

Zalaszentgrót

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Zalaszentgrót

Zalaszentgrót 2009



Mayor's prologue

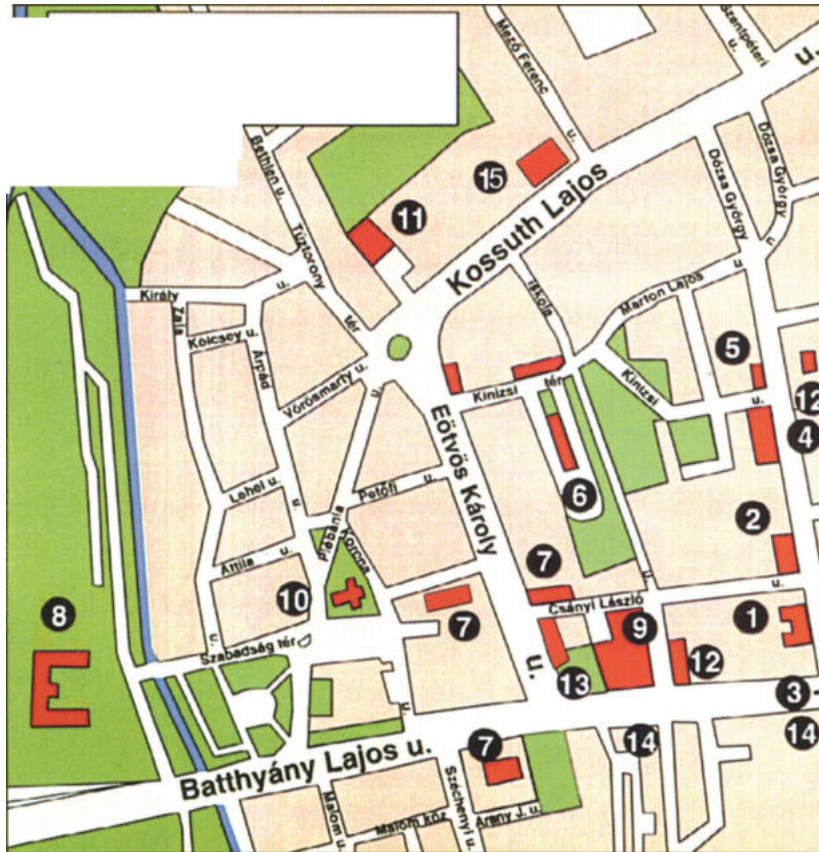
Dear Reader!

I welcome you as a mayor of a city, which has got the rank of being a town in the country 100th time for 25 years. This volume is about our settlement, the illustrious past and the present, so about everything in which our future is rooted. Our city can be rightly proud of its history and present. Beautiful natural features, many unique values and peacefulness give a real rank to our settlement in Zala-valley, the centre of the region. The locals do not even realize these, but in the eyes of outsider tourists, there are many treasures hidden in the landscape. Just like a walk in the city. Zalaszentgrót is not a huge town, but we can find many sights and art relics here. Without being exhaustive, the Batthyány Castle, the Stone Bridge, the “Romtorony” in Kísszentgrót, the 250-year-old Roman Catholic Church, the Little Castle and its museums are all represent value. But we can mention as well the privileges given by nature: fishing, hunting, hiking and wine friendship. They are all jewels of Zalaszentgrót. Just like the spa, of which pools offer real recreation. The water is a unique value; it is proven by the fact, that the nationally famous and popular NaturAqua mineral water is bottled here. I hope I have created pleasure to visit Zalaszentgrót personally, take a walk around the village as a returning guest with your family and friends and the more we can say: Welcome to our city!



Zalaszentgrót, 2009. December

József Császár mayor



ZALASZENTGRÓT City Centre

1. Town hall
2. Police
3. Post
4. Health Centre
5. Pharmacy
6. Bus station
7. Restaurant
8. Batthyány Castle
9. City Community Centre
10. Roman Catholic Church
11. Sports-court
12. Bank
13. Hotel
14. Public telephone
15. Evangelical Church

Natural givens

It is enough to look around or do a short walk to see: Zalaszentgrót is located in the heart of the valley of Zala in an idyllic environment.

The Zala-hill is the part of the south-western hills of Transdanubian hills. In this low land of tertiary and quaternary era, lays Zala-county. The land is pebbly, loessy, sandy and loamy. The development of the soft “Pannonian landscape” was impressed by the Roman era. Gentle and mild hills welcome travellers. There is not enough distance between two towns, that nature could “run wild”. Here is a white-walled press house, there is a cornfield or an apple garden or a shady forest. In the Zala-valley the floodplain willows, meadows and pastures are in majority.

Because of the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea and the Alps, the climate is not extreme. The nice, warm summer is followed by fall- 800-900 mm rainfall- and not too cold winter. Spring is especially beautiful in the area. Not only because of the roads lined by beautiful trees, but also because of the wild flowers



Zalaszentgrót, the 100th Hungarian city bird's eye view



The vineyard of Aranyod, taken from the city

blooming in the forests like a white veil. The natural vegetation of the hills are the oak and beech forests, but chestnut trees and fragrant cyclamen can be found too. The fauna of the area is rich; there is a lot of deer, wild boar and fox. The marshes near Zala are visited by waterfowls arrived from the range of Balaton.

The river of the town is Zala-river, which brings the rainwater of the east parts of the hills to the Small-Balaton. Since the lake belongs to the catchment area of Balaton, we should pay particular attention to the cleanliness of its water. And because, if the people living here getting tired, could take a fishing rod in their hands and sit next to the waterline, or be able to take a backpack and start a journey along the river, up to the hills to a cozy wine tour. Anyone, who does this, could enjoy the view of the beautiful Zala-valley and the view of the spectacular cityscape of Zalaszentgrót. Those, who visit the area, should not miss a trip, on which they could view the sights-including rare historical values- of the town and its surroundings.

Zalaszentgrót long ago...

Zalaszentgrót was a built-up area BC. The excavations undoubtedly confirmed this when polished stone axes, Roman stone coffins and various objects were found there. There are some assumptions, that at the place of the sand mine in the suburbs named “Polgárváros” was a Celtic settlement. It’s a theory of Kálmán Darnay for example. However the graves, Celtic swords, weapons, tools and jewellery found in Zalaszentgrót, show the advanced technique and good taste of the former residents.

One of the most important data of the town is 1083 or 1084, which years are supposed to be the years of the naming, however, no written evidence can prove it. According to the experts who deal with the history of the settlement it got its name after St. Gellért bishop. The bishop who died as a martyr was declared a saint in 1083 or 1084, therefore the settlement could get its name after him only after his death. The first written evidence for the existence of the settlement is from 1247. In this we could read that Dénes Szentgróti who was given the abbey in Túrje that was established by himself in addition with four holdings, a two-wheeled mill by the bank of the River Zala, and half of the amount of the taxes as well. In 1247 Zalaszentgrót couldn’t be an insignificant settlement, if his occupant Dénes from Túrje genus calls himself “szentgróti” and one of the charters of Béla IV. was published here. The sources in 1397 called the city market town or oppidum, this fact indicates the rapid development of the city. And in the day of Saint Blaise national fairs



The Batthyány Castle is the historical symbol of Zalaszentgrót



The castle presents a majestic sight from the direction of the park

were held here. The settlement received its name- as well as other villages in Zala- the name of its patron saint, Saint Gellert. Gellért is the same as Gerardus, which can be abbreviated as Grót. However, this also means that the name “Szentgrót” could have born only in the Christian era, if the town was named after its patron saint.

