With each visit Pannonhalma shows us a different face, since each season offers events, which make it worth coming back.

Our religious feasts in spring – Saint Benedict’s day, Easter, Whitsunday, the Revitalisation of Nature in the Arboretum and Herbal Garden

Blessing of our vineyards on Saint Orban’s Day
Lavender blossoming and harvest in summer
Events held at Viator Restaurant and on the tasting terrace of the Abbey Winery

Arcus Temporum – the art festival of Pannonhalma
Family programs in the Monastery
Herb blessing in August
Saint Stephen’s feast
Autumn harvest in the six vineyards of Abbey Winery
October Organ Concert
Saint Martin’s Day – family programs
Christmas Organ Concert
Saint John’s Day wine blessing
Saint Vincent’s Day – grape blessing
Dear Visitors,

No matter from which direction you approach our place, “like a royal throne, Pannonhalma hovers” in front of your eyes, as the Hungarian poet Ferenc Kazinczy wrote in his first impression of Saint Martin’s monastery. This “town built on a hill” welcomes everyone with love and presents its visitors with its beauty, peace, and sometimes indescribable secrets, at least for a short time.

The huge wrought iron gate of the monastery is open to arriving guests, demonstrating the hospitality of the local monks. The Benedictine community, living according to the Christian mission, has been “praying and working” for one thousand five hundred years in Europe, and for more than a thousand years in Hungary. We would like to reveal to our dear visitors the soul, architectural beauty and spiritual richness of this one thousand-year-old place, with which you can become familiar on our historical walk, and we would like to draw your attention to our winery, restaurant and herb garden which has recently been reborn.

I wish from my heart what you see and experience in Pannonhalma, remains with you in your everyday life and brings you peace and joy.

AȘZTRIK VĂRSZEGI
Archabbot

The Archabbey, which has a history of more than a thousand years, was built on the almost 300 metre high hill located at the meeting point of Bakony and the Little Hungarian Plain, and is easily visible from a distance. Within the walls of the imposing complex, now the same order of Benedictine monks live and work, following the intellectuality of the Rule of Saint Benedict of Nursia (480–547), for whom Grand Prince Géza, the father of King Saint Stephen founded the monastery in 996. The Benedictine monks who lived in the monastery which was erected in honour of Saint Martin of Tours, played a significant role in both the establishment of the Christian Europe of the Middle Ages and in the handing down of classic civilisation. Besides its pastoral role, education became central to the life of the order from the beginning of the 19th century. The modern name of Pannonhalma also dates back to this time, when it first emerged in the correspondence of the poet Ferenc Kazinczy and the Benedictine monk Izidor Guzmics, as the Hungarian name for the Latin Mons Sacer Pannoniae. The Archabbey of Pannonhalma and its surroundings, a highly significant religious, cultural and educational centre of Hungary, was pronounced part of the World Heritage in 1996.
The monks have time for God. They gather three times a day for common prayer and worship in Pannonhalma. The monks take the life of Jesus and his followers as their example of community life. Christ is head of the community. According to their belief, the abbot is the surrogate of Christ in the monastery, who guides the individual monks and the community in their life-long search for God. The monks highly appreciate this world but do not consider it as the final destination. This is the first station of their eternal life proceeding towards the God's Holy Realm. They are willing to forego marriage, wealth and vindication of self-will here on the Earth for their forthcoming lives. Written at the beginning of the century, the Rules of Saint Benedict VI can be summarised thus „Ora et labora et lege – pray, work and read”. The same ideal still pervades everyday life today. The monks of the monastery perform numerous services. They carry out pastoral work in the communities of the region, teach and educate at universities, secondary schools and hostels and run a social care home. The enterprises and institutions provide employment for more than three hundred people. The saying of Saint Benedict is vindicated in the various services: „Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus! That in all things God may be glorified!”
The red marble gates built at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, opening from the main nave of the Basilica on the right and left sides, imitating the Roman style, lead to the rectangular space of the Crypt covered by cross vaults resting on six pillars and cantilevers. The pillars rest on wide octagonal base plates, the column heads and cantilevers are covered in a thick budding leaf motif. In the Western dome stages the ornamentation is enriched by symbolic carved wooden figures comprising human heads. Bays have been sunk into both side walls of the Eastern dome. One is an armarium bay (storage place for books and liturgy instruments) while the other is a lavabo (small hand-washing basin). On the straight closing wall of the Crypt three lunettes can be found. According to legend the throne-like seating bay ornamented with three lobes covered in red marble beneath the stairs of the Crypt is the chair of Saint Stephen; however it was more likely an abbot’s throne.

