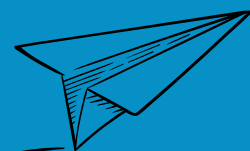


DEBRECEN UNPACKED



Settling into Debrecen and Hungary

Welcome to Debrecen! A Guide to Your New Home

Welcome to your new adventure! Whether you've been here for a while now or just getting started, we're excited to help you settle into life in Debrecen.

This newsletter will guide you through the essentials—from local tips to mastering Hungarian (spoiler: it's tricky, but you'll get the hang of it!).

Get ready to explore, learn, and enjoy all the little things that make Debrecen special. We're here to make sure your time here is as fun and easy as possible!

P.S. Don't worry, you'll feel like a local in no time!

In this week's issue we will unpack:

- the location and history of Debrecen,
- where you'll live,
- how you can get around the city,
- where you can buy your essentials,
- what should be the first places you explore.

WHERE ARE WE ON THE MAP?

a quick introduction to Debrecen

Debrecen is located in the eastern part of Hungary, near the border with Romania, making it one of the most significant cities in Hungary's Great Plain region. It is the second-largest city in Hungary by population, with around 200,000 inhabitants.

Please don't be misled when we Hungarians call Debrecen a city—by global standards, our beloved city would likely feel more like a small town to you.

Debrecen has a rich history and is sometimes referred to as the "Calvinist Rome" due to its long-standing association with Calvinism, especially during the Reformation when it became a stronghold of the Protestant faith in Hungary. The city's significance grew in the 16th century, when it was a center for Calvinist theology and learning. The University of Debrecen, founded in 1538, has played a vital role in shaping the intellectual landscape of the city and the country, making Debrecen a renowned hub for education and research, bringing multiculturalism and religious diversity. Throughout its history, Debrecen has witnessed many key moments, such as serving as the capital of Hungary for a brief period during the Hungarian Revolution of 1848.

The city's cultural and intellectual heritage continues to thrive, with the university being a key contributor to the region's development and international reputation. The University attracts a significant number of international students, is one of Hungary's largest and most prestigious institutions, offering a wide range of programs, especially in faculties like Medicine, Law, IT, Engineering, Agricultural Science, and Business. The Medical Faculty is particularly popular, drawing students from all over the world due to its high-quality education and internationally recognized programs.

In recent years, the city has also experienced growth in its industrial sector, with new factories opening in areas like automotive manufacturing and electronics. These developments have brought more international professionals to Debrecen, further enriching the city's cultural diversity. The combination of educational opportunities and growing job prospects has made Debrecen an increasingly cosmopolitan city, where international students and professionals from all over the world come to live, work, and study, creating a dynamic and colorful atmosphere in this historically rich region.

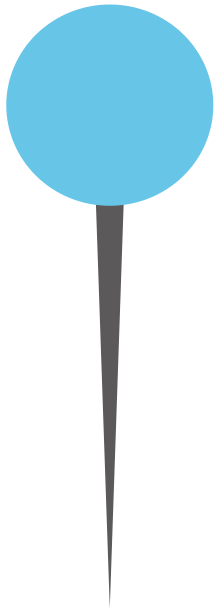
How does ISD fit into this picture?

The school opened in autumn 2019, has quickly become a key institution for international families in the city. Offering an English-language curriculum from kindergarten to high school, ISD provides a seamless educational experience for children moving to Debrecen. Its presence makes the city more attractive to expatriates, ensuring that families can easily integrate while receiving a high-quality education that meets global standards.



MOST LIKED AREAS TO LIVE IN

Check out the map below!



The area highlighted in **BLUE** is the closest mostly residential neighborhood to ISD in Debrecen, offering a great balance of convenience and tranquility. Living here means you're just a short distance from the main campus of the University and the beautiful Great Forest park—perfect for relaxing or doing some sports outdoors. Bring your picnic blanket and enjoy the sun by Lake Békás, I'll definitely do that as soon as spring weather hits.

You'll likely have easy access to Bus #13, and both tram lines are within reach, making it a breeze to get around. While this neighborhood is slightly removed from the hustle and bustle of downtown, a quick 10-minute tram ride will take you right into the city center.