The significance of the settlement is enlarged by the fact that in the XII. Century the Szentgrót fortress was built in an island flanked by the River Zala. In Pallas large lexicon (issued in 1897) we could read on page 558, that: “The castle was built around 1083, in memory of Bishop Gellért”. (This is confuted by other sources.)

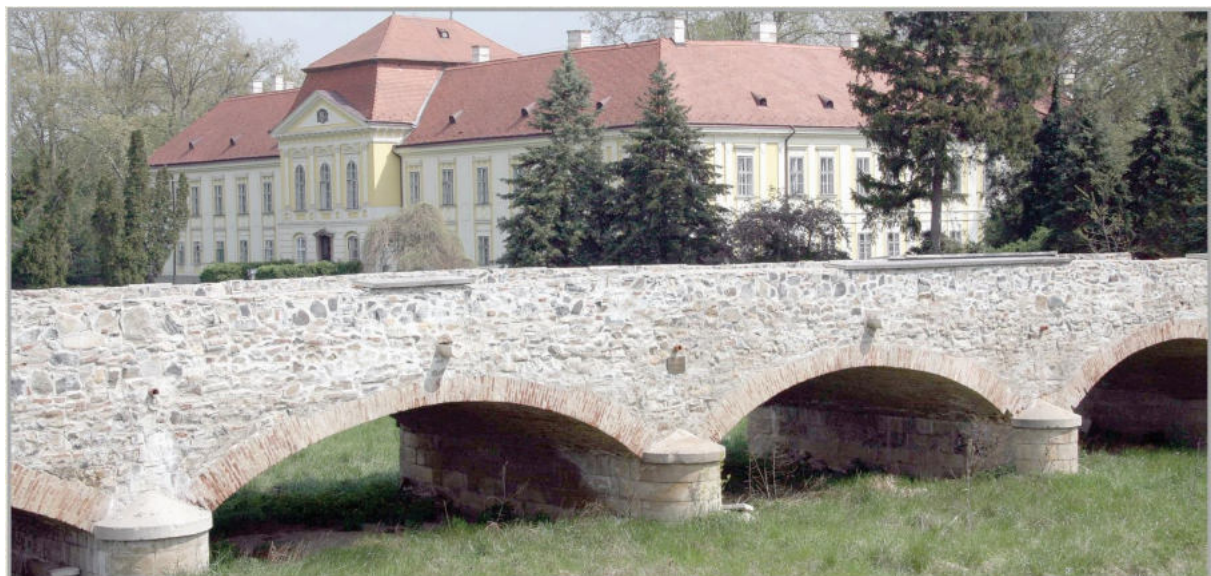
The castle was first mentioned in 1299, so its sure that it was built before 1299. Its one of the oldest castles in the county. It was strengthen as the Turkish threat increased and became more and more important. Samuel Kardos’s Datas of the History of Saint Groth (published in Nagykanizsa, 1897) we could find the following information about the castle: “The Castle of Szentgrót was supplied with a guard contains 600 riders and foot soldiers, who lived at their own expense, and because of this they were exempt from all national and ecclesiastical taxes.” In 1474 9 and in 1663 14 villages belonged to the Castle. However they were poor at the time of the Turkish havoc. There are other sources, which are implying the significance of the castle. In these documents the authors consistently called Szentgrót a strong castle (*castrum rax*) in contrast to the castles of Egerszeg, Kapornak and Egervár. After the Defeat at Mohács the new landlords (Hagymássy family) strengthened the castle. The marshes of Zala River were the main strength. The external fortification was a cheap and easily produced backboard, more precisely clay wall rammed between wooden plies. Inside there was a two-storied building with a wooden tower. The furniture was very modest, almost puritanical. The Castle Guard was not many, but in case of danger the men of the city or “hostat” joined the Guard. Many contemporary imagery remained of the castle. The “Zalaszentgrót-vizivár view from 1660” must be mentioned. It is in the Military Archives in Vienna.

Outside the walls of the castle was the medieval Kisutca. Its Franciscan monastery and church (built in the XIII century), the ruins of a Romanesque tower and a Gothic shrine (built in the XV century) are still appreciated art relics. This settlement was obligated to normal feudal service, that’s why it was called “civil town” and after the Revolution in 1848 it picked up the name Kisszentgrót.

In the 1690's the castle was neglected, because its simple building were not suitable to the feudal lords. The Batthyány landlords replaced it



The city museum introduces the past of the city.



Art relic Stone Bridge

in 1767 with a magnificent baroque palace, which serves as a primary school and dormitory nowadays. In 1711 the village was inhabited by 73 families and if 70 owners had not died in cholera in the same year, it would have been more populous than Kanizsa and Keszthely. In 1767 the landlords have been able to force the citizens to regular feudal work because they took the advantage of urbarium by Empress Maria Theresa and this fact obstructed the development of the town. But the city still increased because handicraft was strong and the main agricultural crop (grape) was free of feudal burdens. At the beginning of the XVIII century the wine of Szentgrót was as famous as the wine of Badacsony. From 1841 Szentgrót started to prosper. Different associations, such as Reading Club, Casino etc. were established. Károly Batthyány and Ferenc Deák “the wise man of Hungary” have played a big role in the establishment of these associations. Ferenc Deák was a guest here at the time of elections.

The beautiful toll-house and the big restaurant was built in 1844, the notary in 1854, and the Zala Bridge was built in 1844 by prisoners. As a large rural centre, Zalaszentgrót was also a factor of political life. The first representative of the town was Ferenc Deák in 1848. In order to develop the trade and industry a movement started with the aim to build a railway between Túrje and Szentgrót. The railway was finished in 1892 on January 27. The manufacturers of Zala Valley initiated the construction of Zala Valley railway, which had been built in 1895. During the building of the railway, Roman graves were found in the field of Ferenc Zászló, a citizen of Zalaszentgrót. Originally when the railway opened there were four trains a day between Túrje and Balatonszentgyörgy. The cattle breeding started to flourish, because the livestock could have delivered cheaper and easier. Zalaszentgrót had 8 fair combined with cattle exhibition.

The former oppidum, village Zalaszentgrót suffered relatively little damage during the world wars. After 1945 the town has regained its central role and functioned as a district town. After the II World War the town and the co-operative movement started to develop rapidly. We have to mention the growth of agriculture, distillery, winery, brick factory, textile and wood industry and vegetable growing. It had a positive effect not only on Zalaszentgrót, but also on the surrounding villages.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, in 1989 the co-ops have broken up. The population begins to focus on the agriculture, wine and fruit growing again and many family businesses are focused on tourism.

1963 is a notable date in the life of the settlement, because Aranyod and Tüskeszepétér were attached to it by this time.



The voluntary fire service has a historical past.