The greater part of today’s Saint Martin Basilica of Pannonhalma, was built at the beginning of the 13th century during the reign of Abbot Uros (1207–1243) in early Gothic style. Recent archaeological findings have shed light on the wall remains of earlier constructions. It was most likely consecrated in 1224. The Basilica, which is divided into four well separated parts, is fifty metres long with three naves, carries the imprint of three architectural workshops. In addition to the work of Hungarian masters, Upper-Rhein and North-French influences can be seen within the building. The church was extended during the regulation of King Matthias, the star-domed ceiling of the sanctum, the Eastern end of the naves and the Saint Benedict Chapel were all built at that time. The interior was completely ruined during the Turkish era. Significant renovation commenced in the 1720’s during the reign of Archabbot Benedek Sajghó, then later in the 1860’s under the leadership of Ferenc Storno. In the present day the interior of the church was renewed based on the designs of the British architect John Pawson, in order to provide a worthy place for the monks’ liturgy after the Second Vatican Council.
The Library has been an important part of the monastery since its foundation. According to a certificate from the era of Saint László (around 1090), by the end of the 11th century 80 volumes (approximately 200 works) were registered in Pannonhalma. In 1786 when the order was dismissed, the collection amounted more than 4000 volumes. In 1802 only one part of the books were returned to the monastery's library. Today the Library has dozens of codices, and holds approximately three hundred ancient printings. It currently numbers somewhere in the region of four hundred thousand books. The Classicist building is now one of the main sights of Pannonhalma. The foundation stone of the new library was laid down in 1825. From 1832 an oval room was built based on the designs of János Páckh and side rooms were adjusted to it. The frescoes were painted by Josef Klieber of Vienna. On the four sides of the ceiling of the oval room the symbols of the four medieval university faculties can be seen: Law, Theology, Medicine and Arts. The gypsum statues of Saint Stephen and Francis I who re-instated the order are also the work of Klieber. The library's interior reflects the enlightened intellect of the 19th century as the temple of science. The main figure in the ceiling fresco is Pallas Athene (Minerva), the Greek goddess of Science. On the two closing walls of the hall the portraits of great classic Greco-Roman artists and scientists can be seen. The nine portraits of the main nave show religious and worldly representatives of Hungarian science and literature. The library's interior, designed with clean structures, rational temperance and generous elegance is a building with one of the most harmonious interiors.

The archive is as old as the monastery. The manuscript documents related to the operation, institutions and agriculture of the Archabbey and the Benedictine Order in Hungary are kept within its walls. Owing to the careful treatment, the majority of the early diplomas survived, thus Pannonhalma houses one of the richest and most valuable collections of the diplomas originating from the first centuries of statehood in Hungary, whose first piece is the monastery's charter issued by King Saint Stephen (1001). In addition to three diplomas issued by King Saint Ladislaus, the first linguistic record of the Hungarian language is kept here: the deed of foundation of Abbey Tihany (1055) and the first papal document in Hungary, the bull issued by Pope Paschalis II issued in 1102. The archive is open to researchers and groups arriving for taking part in activities of education in archives.

Our oldest written examples of Hungarian language with Hungarian words fitted to the Latin text, King Saint Stephen's letter of decree dated in 1001 and the foundation letter of the Tihany Abbey (1055) are preserved in the archives of the Archabbey.
Visiting opening hours:

21st March – 31st May
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
closed on Mondays

1st June – 30th September
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
1st October – 10th November
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
closed on Mondays

11th November – 20th March
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
closed on Mondays

TriCollis Foglalási Központ
(Booking Centre)
H-9090 Pannonhalma, Vár 1.
Tel.: +36 96 570 191
Fax: +36 96 570 192
E-mail: info@osb.hu
Web: www.bences.hu

For information about
the programs,
visiting opening hours
of the Archabbey
and accommodation please call:
+36 96 570 191 all year round.

On the back page: Extract from the Letters Patent of the Pannonhalma Archabbey:

“But I wish to add that the monastery shall remain free of any harassment and the monks,
if any of their abbots leave, shall have the right to freely select a new abbot,
to sanctify him by any bishop according to their liking and
they shall be free to take up the orders from a bishop anywhere.”

Translation of Géza Érszegi
"ADHUC AUTEM SUBIUNGENS DICO, SIT ID IPSUM MONASTERIUM AB OMNI INQUIETUDINE SEMOTUM, HABEANTQUE MONACHI POST TRANSITUM SUI CUIUSQUE ABBATIS ALIUM ABBATEM SECURITER ELIGENDI ET A QUOCUNQUE VELINT EPISCOPO CONSECRANDI EUM; SITQUE ILLIS LICITUM ORDINES ACCIPERE QUOVIS LOCO ET A QUOCUNQUE EPISCOPO."

"