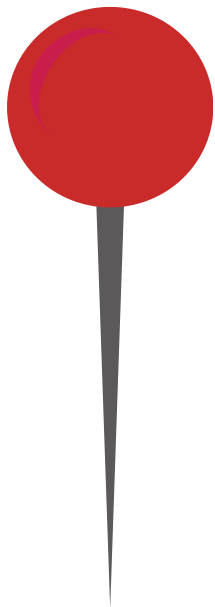
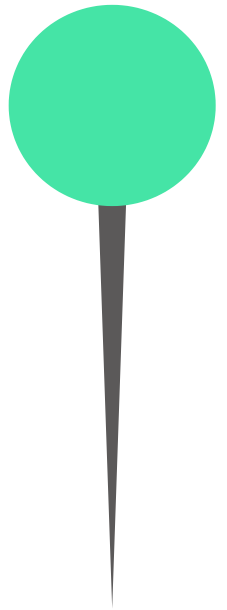
For everyday essentials, you'll find several small grocery stores and a few cozy restaurants nearby. The main shopping hub in this area is Malompark, where you can shop at Interspar, visit the post office, or browse Praktiker for home essentials.

It's a lovely spot to call home, combining convenience, nature, and great connectivity!

The **GREEN** area offers the best of both worlds—perfectly situated between the vibrant city center and the more peaceful, nature-filled neighborhoods near the Great Forest. Living here means you're close to downtown while still having easy access to green spaces, making it an ideal location for both city lovers and nature enthusiasts.

With Bus #13 running along University Avenue, getting to ISD is quick and convenient. Plus, both of Debrecen's main shopping malls—Debrecen Plaza and Fórum—are within walking distance, giving you plenty of options for shopping, dining, and entertainment. If you'd rather not walk, the trams are always nearby to take you wherever you need to go.

This area strikes a perfect balance between city life and tranquility, making it a great place to call home!