... and nowadays

Zalaszentgrót was given the title of being a town on 1st January 1984 after the attachment was ended. This was the 100th time to give the rank of being a town in the country. According to the current process that went through the country at that time, the court, the deputy office, the public prosecutor's office and the police station was closed in Zalaszentgrót. Actually the city starts to get back these now, and the leaders of it aimed to create extended services.

The proof of the “renewing” region centre role is that there are more and more office and institution in the city. The Citizens' Service Centre and other services started to work.

The Health Centre not only attends the citizens of Zalaszentgrót, but it attends the people of 23 surrounding villages. They could have resort to the central medical duty in the town too. There are two pharmacies in the city. The activities of the Municipal Cultural Centre, Elementary School of Arts and Library also play a regional role, and its trainings and presentations aim at the surrounding villages too. Zalaszentgrót is the centre of the ZALA-KAR Regional Innovational Micro-regional Association.

In 1992 a purposeful retouching of the city began. The government has made the development concept of the city and one side of the Municipal Cultural Centre was built in with a unique styled shops. As the second phase the special tree buildings of Saint Stephen's Square, than the Kis-Korona restaurant and the place between the former MATÁV centre and VMK have been completed. A car park (35 places) has been built in here, and of course there are stylish lamps and revetment. In 1999 the casing of the main square has been completed, the former parking area has been covered with flagstones, and in several places –as a symbol of Hungarian history –seven granite stars has been placed symbolising the seven leaders. This time the outdoor theatre has been completed too in the square, near the Zala department store, which is an excellent location for various events like folk dance galas and theatrical performances. The square is decorated with a drinking-fountain and thanks to contractors ornate benches were made too.



In the centre of the town we could find modern buildings too.

Since the old beach, near Zala River, has been ceased the citizens wished to have a spa and the government body also recognized the necessity of it. The city fathers have decided to start to do the task and they appointed the location of the object- taking notice of the local conditions and the regulations of the authorities- in the area near Tüskeszentpéter. They drilled a well (with the utilization of money from applications) and the water proved itself to be appropriate not just as bath water but as mineral water too. Meanwhile the detailed plans of Szent Grót Spa and Fitness Centre have been completed and the government had divide money for the build-up. The first phase- the outdoor pool- was built in 2001 with the help of applications and soon the indoor part was completed too.

As the unique Stone Bridge comparable to the Nine-holed Bridge in Hortobágy renewed, the Little Castle has renewed too. In this there is a city and fire service museum. The Stone Bridge is planned to lead the pedestrian and bicycle traffic to the Spa and Fitness Centre.



The newest house of Zalaszentgrót determines the cityscape

Walks in the city

For those who are arriving from the number 76 main road or from the direction of Zalaegerszeg the Batthyány Castle comes into view from afar.

There was an old castle in the place of the amazing wonderful Batthyány Castle. First time it was mentioned in 1299 in written sources.

In the Middle Ages the castle was the property of Szentgróti and Berekszői-Hagymási family and over the centuries it changed hands many times. The Turks in the XVI-XVII century tried to attack the castle but they never been able to occupy it. However they probably didn't want because serious attack never ever happened. After the repossession of Kanizsa (1690) the fortress system of Zala's fate was sealed, its task was ended; moreover the court in Vienna ordered the destruction of the bulk of the Hungarian castles, because of the growing kuruc movements.

So the majority of the county's castles were blown up. However for the smaller



Batthyány Castle is well-known by tourists.



The Templom Square is a pleasant place thanks to the fountain here.

backboard fortresses the fact was enough, that they were neglected, because the constructions made of earth and wood collapsed down after a short time without maintenance. But the castle of Szentgrót wasn't ended up like this because it was the property of Adam Batthyány II who was recaptured Kanizsa. So it has remained in use in the XVIII century, but for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless this medieval fortress hardly was able to act the part of a convenient residency, because the demands of the XVIII century were rapidly changed. That's why in 1767 Imre Batthyány had demolished it and built this amazing castle in place of the old one. Due to its location the castle is a defining character of the landscape. Near the castle there is an art relic bridge built in 1846 and the remained parts of the former park, which was 22 acres big. Only some protected sycamore and yew are reminiscent of the popularity of the former garden. On the east facade of the castle there is the following inscription:

sIC eX annosIS sVrgVnt noVa teCta rVInIs Haec sI non pLaCent, faC
Meliora, LICet MCCCCCCLLLXIIIIII

It means: "So thus old ruins became comely buildings, if you do not like the new, replace it with another one."

The castle is a U-shaped building made by brick in Louis XVI style. At the end of the flanks there is a semicircular tower. It's a one-storied building, there are 7+3+7 windows in the main façade, and the axis of the side facades is 12. Architecturally the main ell is unified. Upstairs there are the former living rooms and the hall is in the centre risalit. Its three windows are facing west, as well as the staircase. Two balconies attach to the courtyard facade. The former library room- which is divided into two parts with a pillar and two half pillars- is located in the southwest corner of the storey. The rooms of the servants and the service facilities were on the ground floor. The Louis XVI-styled chateau's style and structure is like the type of Gödöllő. The castle- there are no written sources about the building of it-

is a very late representative of this type or the construction started much earlier and they completed a halfway finished work in 1787. Anyhow the architects solved the problem well, because we could see a well-structured, harmonious and unified building.



In the early 1800's enriched it with renaissance doors and furniture. Some of them are still could be found in the building. We have to mention the oak door of the library, on which an Italian master carved heads of ancient wise men.

The last owners of the castle were the Counts Károlyi, who fled at the last minute. However they also had perpetuated the memory of the family with a 11 armed princely crest, which could be found in the west facade. There is title on it in Latin language:

„FID ET VIRTUTE QVERE”

„Gain fame with faith and hope”

The castle was occupied by soldiers before the end of the war. The furniture was relieved by them and the citizens. In 1947 21st March the Ministry of Religion and Public Education has convert it into a college for elementary school students. The reconstruction of the building started in 1984 and took for four years and it was cost in 42 million forints. As a result, those who visit Zalászentgrót could see a magnificent castle.

One of the jewels of Zalászentgrót is Romtorony in the suburbs called Kisszentgrót, which is a ruin of an old monastery.

The huge building of the former Romtorony has remained low, but we could say that all of the remains of the three churches, which were in Kisszentgrót, could be found here. The contemporary descriptions say that there were three churches in the town. As the records of the parish said:

“The believers say that there were three churches in the suburbs of Szentgróth. One of them- which’s ruins are still visible- was the belonging of the red friends and it was in the northern part of the city. Who had built the monastery and when? It’s not known because of the lack of data. If indeed it was the property of the Order of the Temple, than in 1312 when the order has ceased to exist, the monastery falled into the hands of another religious organization. We don’t know exactly. The church and the priory have started to decoy in the time of the Turkish wars. Even at the end of the last century the two towers with the walls were stood. However Count Ferenc Batthyány had demolished the building. The manor house and the stable were built of its bricks and stones. The building materials of the priory were used to the construction of the present church. Because of the request of the citizens one of the towers had left as a belfry. ”

The Romtorony in Kisszentgrót is one of the oldest art relics of the town.



At the beginning of the century more walls of the church had stood, but the building operations of the people had consumed the bricks and stones. The building was so diminished, that the demolition of it was forbidden by a law. There is a rumour that the old cellars under the former monastery still exist. It has evidenced by a clanging voice, which can be heard near the tower and on the road. The concrete tiles in front of the building hide graves. In the course of an exploration many human skeletons were found under the ground. According to experts there was once a cemetery near the church. The believers claim that the second church was at the centre of the city. “This seems to prove by the fact, that in 1840 in the garden of Ferenc Pál, a pit was dug and under the ground, walls and a tomb with human bones were found. The owner had built his house from the bricks. Most likely it was the parish church, because it was a common talk, that this was an

independent church. ” Although the past old ones told their fathers and grandfathers have seen this building, nowadays not even the ruins left. The third church said to be planned in the border of the city, also attached to the monastery. “It is so a common talk, that there is hardly any citizen, who could not show the place. Namely, it was near the so-called Bödör mill. Ferenc Németh (82 years old) strongly proves that when he went to the forest to collect wood, he saw the fortifications, which was said to be the fence of the priory. The different figures made of lawn were visible, and he found old bricks of which the old ones told they are the remains of the former church and cloister. Unfortunately we couldn’t say who the owner was... ”

So in Kisszentgrót there was a very lively religious life in the Middle Ages. Nowadays people are also religious, but for a long time they had to go to the big church in Szentgrót, because in that part of the city there was no church for a long time- “traitorously” to the old times. szentgróti, However, thanks to János Bizderi parish priest, a few years ago a small, neat church was developed from the former church building – which served as a school for decades - much to the delight of the population. The new building- the fourth church of Kisszentgrót, in which the visitors could see the statue of Mother Mary of Fatima, and in honour of it there is a mass in every month -is almost in front of the Romtorony. The church of Zalaszentgrót stands in the middle of the city. The statues and paintings of the tarnished building are important to the believers.

The Historia Domus write: “The parish of Szentgrót is one the oldest parish in Hungary, built in the 14th century. We have no data about the old parsonage, the devastating effects of the Turkish wars in Hungary were affected Szentgrót sensitively. ”



The 250 years old Catholic church with the statue of the Holy Trinity.



We could see the mummy of martyr St. Ince in the church.



All parts of the building are richly decorated.

Thanks to Bishop János Volkra a parish was established in Szentgrót again. The little church served as main church until them – which was the property of the Lutherans until 1753 – was demolished and with using its bricks the present church was built.



One of the fames of the church is the Madonna statue.

Because the ground was soggy, they used strong oak piles hammered into the ground, and laid the foundation-stones on these. The brick needed to the building was from the destroyed monastery and the money was from Batthyány Imre. The people contributed to the building of the church by day labourer work. The building was finished in 1758, and was sanctified to Prince St. Imre. The cross-shaped, original tower had very badly damaged by a windstorm in 1845, and had repaired by Count Károly Batthyány. (Otherwise in 1892, the tower had tumbled down completely as a result of another storm. The current tower had built than instead of the onion dome.) At first the church had a lot of windows, later they had been built in because of practical reasons. The vestry has been made later. Thanks to the feudal lord the church has its own clock tower too.

The building has 14 half-pillars; there is a triple dome on them: three cupolas decorated with ornaments. On the facade of the shrine – where the Baroque statues of St. István and St. László has

been placed - could be seen the coat of arms of the Batthyány family and the year of the building of the church. In front of it we could see the altars of St. József and St. Anna, but these are from the 19th century.



The parish's building.



Left: The statue of St. Gellért.

Right: The Catholic Church is surrounded by statues of saints.

The dome of the sanctuary consists of peaky arches with ornaments. At first it was whitewashed and only the sanctuary was painted to red, that the ornaments on it and the date became visible.

The main altar is a true Rococo masterpiece. On the top there is the Holy Trinity in a richly gilded glory, and a carved wooden image of God, surrounded by loving angels. The altarpiece shows St Imre, the painter of it was probably Gáspár Sambach, pupil of Donner a Viennese court painter. The aisle operate as a chapel, the altar illustrates the Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary. Here is a beautiful carving and gilded wooden coffin with glass pane, in which the whole skeleton of martyr St. Ince lies. This "treasure" was donated to the church by Pope Clement in 1766. The present suit of it was made by nuns from Graz, in 2 years; the coffin also comes from there.

The altar of the painful Virgin is aside in the nave. It is the same age as the church, because the decoration and the colours of it are the same as of the church. On top of the Tabernacle is the relic of St. Imre. On the north wall there is the pulpit, which is made of wood. Its decorated with gilded carvings and with three pictures like an embossment. The chorus is entirely made of wood



Group of statues in St. István Square.



The City Cultural Centre, Library and Arts School.



The venetian blinded buildings make the cityscape intimate.

with green-coloured marble and gold-plated patterns. An organ, made in 1866, was first set up in the choir and above the vestry an oratory for the count's family.

Left to the main entrance is the Madonna statue of Zalaszentgrót (made by wood), holds the infant Jesus in her arms. This is a work of the 14th century.

Those who enter the church could see left to the main entrance door the baroque statue of Mary, and in the right side the font, which was donated by descendants of Polish.



Left: The statue of St. Flórián stands near the church.

Right: The Evangelical church and chapel was built in 1912.

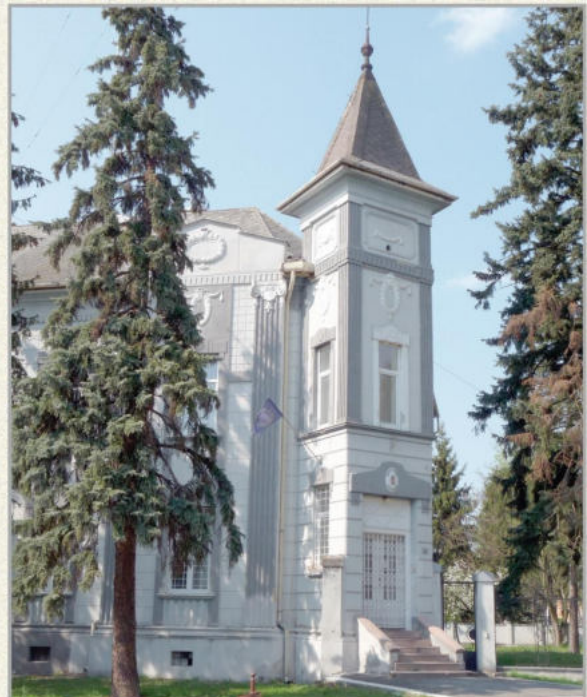
The Evangelical church and the chapel near it have been renewed totally in 2000, the consecration was observed with the celebration of the millennium.

The oldest records about the Evangelical church of Zalaszentgrót are from 1695. According to them Szentgrót was an ecclesia mater. In the era of the Counter-Reformation the Evangelicals disappeared, but they reappeared after the Patent of Toleration. So, after 1784 the congregation lived on.

In 1839 a building was also bought by public subscription, and after huge organization in 1912 they developed today's church from the chapel. Soon two - one 183 and one 349 kg-bells were bought to the tower, and then the chapel was built. In 1942, the church enriched with an organ, and a lively religious life was in it.



The visitors of the town could meet with unique architectural solutions.



Left: The statue of Ferenc Deák in front of the mayor's office.

Right: The characteristic building of the police in György Dózsa street.



The building of the local government.

But the time lasted, so the building had needed renovation. The work has started in 1966 and has been finished in 1971. The preparations for reconstruction had started again in 1995, the little church and the chapel next to it received a new roof.

The so-called Stone Bridge could be noticed immediately by strangers coming into the town.

The bridge was built in 1846, so it's one of Hungary's oldest stone bridges. The road traffic used the bridge until 1975. The government has decided about the renovations, but the building is the property of the state, so the reconstruction of it was realized with the help of central funds. It is planned that besides the bridge is renewing, it will get a function, that the pedestrian and bicycle traffic will take place on it between Zalaszentgrót and Aranyod.

We could relax in pleasant circumstances in the park near the Batthyány Castle.

The Historical Monument, which has asserted to the memory of victims of the war, is surrounded by beautiful trees and flowers.



The recently renewed building of the Little Castle.



The Historical Monument with Turul.



The Main Square had renewed by virtue of the plans of Imre Makovecz.

A dream comes true: the spa.

If you get tired of walking in the city and exploring the area, take the course to the Szent Gróth Spa and Leisure Centre. In the border of the town –between Tüskeszentpéter and Zalabér- lies the spa in a beautiful environment. It waits for the guests with five outdoor and four indoor swimming pools, and many services „related” to bathing. It has excellent compounded water; it is proven by the fact, that the nationally famous and popular NaturAqua mineral water is bottled here. According to preliminary examinations the water of the spa could successfully be able to use as therapy. In weekends and weekdays the audience of the spa is waited by many programs.



The spa in a scorching weekend.



The giant slide is preferred mainly by children and young people.



The indoor pool is the paradise of swimmers.



The pools are enriched by experience elements.



The bath is popular in the whole year because of its warm water.



Institutions, civilians

About the institutional system of Zalaszentgrót could be said that, it carefully tries to satisfy the local and neighbourhood claims.

In Zalaszentgrót there is kindergarten, elementary school and high-school. In the Batthyány Castle there is an elementary school and a dormitory.

There is basic art education too in the city. The Erkel Ferenc Music School gave many excellences to the art life.

The Zrínyi Miklós Primary School celebrated its 110th anniversary this year. The institution was the first primary school of the city. The Laszlo Csanyi Elementary School was opened in 1967. The two institutions have merged several years ago. Both of the former institutions took pride in numerous study and sporting successes. The renewal of the kindergarten ensures better conditions for the children and for the employees too.

In the historic building-the Batthyány Castle- there is a special education institution from October 1950, named after Dezső Koncz.



There is an exhibition about the history of Csányi-Zrínyi Primary School.



The Primary School celebrated its 110th anniversary this year.



The new kindergarten ensures pleasant conditions for the children.
The Beri Balogh Adam High School is the only secondary education institution, where is adult education as well.



The majorette team of the high school attends several events.

The cultural life and events of the city are managed by the Municipal Cultural Centre, Library and School of Art. The institution -in which there are children's and adult library and a cinema as well – permitted of many presentations, exhibitions and several clubs operate there since 1970. The Municipal Library operates here. The Health Centre not only attends the citizens of Zalaszentgrót, but it attends the people of 23 surrounding villages. They could have resort to the central medical duty in the town too. The building of the institution was expanded and thanks to this several new services were started. There are many associations, civic organizations and arts groups are in Zalaszentgrót. For example: the Volunteer Fire Association, the Pro Urbe Award-winning Municipal Orchestra, the City Chamber Choir, dance bands and clubs operating within the VMK. The hikers, anglers, hunters are also working in organizations.



The activities of City Woodwinds Orchestra were acknowledged with Pro Urbe Award.





The Health Centre will be renewed and expand next year.



Fireman day in the town.

Cultural life and traditions

Several cultural events became traditions in the city. On the Day of Hungarian Culture all art and cultural groups of the city are introducing. The cultural season begins with this event. The Pentecostal windwood meeting, the harvest festival and international dance gala are in every year, but sometimes there are occasional cultural events too. Spring and autumn exhibition has nearly 40 years old past. The Zalaszentgrót Drama Camp is nationally acknowledged, to which not only from our country, but also from abroad arrive young actor candidates. In Zalaszentgrót St.Imre's day is also a tradition, its on the next Sunday after Imre day. The so-called Zalavölgyi Kultúrtivornya program has become a tradition in Zalaszentgrót, which offers widespread opportunities for all age-groups in the middle of summer for a week. But we could mention the Oszika Puszika Zala Canoeing and Kayaking tour, which has become a nationally known and "searched" event. The hiking is popular and the so called Harvest Wandering Tour from cellar to cellar. The common Advent candle lighting and the Everybody's Christmas ceremony have become a tradition too.



The Day of Hungarian Culture, the performance of the Arvisura Dance Group.



Hundreds had designated to the so called Puszika Oszika “nut” race.



Spring and autumn exhibition has nearly 40 years old past.



The City Chamber Choir



Sports and Entertainment



The anglers could be addicted to their passion near several fishponds.

In Zalaszentgrót sports life quite is quite various, the football, men's / women's basketball and bowling are very popular, in recent years the 100th Hungarian city has became one of the national citadels of karate. From America to Japan, from many countries are arriving the lovers of this martial art and its black belted members to the camp, which has named after Sensei Laszlo Safar, and which is in the City Coliseum. The camp is usually ends with competition. The students of our schools have nice results. The city has football courts, and the already mentioned modern sports hall, which is exceedingly qualified to the arrangement of international competitions.

The leisure and entertainment options are extensive, the city and its surroundings provide an opportunity for fishing, hunting and hiking, biking, and riding sports. Many regular programs are based on these options. Anglers could choose between several lakes, which many record-sized fish have been caught. The hunters could found a variety of wild animals in the untouched forests. They had captured several times gold medal trophy beast, in fact, even a rare white deer rifle was haunted down years ago. And if we had mentioned entertainment, than we have to speak about the Ibiza disco club, which is the citadel of youngsters on Saturday.



People arrive to the international karate camp from all over the world.



The place of the Indian camp is in the thermal spa.

Parts of the city

Aranyod

It's a part of Zalaszentgrót, which belonged to the Harkályi or rather to the Salamonvári family in the XVI century. After the extinction of this family it was in the hand of Ostfi family from Herbortya and Mavotich family in the half of the next century and still in 1458. In 1828 it consisted of 33 houses, 270 residents, its lords were gentry families, number of inhabitants in 1851 was 280 people. In 1900 it was divided into two separate parts, named as Upper and Lower Aranyod. They were unified at the beginning of this century. There is lively public activity in the town, in the past ten years a sports field has been built, the cultural centre has renewed, and honouring to the victims of II. World War a memorial has been set. Several programs, such as city part day and the so-called "Majális" became a tradition. The infrastructure has been built in Aranyod.



There is a magnificent panorama from the vineyard of Aranyod.



