

TRADITIONAL



ARTS AND CRAFTS

TRADITIONAL HUNGARIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS



TURÓCZINÉ VARGA ILDIKÓ

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HUNGARIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

Hungary is a small country in Central Europe. It is located in the Carpathian Basin with a population of less than 10 million, but another 2,5 million Hungarians reside within the seven countries surrounding its borders, and another 2 million Hungarians live in other parts of the world. These people speak Hungarian – known as Magyar.

Hungary has a rich and diverse heritage of music, dance, costume, arts and crafts, gastronomy, and even the conventions of naming; Hungarians place the family name before the given name, as is the case with most peoples of eastern and south-eastern Asia.

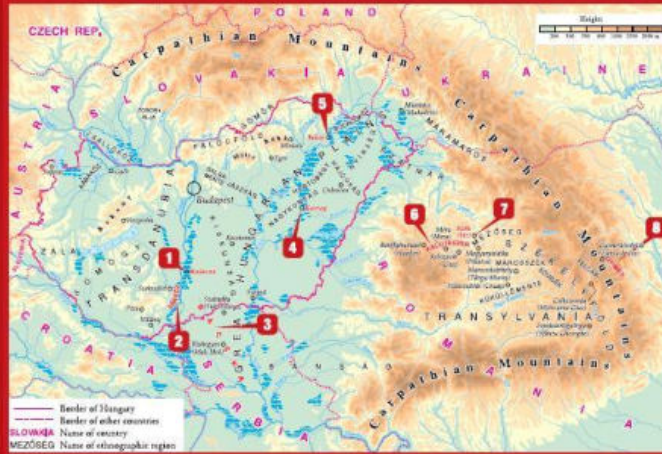
At the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, the semi-normandic Magyar people migrated from the Eurasian Steppe to Central Europe. Hungarian history and culture was influenced by the invasions of the Mongols in the 13th century and that of the Ottoman Turks in the 16th century, the Habsburg rulers from 16th to 1918. Hungary was dominated by Nazi Germany during WWII and the Soviet Union from 1945 until 1989. Hungarian Jews and various groups of Roma people also had a great influence on Hungary's culture, gastronomy, music, dance, culture, arts and crafts.



HUNGARIAN CULTURAL REGIONS

Distinctive cultural areas featured in the *Hungarian Heritage* program include:

1. **Kalocsa:** the floral patterns of Kalocsa have become national symbols of Hungarian folk art
2. **Sárkőz:** renowned for its distinctive decorative arts, costumes, and dance traditions
3. **Bácska:** a multiethnic region known for its culinary arts and fertile farmland
4. **Karcag:** a large town in the Northern Great Plain region, known for its traditional shepherd culture
5. **Tokaj:** declared a World Heritage Site in 2002, Tokaj is famous for its Tokaj Aszú dessert wine
6. **Kalotaszeg:** best known for its living traditions of folk music, folk dress, and painted furniture
7. **Szék:** since 1970, Szék has been at the center of the folk revival and táncosház (dance house) movements
8. **Gyimes:** due to its remote location, Gyimes has preserved much of its cultural heritage



HUNGARIAN CULTURAL REGIONS

FOLK ARTS AND CRAFTS

FOLK EMBROIDERY

The techniques and embroidery styles vary according to their base material and yarn type. In the 18th century, free-hand floral designs of various stitch types began replacing the older geometric motifs. This led to the development of several distinctive regional and local styles of embroidery; the best-known of these come from Kalocsa, Kalotaszeg and Mezőkövesd.

TRADITIONAL



ARTS AND CRAFTS



FOLK JEWELLERY

Jewelry has long been an essential element in the traditional dress of Hungarian girls and women.