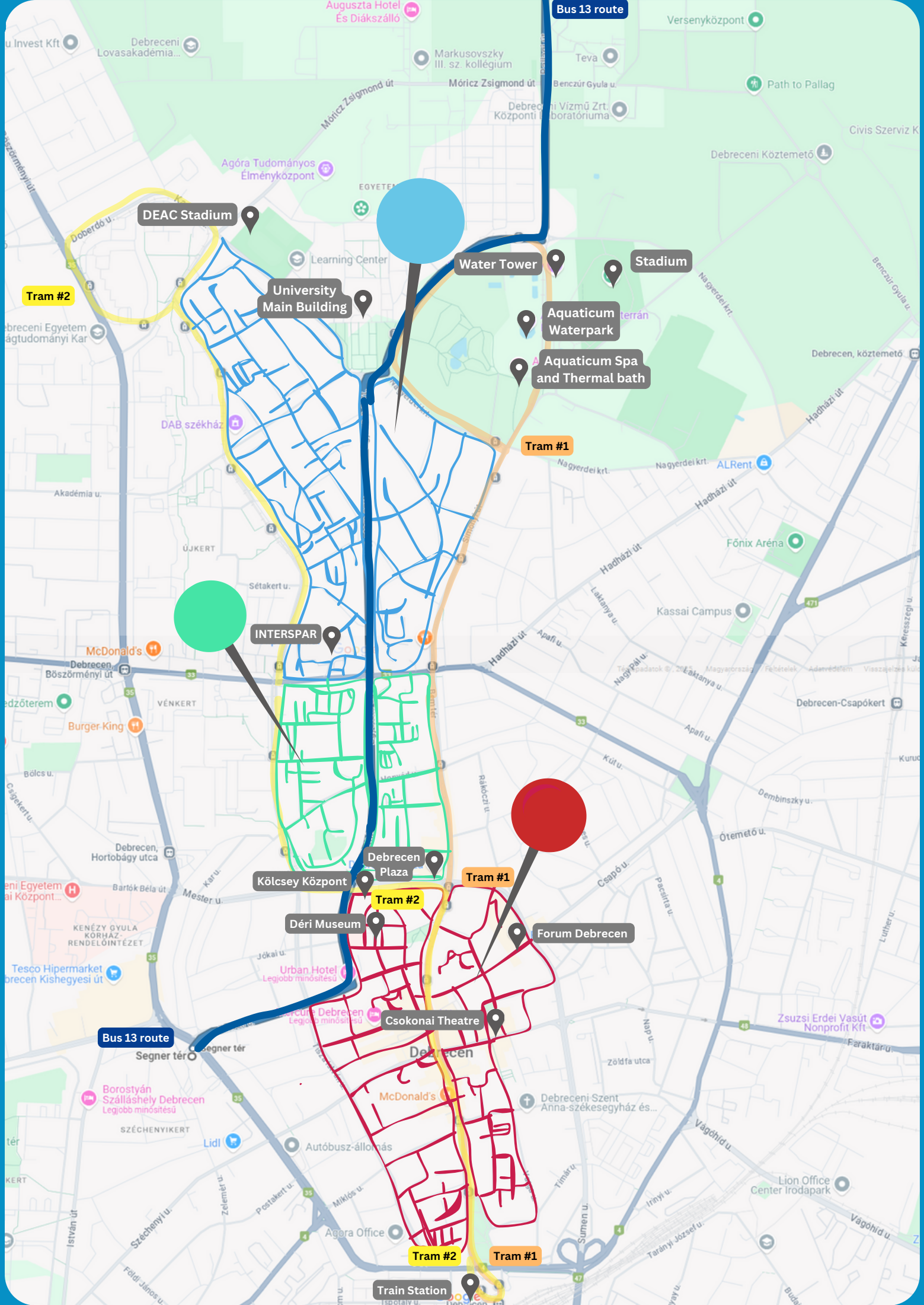


The **RED** area marks downtown Debrecen—the vibrant cultural and social heart of the city! Here, you'll find a fantastic selection of restaurants, cozy cafés, lively bars, and even a few clubs, making it the perfect place to enjoy a night out with friends.

Both Tram #1 and #2 run through the center along the famous Piac Street, ensuring easy access to everything the city has to offer. And right at the heart of it all stands the iconic Great Church—a true landmark of Debrecen.

If you're lucky, your balcony might overlook Piac Street, giving you a front-row seat to the spectacular Flower Carnival from the comfort of your home. And during the holiday season, the magical Christmas market could be right at your doorstep, filling the air with festive cheer.

Living here means being at the center of it all—history, culture, and an unbeatable city atmosphere!



GETTING AROUND THE CITY

public transport

Public transport in Debrecen consists of 2 tramlines, buses and trolley buses. These vehicles run the most frequently in the city center and the further you are from the center the less options you'll have and the less frequent the service is.

There are several ways to check public transportation schedules. You can refer to the information tables at the bus stop, or use apps such as the official DKV app, Menetrend, MyDKV or Google Maps, which are all reliable options for up-to-date schedule information.

How to get to ISD?

Getting to ISD is simple, whether you prefer using public transport or cycling.

The areas international teachers choose to live in mainly depends on whether they would like to use public transport or drive to get to school.

If you would like to hop on a bus in the mornings you'll need to live close to the route of Bus 13 or along one of the two tramlines as they can both get you close to one of the bus stops you'll need.

The morning commute is made more bearable by the road to Pallag through the forest that's magical in each season. Once you reach "Balásházy János Szki." stop you've reached your destination. From there, it's just a short walk to the school. **Here's a helpful tip:** *the bus runs only a few every hour, so be sure to time your trip accordingly to avoid missing it!*

For those who enjoy cycling, a new bike lane connects Debrecen to Pallag. The lane starts near the Nagyerdei Campus tram stop and leads directly to the school.

Make sure to explore your options, and choose the one that suits your needs the best!

Useful apps



Menetrend



MyDKV



Google Maps



GETTING AROUND THE CITY

Debrecen on Two Wheels

The city has an extensive network of over 100 kilometers of bicycle paths. This network is comprised of segregated cycle lanes, on-road lanes shared with vehicles, and shared paths used by both cyclists and pedestrians.

You can always join a resilient group of teachers through thick and thin on bike on their way to ISD.

Driving culture

During rush hours, roads can become crowded as commuters from Debrecen and surrounding areas (Józsa, Pallag, Hajdúsámson, Mikepércs) travel to and from their destinations.

Hungarian driving culture can be fast-paced yet efficient. **Key tips:** *Use your distress signal to thank drivers who allow you to merge, and always make space to ambulances or police with sirens. For more tips visit the following [site](#).*

Get around with Taxis

The taxi system is expanding, with several reputable and trusted companies, such as Bolt, offering a user-friendly mobile application for convenient access to their services. These companies provide transparent pricing with fixed rates and a dependable service.

CITY Taxi also offers a mobile application called 555 Taxi Debrecen that is rather easy to use.



WHERE CAN I BUY MY ESSENTIALS?

Now that you know how to get around in Debrecen, you might as well get a simple guide to shopping the essentials!

