

Here are some helpful hints for traveling in Uzhhorod

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Last updated November, 2004

Visas:

For information on visa requirements and to download a visa application, go to the Ukrainian Embassy's homepage:

<http://www.ukraineinfo.us/contact/contact.html>

International Air Transportation:

United-Lufthansa, Northwest-KLM, Delta- Malev (Hungarian Airlines), SAS, and British Air all fly into Budapest, Hungary, which is the closest major airport to Uzhhorod. You may check two bags not exceeding 70 pounds each. Place legible address labels inside as well as outside your luggage. Lost luggage is not uncommon -- be sure to have essentials and a change of clothes in your carry-on.

In the Budapest airport baggage claim area, you may want to exchange a small amount of money for Hungarian forints. After clearing customs in Budapest, you will see the Airport Mini-bus desk in the main lobby. Tell the clerk at the Mini-bus desk where you want to go (which train station or hotel), and they will take you anywhere in Budapest for one low price (round trip tickets available). If you want to spend the night and do not have reservations at a hotel, they have a list of hotels of various prices, from about \$50 to over \$200, and they will call and make a reservation if you wish.

Budapest Hotels:

Budapest has all the American chains (Hilton, Hyatt, Radisson, etc.), as well as local hotels in all price ranges. CSCA members who have been to Budapest or your travel agent can give you suggestions. The Budapest webpage lists many local hotels, most of which can be booked in advance through your travel agent. There are also numerous pensiones and hostels in Budapest.

Budapest sightseeing:

You will almost certainly want to spend a day or two in Budapest, either when arriving or before flying home. Places of special interest on the Buda side of the Danube are the Citadel and Castle Hill (including St. Mathias Cathedral, Fisherman's Bastion, the National Gallery of Art, and charming shops and restaurants). On the Pest side of the river, take the tram or subway to Heroes Square (and adjacent art museum and park). The promenade along the Danube has lots of vendors and is adjacent to a pedestrian shopping district. The architecture of the Parliament Buildings is magnificent, both outside and inside.

If you do plan to do some sightseeing in Budapest, ask your hotel where to buy a pass for the city transportation system. You can buy books of 10 tickets, or one-

day or 3-day passes good on subway, tram, and buses. They are sold only at specific places and are NOT available from drivers. Be sure to validate your pass or ticket when boarding (any rider will be happy to show you how). If you get off without a validated ticket and are caught (they check randomly), the fine is substantial.

If you take a taxi anywhere in Budapest, take a registered cab only (the hotel personnel can help). Americans are often overcharged, so be sure you and the driver understand destination and price before getting in the taxi.

Budapest to Chop (Ukraine) Train:

This is the closest stop to Uzhhorod for the train from Hungary. The afternoon train from Budapest to Chop (Ukraine) leaves from KELETI Station in the afternoon (schedule changes frequently, but time of departure is always between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.) and arrives in Chop about 5-1/2 hours later. If you choose to spend the night in Budapest and travel to Uzhhorod in the morning, the train leaves at approximately 6 a.m. from NYUGOTI Station, arriving Chop early afternoon. If you are taking the 6 a.m. train, it is best to purchase your ticket the previous evening. You will need to purchase your ticket at either station at the INTERNATIONAL TICKET window. There is not a baggage car, so you must carry your luggage on. Be sure you get in the correct car -- both trains disconnect some of the cars half-way and they go to Romania! A conductor can direct you to the correct car before you board.

If you arrive in Chop by train and have not arranged for someone to pick you up at the station, you will need to get a taxi to your hotel in Uzhhorod (about 14 km). Agree on the price before getting into the taxi.

Uzhhorod Hotels (reservations can be made through sister city contacts):

- The Uzhhorod Hotel is on the Uzh River and in an excellent location for walking to just about anywhere. Elevator. They are in the process of remodeling, and some updated rooms are available now. Restaurant.
- Atlan Hotel is a nice, small private hotel in the city center.
- Duet Hotel is a lovely private hotel with a great restaurant, but the location is not convenient if you want to be able to walk to the city center.
- The Zakarpatya (Transcarpathia) Hotel is the Intourist Hotel. Restaurant, coffee shop, etc. Elevator.
- The Druzhba (Friendship) Hotel is the old Communist Party hotel. Restaurant. Pleasant location on a hill, but not the most convenient to city center. Elevator.

Additional small private hotels are opening, so options are increasing. Hotel prices change frequently.

Hotels in Uzhhorod do not provide wash cloths, so take your own if you use one. A transformer (for European voltage -- 2 round prongs) is necessary for any electrical appliances you use. European-style toilet paper (unbleached, not soft)

is provided in the hotels, but many public restrooms do not have toilet paper, so take a roll or lots of kleenex. Also take bug repellent in summer/fall. Do not drink tap water unless you have filtered it with a high grade camping filter. Bottled mineral water and cartons of fruit juices can be purchased at hotels and kiosks.

Money:

Uzhhorod is primarily a cash economy. There are ATMs throughout the city. It is easy to change dollars into local currency as long as the bills are crisp and clean and have no marks or tears. Inflation is a problem, so it is best to only exchange currency for a couple of days at a time. Ukrainian currency has no value outside the country, so convert back to dollars (or Euros) before leaving.

Sightseeing:

In Uzhhorod, be sure to visit the castle and the outdoor museum of folk architecture, the Greek Catholic Cathedral, the Synagogue (now Philharmonia), the Russian Orthodox Church, and art galleries and music/dance performances. The best way to get around in Uzhhorod is by foot, but taxis are plentiful and cheap if you prefer to ride (most taxi drivers do not speak English, however). Renting cars/drivers/interpreters is possible through Intourist (offices at Zakarpatya Hotel) but expensive.

Other sights of interest nearby include Nevitsky Castle ruins (just outside Uzhhorod), Mukacheve castle and monastery, Zakarpatya Sanitorium, and lovely forests. Longer trips might include the salt mines, Lake Sinovir, or the picturesque high mountain villages.

Jet Lag:

Uzhhorod time is 10 hours ahead of Corvallis (noon in Corvallis is 10 p.m. in Uzhhorod), so jet lag may be a major problem. Some folks swear by melatonin, some get prescriptions from their physicians, some just let it run its course. In any case, there are many things you can do to make jet lag more manageable. During the transAtlantic flight, avoid coffee and alcohol, and sleep if you can. If you have a short layover in your European gateway city, try to get outside into the sunlight and take a walk. Spending the night in Budapest before the ground travel to Uzhhorod is helpful for some. When you arrive in Uzhhorod, force yourself to be on their time. If you must nap during your first couple of days, set your alarm and keep the nap short (an hour or less), and if you drink, limit your alcohol intake. Be out in the natural daylight as much as possible -- the sun will help reset your body clock.