The belfry of Csáford

Csáford

Csáford has appeared first time in 1311, in our documents as Chafurd. Its parish already existed in 1333. In 1526 it was a part of Hegyesd fortress. The beautiful and peaceful town is beloved by foreigners, so many of them bought and renovated old houses. The wonderful town embraced by mountains is ideal for vine growing, due to the favourable climate and the local nectar is very tasty. In the town part a memorial was dedicated of World War, and the old school was remade into a church. The infrastructure has also developed well in the town, last time the network of piped gas has built up with the help of the citizens and the government. There are also meetings in Csáford, such as the elder ones are regularly celebrated in the village. The so-called “Lángosfesztivál” is a popular program.

Kisszentgrót

We could find it in the ancient sources, under the name of Kisutca and Polgárváros. Indeed it could be considered as a suburb of Szentgrót, which was formed and lived by the free citizens (craftsmen, traders) of the town. Therefore was the city's name “polgárváros”, to distinguish it from the castle and from the part where the serfs of the landlords lived. So its history could be considered identical to the history of Szentgrót. Because of the city's historical past, there are a lot of sights; the first among them is Romtorony, surrounded by a beautiful park. It is also worth watching the small church, which has constructed from an old school building a few years ago, and its patron saint is St. Gellért. Since few years' indulgence is also a tradition, it's on the next Sunday after Gellért day.



Harvest parade in Kísszentgrót.

Tekenye

The Tekénye clan of Vérbulcsú tribe occupied this countryside after the conquest of the land, and the town has preserved the name of this genus. In 1333 it had a church already, in 1720 it was under noble administration, and had 728 inhabitants. The village has undergone real progress in the past few years. The current leadership of the district -near developing of the infrastructure- pays particular attention to the fact that people do not move away. The famous festivals are held all in communities and events has been organize for the elderly people as well. On the traditional summer cake festival there is always a mass, but they also pay

particular attention to children: a playground have been developed to them, and before the holidays there is always a playing house. The temple of it had built in 1748, in the place of the old chapel in the

cemetery. In 1913, a Sanctuary has attached to it, including a beautiful altar, which is decorated with statues of St. István, St. László, and Apostles Peter and Paul.

Tüskeszentpéter



Terra Sanctus Petrus along the Nádasd River was mentioned in 1166, when John Knights were given a permit to settle an estate. In the XIII century the church of Pauline order is mentioned. It was possessed by -in addition to Paulian- by the Kanizsai family and other gentry families, the inhabitants were noblemen during the Turkish occupation too.

The number one attraction of Tüskeszentpéter is certainly the mill, well-known of its famous flour. The settlement is also a popular place of foreigners because it's peaceful and beautiful. In the village there are regular local events, among others the harvest parade is a great success in every year. The indulgence is also well-known, which is held on the next Sunday after Peter-Paul day. Its church was built in 1776 and was reconstructed in 1966-68. The story of it is quite troubled: during the Turkish invasion it had completely destroyed, the present building had been built from the ruins of the old one in the "new" village. To the top of the tower the walls are made of brick, the roof made of wood and on the top of it a huge iron cross stood. Its walls were white as snow and its altar portrayed the meeting of Peter and Paul. It also had two bells, which were destroyed by the military during the war. Since then, the former bell of Szentgrót is in the tower.

Zalakoppány

Koppan belonged to the ancient possessions of Bezerédi family from Lőrente tribe. The name of its priest was first mentioned in sources in 1419, so it had a church than. It was still inhabited during the time of the Turkish invasion; the owners were the Bezerédi, Fényes and Kozáry families.

The historic church could be found in the highest point of the settlement; there is a heroic monument in the courtyard of it. The beautiful and peaceful town is beloved by foreigners, so many of them bought and renovated old houses. These restorations have beautified the city. In the renovated cultural house more and more cultural events are held. The Day of Elderly People and Zalakoppányi wine competition is held in every year, in which everyone can taste the great flavoured wines. Indulgence is also a tradition; it's on the next Sunday after 15th August. The infrastructure has also developed well in the town.



There are several civil organizations in Zalakoppány, for example trainband.

Zalaudvarnok



Vouarnok was an ancient possession of Yürle tribe; in 1479 the Szentgirolti family had a house in Udvarnok. At the end of the XVII century it was among the possessions of Batthyány family, while in 1851 the estate belonged to Szentgrót domain of the family and it had 650 inhabitants. The infrastructure has also developed well in the town. The beautiful and peaceful town is beloved by foreigners, so many of them bought and renovated old houses. These restorations have beautified the city. The interesting styled church, - which was built by the help of the population of the village- is one of the sights of the city. It's connected with Zalaszentgrót not only with public road but with bicycle road as well. The indulgence is on the second day of Pentecost, but other programs are also organized.

The church of Zalaudvarnok

Germersheim, the twin-city

The twin-city of Zalaszentgrót is Germersheim in Germany. The leaders and arts groups of the two towns had met several times since the signing of the official contact.

It has twenty-two thousand inhabitants, its near Karlsruhe; it's about a thousand kilometres from Zalaszentgrót. It lies on the Rhine shore, in picturesque surroundings and its sights have fascinated us. It is important to highlight the long trench and fort system made of brick -rare even in Europe-, in which there are several institutions. The construction began in 1834, and the work lasted for 27 years. They could not be rejoiced in safety for a long time, because the system has become out of date due to the appearance of new defensive techniques. After the First World War a part of it had to be destroyed and it had loose its original function. Many buildings are in use today, even they have continuously renovated by the government. In this works for example Music School, which's wind instrument and Samba group delighted us with an unforgettable concert. The local university, called FASK, -famous for its (simultaneous) interpreter training - has partially housed in the old fort that is worldwide.

The citizens of Germersheim have regularly invited the citizens of Zalaszentgrót to the Fort festival, but the invitation is mutual because the group of the German settlement took part in the anniversary celebration of Zalaszentgrót in summer.



The mayor of Germersheim donated a flag to the city.

NaturAqua- A natural success story



It took for a long time until the Coca-Cola Hungary has found the right place for a high quality fountain. Professionals in 25 locations tested the quality and composition of water. Because of the favourable conditions of the water –obtained from 685 metres deep, filtered 14 thousand years ago- and the skilled local workforce and the picturesque surroundings, the company has chosen Zalaszentgrót. The Coca-Cola is the natural mineral water brand of Hungary. The NaturAqua appeared on store shelves in April 2003, at first sparkling and no-sparkling versions. The range has completed with mild and flavoured water in the summer of 2008.

The success of the product is illustrated by the annual double-digit growth of sales volume, which resulted the NaturAqua has become the leading brand of our country. Due to the constantly growing demand for mineral water, at the end of 2009, the capacity of NaturAqua bottling company has doubled to 600 million litres with the help of a 2.5 billion forints development.



The realization of the program -serves the job creating, regional development and competitiveness improvement- was supported by the European Union by five hundred million forints. The Coca-Cola Hungary has contributed to the success of Zalaszentgrót and NaturAqua more than HUF 10 billion investment until now. As a result of the developments the company has become one of the largest taxpayers of the city. The firm – the bottling factory and the commercial and distribution centre- employs about 150 employees of the city and the surrounding area.



Together we achieved – from bypass to playground

The Coca-Cola Hungary and Zalaszentgrót city are not only colleagues in work, but also in other areas of life. In accordance with the impacts of its activities, the company feels responsibility to preserve the environment and natural resources and the state of

infrastructure. As a food processing firm it aim to do a lifestyle promotion of active and health conscious life as well. In order to comply with the interests and expectations of the city and the community, the Coca-Cola Hungary and the government of Zalaszentgrót city work together.

Here is a summary of what has been achieved together in the past few years:

- New playground has been passed in the yard of the Csányi-Zrínyi Elementary School. The company has support the realization of this playground with 3 million HUF.
- In September 2008, the Tüskeszentpéter bypass has inaugurated, which cost 50 million forints – plays a significant part in relieving the city from truck traffic – and the Coca-Cola HBC Hungary Kft. has paid it.
- The temperature of the water rising from NaturAqua well is 33 degrees hot. To the bottling of it just 17 degrees Celsius water is needed, so the temperature difference has used for heating of the urban thermal transfer.
- The company supports dozens of jointly organized community and sports program in every year, only in the last two years it has contributed more than five million forints to them.



Excursions in the area

Hévíz



The world-famous thermal lake of Hévíz

It's a bright idea, if man towards Keszthely - according to the purpose - drops short or long term by Hévíz. Its easy to spend the time with a walk in the very organized and true jewel-like town, because it has a lot of attractions: monuments, flowers, and of course the inevitable Egregy church from Árpád-era. What is important too: in Hévíz there are many cultural events organized for the guests.

Sümeg

After Túrje, walking approximately 15 kilometres, we reach Sümeg, which is famous in particular for its castle. The special shaped Castle Hill is clearly visible from any point of the settlement, and castle games, tournaments, and of course the medieval dinners afford special experience.

Walking in Sümeg two beautiful churches should also be considered (in the so-called lower temple Maulbertsch murals can be seen), and the Bishop's palace.

Keszthely

Four miles away from Hévíz, is located on the coast of Lake Balaton, lays Keszthely, which has really a lot of attractions. Beautiful for example -with its many exhibitions and park- the Festetics Palace, the Georgikon Farm Museum, "Magyarok Nagyasszonya" Church, Balaton Museum, and of course you should detour to Fenékpusztá, where the old castle building, and the Roman excavations,

both could be seen. From there, it's only one remove from the Kis-Balaton, which enchanted everyone with its wonderful flora and fauna.

Of course, if we are talking about Keszthely- cultural capital of Lake Balaton- then it should be mention the opportunity of bathing, in the city three beaches are waiting for the guests. But of course, in the neighbour villages- Gyenesdiás, Vonyarcvashegy Balatongyörök- the tourists could also take a dip in Lake Balaton.



The Festetics Castle in Keszthely

Wandering in the Zala- KAR region

Zalaszentgrót is the centre of the Zala-KAR micro region as a town. The region is composed of twenty-four settlements; natural environment speaks for itself that is wonderful. Let's take a look at the villages in alphabetical order.

Almásháza is located in the middle of the Keszthely-Zalaegerszeg route. As a dead-end village it's peaceful and the air is fresh in the middle of the forest. Consequently it's a great base for excursions, hiking, fishing and hunting. It's famous for its chapel, which is built in the early 1900s, from the contributions of the residents.

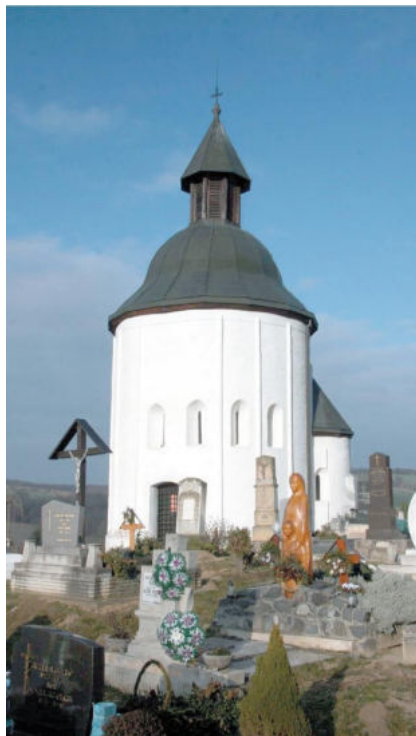
Batyk is located between Zalabér and Túrje, and the village is a major railway junction, its main attractions are the temple and the heroic monuments. It could be proud of its significant natural values, rare flowers and the so-called "grove of Batyk".

Döbröce is located in the foothills of Kovácsi-hill; the population is less than one hundred. The attraction of it is the playground consists of carved instruments. As a small village it also has accommodation, in the cottage there is a place for events.



The playground consists of carved instruments appears first for a traveller.

Dötk is the smallest village of the region, but in spite of this, the town still could be proud of many things. The villagers managed to take advantage of natural features, so the village became some kind of eco-centre. There are constant events in the eco-centre, but it's not the only reason why tourists visit the village. The village of Dötk is popular in the region because of its fishing lakes, forests and calmness.



Kallósd has historical past, as evidenced by the Gothic round church from Árpád-era, which rises on the cemetery hill. There are often classical music concerts in it. Small village with few inhabitants, but the hospitality is greater. It's a small village with few inhabitants, but the much greater the hospitality is. You could sense it, if you make a tour to the vineyards.

Kehidakustány has a significant number of inhabitants in the region, and it already has a national reputation because of its bath. It's known also of Ferenc Deák, because the "wise man of the nation" lived in this place for many years. His mansion has restored and in it a museum works.

In Kisgörbő there is a little more than two hundred inhabitants and its old mansions define the village picture. As the former Bezerédy mansion and the Lion Monument of World War near it.

Kisvásárhely is located not far from Sümeg; it's a dead-end settlement, a tiny, quiet village. Long ago it was visited because of Marcal River, which meandered in the village, but it has dried out. The national blue tour route passes through the village, nature lovers like to visit the village.

Kallósd is famous of the round church from Árpád-era.



Kehidakustány is famous for the Deák mansion



The memorial of World War II. in Kisgörbő.



The centre of Nagygörbő with the church.

Ligetfalva is also famous for its peacefulness. The village could be reached from Zalaegerszeg Keszthely-main road; its natural beauty is indescribable.

Mihályfa lies between Sümeg and Szalapa, its sights are relics of Roman history. In the old mansion institutions are operating today. József Róti is a well-known wood-carver, whose home gallery is often visited by guests.

Nagyörbő lies in the foothills of Kovácsi-hill, from where you can easily reach the unique basalt formations well-known in the country. The church is in the main street, not far from the recently renovated former Tolnay mansion.

Óhíd is near Fenyős River, its some kind of centre in its area. District notary, school, nursery and doctor's office are operating in the settlement. Its vineyard is popular among guests, between the programs stand out the “winter frightening” fire lightning of the Italian company.

Pakod is located in the middle of Sümeg- Zalaegerszeg route, it has a historical church, and the viticulture has centuries old traditions. To the attractions belongs to an "ancient" thatched roof cellar. The tourist teams often take their journey here.

Szalapa was first mentioned in written sources as Zalapha in 1438. The winding village situated between Mihályfa and Túrje has 250 people inhabitants. In recent years the village has changed a lot, its vineyard is attractive for tourists.

Tilaj could be reached from the main road no. 76, and it's not far from the Zalacsány lakes. in Its located to close proximity to forests and because of the natural beauty of it many people prefer to visit it for hiking.

Túrje is also a kind of centre in the region. With its 2000 inhabitants it's the largest town in the region. The main attraction of the village is the church from Árpád-era; on its wall you could see the fresco of Saint László Legend. The monastery is next to the church, which operates a retirement home. Its school has rebuilt and extended recently.



The main sight of Túrje is the church from Árpád-era with the Saint László Legend



Vindornyaszőlős. The stone corridor is a unique natural formation.

Vindornyaszőlős is one of those villages in the region which could boast the most natural value. There are many tourists -because of the basalt formations of Kovács-hill, the peat bog, the rock corridor, the large number of rare plants and animals - who could wander the village and its area on established study path. The utilization of peat bog is in progress.

Zalabér lies in the road between Zalaszentgrót and Zalaegerszeg and its past is more than eight hundred years old. Its church is a historical monument; its vineyard is considered, as part of the Zala wine route. The chapel of St. Antal is one of the centres of tourism.

Zalavég is located at the border of Zala and Vas County; it was first mentioned in written sources in 1247. Its church is a historical monument. Because it's close to Szajki lakes, it has a major tourist traffic transit.

Sénye



Sénye is between Zalaszentgrót and Zalaszentlászló, its available for a long, winding access road. The dead-end village - which gets its name from the Senye personal name-, was first mentioned in written sources in 1429. The small town -with a population of about forty - lies in a picturesque place with vineyards on the hills and forests replacing one another. Because of the rich beast population it's a perfect place for hunters. The village with its tiny peasant houses, aesthetical new buildings fitting into the landscape, and with its good air has a calm, pleasant, atmosphere. The belfry and the Ecumenical Hill Chapel should be mentioned among the sights other things.

The belfry of Sénye characteristically determines the image of the village.

Sümegecsehi

Sümegecsehi lies in the foot of Kovácsi- hill easily accessible from the roads no.8 and no.84. If instead of the programs of nearby Sümeg, Hévíz, Keszthely and Tapolca you would like to rest in a nice, pleasant environment, you do not mind it if you visit to our village with only 660 inhabitants.

There are gentle hillsides walking and hiking paths are leading on them, the atmosphere and tranquillity of rural life can be felt everywhere. But you could not to be bored here! Music festivals are take place frequently. Mountain cellars offer great entertainment opportunities to small and large companies and local hunters willing to organize hunting.

The folk music, dance, theatre fans shouldn't be bored too: our local groups often hold presentations.

The hospitable inhabitants of the village are waiting for travellers, especially who wish to stay here!



Left: The centre of Sümegcsehi with the World War Memorial and the church.
 Right: The travellers are briefed by specific traffic signs in the village.

Zalaszentlászló

Its located north from Keszthely, Hévíz, in the Zala River valley between gently rolling hills. The population is 835 people. It's a kind of agricultural settlement; there are no industrial plants there.

The village gets its name of the church dedicated to St. László. It was mentioned in written sources in 1333. One of the main tourist attractions is the Village House, which was built in 1985 according to plans by Imre Makovecz. It's organically connected to an eight-room guesthouse that could accommodate 22 guests. The Makovecz style could also be discovered in newly built houses, it gives a special atmosphere for the settlement.

The proximity of hot water bathes of Hévíz, Keszthely and Kehidakustány makes it attractive to all visitors. The estate buying of foreigners is significant.

In the village of Szentmihályfalva, -which is a part of Zalaszentlászló (in the bank of Zala river)-, operates a farm dealing with horse-tourism, they offer riding lessons, carriage tours and riding tours to visitors. The placement of guests is served by 14 rooms, restaurant with seats 60 and a big kitchen.

In the village part called Gyülevész is the Hotel Óperenciás, operating since 2008 May, and its waiting for families who wish to relax.





One of the cosy public squares of Zalaszentlászló in front of the village house.

Zalacsány

Zalacsány is 15 km away from Lake Balaton, 6 from Hévíz and 26 from the Zalakaros spa. Its topography is interesting and spectacular. Its amazing forests and the beautiful valley of the Zala River offer enjoyable attractions. The small lake surrounded by forests provides an excellent opportunity not only for anglers, because the water is also qualified for swimming.

The village -approximately one thousand inhabitants- has a medieval origin, until the middle of 1800s it was owned by Csány family - except for the time of the Turkish invasion. The most famous man of the village- who was born in 1848- is the minister of Szemere government: Csány László, who was executed in Budapest after the defeat of war of independence. Later in the place of his birthplace the Batthyány castle was built in neo baroque-classical style in 1913.

Children's home was operating in one of the wings of the castle at the end of the 80's. After several years of dereliction in 2000 the renovation of the entire building has completed. There's a hotel with own thermal spa, which is unique in the country, many new hotels were built next to it. Not far from it the castle Malatinszky is waiting for the guests, it is also operating as a hotel. The nearby lake was filled in 1991 and it's waiting for anglers. In summer, the "leisure park" is very popular. In the outskirts of Zalacsány Irish investors have started to build a golf course.



In the centre of Zalacsány has recently finished the new village hall.

A Practical Guide

How to approach Zalaszentgrót:

By car: For those who come from Budapest there are several alternatives, but the easiest and quickest way is the M7 highway. Turning off the highway in Balatonszentgyörgy, than Fenékpusztá, Sármellék and Zalacsány is the direction. Those who arrive from Zalaegerszeg in Sümegi road have to go off in Zalabér if they would like to travel to Zalaszentgrót. The city is 43 km from the Austrian border (Körmend, Vasvár touching), 192 from Budapest, 28 from Zalaegerszeg and Keszthely.

By bus: In the county the first bus run to the capital is from Zalaszentgrót. The long-distance bus services from Veszprém County and several other counties toward Zalaegerszeg are almost all affect Zalaszentgrót. The traffic on this route is quite good, on average a bus start by one and a half hour. There are also several bus connections to Keszthely.

By train: In Zalaszentgrót the side line of Zalabér has ceased, so rail transport is not possible.

By airplane: The FlyBalaton Airport which is between Sármellék and Zalavár (about 30 miles away from Zalaszentgrót), of whose operation you could get information in telephone and in the internet.

Commercial information and other services

The city -about 8400 inhabitants- offers a wide assortment of food and consumer goods, there is a shop network and markets are held every Thursday at the square next to the church. The traveller in the city centre could choose from several restaurants, but dining is possible also in other parts of the city. Many vine-growers provide several specialties, and there is an opportunity for wine tasting and dinner in their cellars.

In the town a hotel and several guest houses offer accommodation.

You could find bank automats near K&H and OTP banks in the town.

In Zalaszentgrót you could find the petrol station in Csáfordi road, it is open from 6-22 pm.

Medical service: 83/360-218.

Fire Department: 83/560-130.

Police: 83/360-043.