Groceries

Debrecen's city center offers a variety of grocery stores catering to different needs. You'll find large supermarket chains like Spar, Lidl, Penny and Aldi, which provide a wide range of products at affordable prices, including fresh produce, bakery items, dairy, and often international foods.



For those seeking local goods, stores like CBA and Coop offer Hungarian products and fresh items.



Looking for fresh ingredients for your supper? You can visit the Nagypiac right next to Debrecen Fórum in the morning to purchase all the fresh, mostly locally grown vegetables, fruits and fish and meat products.

The city center's grocery stores are well-organized and easily accessible as they are located usually in the same shopping mall such as FORUM, Malompark, Debrecen Plaza or Párizsi Udvar. Not only grocery stores, but a wide range of fashion boutiques, electronics product stores and drugstore are located in the shopping malls. The most well-known drugstore franchises offering cosmetics, healthcare items and household products are DM and Rossmann.



If you are feeling adventurous you can always visit the shopping centres located on the outskirts of the city such as Auchan, Metro, Stop Shops and Mybox.

These locations offer a wide range of products, similar to the city center. However, it is worth noting that these centers are more easily accessible by car.



Pharmacies

Debrecen's pharmacies offer a wide range of medications, health products, and services. They provide prescription and over-the-counter drugs, along with consultations and health advice.

Many are open late or on weekends, ensuring accessibility. Detailed information about the opening hours of the pharmacies in Debrecen, as well as the pharmacies that are on duty on holidays and public holidays, can be found on the website of the National Center for Public Health and Pharmaceuticals.



Furniture

If you're settling into a new rental and need to pick up some basics, there are plenty of easy places to look. Stores like XXXLutz, Möbelix, JYSK, or Mömax are great for affordable furniture, rugs, curtains, and everyday household items.



Electronics

Debrecen's electronics stores offer everything you need to stay connected and powered up. From smartphones to home appliances, these shops provide a wide selection and helpful staff. Media Markt can be found in FORUM, Euronics in MALOMPARK.



DISCOVER DEBRECEN

You're most likely arriving in July, and honestly, I can't think of a better time to experience Debrecen! The city comes alive with exciting festivals, delicious food, and a buzzing summer atmosphere.

If you love good food and drinks, you're in for a treat—July is packed with festivals like **Beer by Lake Festival**, **Wine and Jazz Days**, the **Gourmet Festival**, and **Zamat Festival**, where you can savor amazing flavors and enjoy live music. Towards the end of the month, **Campus Festival** takes over the city, filling the air with energy as international and Hungarian artists perform for huge crowds.



And the excitement doesn't stop there! August brings the famous **Flower Carnival**, a breathtaking event filled with parades, colorful floats, and lively celebrations. One of the highlights is the **Night Ride**, where locals decorate their bikes with lights and flowers and ride through the city in a magical display.



If you are a sports fan, you can spend an afternoon cheering for **Loki** at the **Great Forest Stadium** or cool off from the summer heat at **Aquaticum Waterpark** with its fun slides and relaxing pools. If you're looking for a peaceful escape, take a long walk through the forest from Debrecen to ISD, enjoying the fresh air and the soothing sounds of nature.

Or, if you're feeling active, lace up your running shoes and hit the scenic forest trail—it conveniently ends right next to ISD!



If you're a fan of theater, you might want to catch a play at **Csokonai Theatre** or **Csokonai Fórum**, where you can often see performances by international troupes. And when the summer heat becomes too much, step into the cool halls of **MODEM** or **Déri Museum**, where art and history might just spark some inspiration.

As the day winds down and the sun eases up, there's no better way to soak in the city's charm than by sitting on a terrace in the city center, enjoying good food, great company, and the lively evening atmosphere.

Summer in Debrecen is full of life, and you'll have plenty of opportunities to soak it all in. Get ready for an unforgettable experience!

Bridge over Lake Békás



Lake Békás



Clock Tower



Main Building of the University of Debrecen



Museum Déri



MODEM



The Great Church



The Small Church



Debrecen Zoo and Amusement Park



Water Tower



Csokonai Theatre

Christmas Fair



IN THE NEXT ISSUE, WE WILL UNPACK...

Cost of Living in Debrecen: What to Expect

- rent, utilities
- groceries
- eating out, ordering food
- ordering groceries
- public transport
- entertainment

SEE YOU NEXT TIME

Photo source:

