



The New York Palace Hotel will open a conference centre and ice rink at the end of the year

Budapest offers top event appeal at an affordable price. Ben Moore reports

Ranked sixth in the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) league table, Budapest may look up to European rivals according to the statistics but when it comes to cost, event organisers will tell you the Hungarian capital has a major trump card to play.

Last year the number of conferences taking place in Hungary rose 10 per cent. Centrally located in Europe,

Hungary for business

thebuyer's eye

"The experience in Budapest is comparable to any city in Europe but value for money is the city's big strength. Take hotel bedrooms, for example, you get a bigger room size than Paris but for 75 per cent of the price.

Also the culture and attractions are a big plus. There are plenty of venues for external dinners, such as museums and castles. And you never feel there are any safety issues for delegates moving around the city.

Perhaps four-star hotels are harder to come by and many

of them are quite tired, but the five-star properties are often more affordable than four-star hotels in other cities.

Our clients are really keen on Budapest because it is much cheaper for the level of service you get."



Joe Bland, WorldEvents

Budapest has excellent short-haul air access from the UK through low cost carriers as well as BA and Malev.

The city boasts bags of history and culture, spread out either side of the River Danube. The hilly Buda side is home to the UNESCO Castle District with its narrow streets and mixture of medieval and neo-classical buildings almost totally reconstructed after the bombings of WWII. The flat Pest side offers wide boulevards and Art Deco influences.

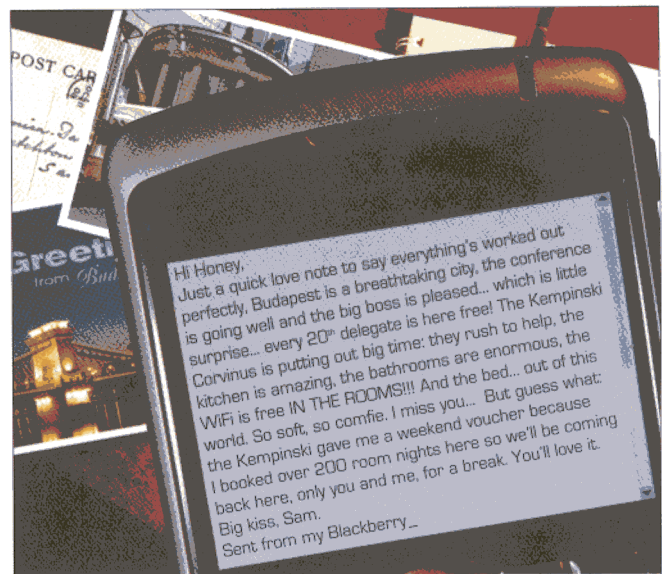
The city is compact, easy to move

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WHO to contact

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BUDAPEST

 thebuyer's eye

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around, safe and welcoming, with English widely spoken within the tourism sector.

The former Continental Hotel will re-open in June as Continental Hotel Zara following renovation. The 272-bedroom, four-star superior property will feature a roof garden available for events, plus four meeting rooms and a boardroom.

Boscolo Hotels is opening a



Try something different in this intriguing city

conference centre at the five-star New York Palace Hotel at the end of the year. It will feature an atrium piazza that will house a skating rink during winter. There will be seven event rooms accommodating 20 to 600 delegates.

Meeting facilities at the Kempinski Corvinus have been enhanced with two new rooms for up to 100 people, while all 402 bedrooms at the InterContinental Budapest have been renovated.

Heralded as the "largest hotel and covered amusement spa complex in central Europe", the four-star superior hotel at the Ramada Resort has 261 bedrooms and a conference centre for

'The amusement spa features 17 swimming pools'

1,000. The amusement spa features 17 swimming pools under a huge glass dome.

The Budapest Congress and World Trade Centre offers a 319-room Novotel connected to the congress centre. The main auditorium can accommodate up to 1,800 and there are eight further meeting rooms for up to 300.

Europa Congress Centre is a 15-minute drive into the Buda hills. There are eight rooms for up to 470.

The riverside Palace of Arts is a performing arts venue that can be used for conferences. The main concert hall seats 1,700 and the dance theatre 450. At night the exterior is illuminated

"Budapest is a truly motivational destination, with an excellent infrastructure that provides a great platform for creative communications, ensuring that the destination wows the audience.

There are some excellent DMCs and an array of hotel options to choose from. Cost-effective and intriguing, it is an understandably popular destination for incentives.

AddingValue recently ran a three-day incentive to Budapest, which was chosen due to its wealth of programme options, excellent value for money and ease of flight access.

A site inspection quickly confirmed the Four Seasons as the preferred hotel – and its location, facilities and service were impeccable.

The programme allowed participants to pre-select activities including a dip in the Szechenyi public baths, a visit to the House of Terror museum and a city tour with private performance at the Opera. A gala dinner took place at the prestigious Hungarian Academy of Science, a very traditional venue just two minutes on foot from the hotel and with views across the Danube to the floodlit castle."



Tina Morris, AddingValue


making the rooftop terrace overlooking the Danube a striking venue for a cocktail reception.

Other unusual venues include The House of Terror, a museum about communist Budapest in the 1950s and the Fascist party years during WWII housed in the former Hungarian KGB headquarters.

Just off Hero's Square is the famous art nouveau Grundel Restaurant which can host gala dinners for up to 400 people.

Budapest's most famous thermal baths are at Gellert Spa. The cathedral-like building can host gala dinners in the lobby area. ■



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