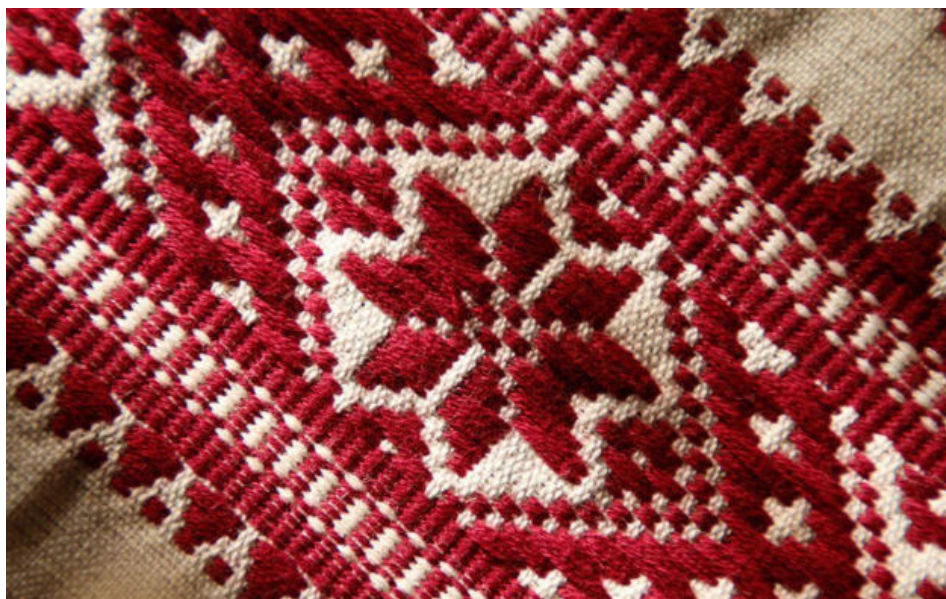
LEATHERWORK

Hungarian leatherworkers fashion leather into footwear, harnesses, and saddles. Horse wranglers use a lasso-like rope to separate a horse from the herd. The most famous tool of the trade is the 'karikásosstor', a whip woven of leather strings.



TEXTILES

Weaving textiles has long played an important role in the economy of rural families. The various textiles shaped and patterned differently for significant events. For instance, red textiles were placed inside children's cribs to ward off the evil eye.





WEAVING

Red and blue remain the most traditional colours in Hungarian folk weaving even though other colours have been added more recently. These textiles often feature stars, flowers, and birds, surrounded by geometrical designs typically with right angles.



HATS

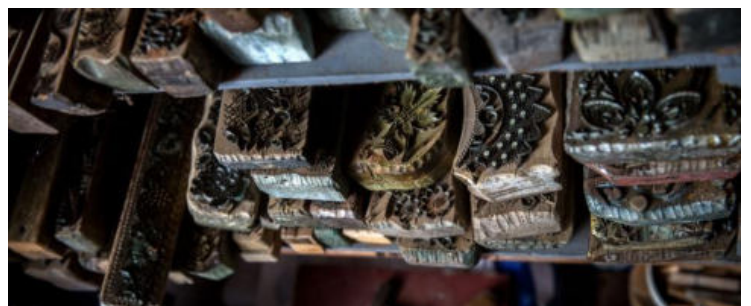
The size, shape, form, decoration, and accessories of hats were one powerful indicators of occupation and social status in Hungary.





BLUE-DYEING

Blue-dyeing is the art of pressing designs that resist colour onto white cotton printing blocks and immersing the fabric in an indigo bath until the cloth attain the desired shade of blue. Today, approximately, ten families in Hungary still practice blue-dyeing, but heir work reflects variations in colours and patterns based on geographic region and family traditions.





COPPERSMITHING

Many Roma people were specialized in this trade, travelling the countryside to repair equipment used in kitchens and bakeries.



HORN CARVING

Herdsmen have long used animal horns to make various tools, utensils and decorative objects. For added decorations, they carve geometric or floral ornamentations and colour them yellow with citric acid.



WICKERWORK

Wickerwork has existed for centuries in Hungary. Baskets, trays, stands and various holders are made by weaving together split rods of willow. Wickerwork is durable and strong and it can even support the weight of a human body.



THATCHED ROOFS

Thatching was the prevalent method for constructing roofs for homes and farm buildings in the rural Hungary. These roofs are easy to repair and resistant to wind and rain. They can keep the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter.



FOLK OVENS

Folk ovens may come in different shapes of square, round or barrel, and they may accommodate 3 to 8 loaves of bread. The hearth opens into the kitchen and the bank around the edge allows space for cooked items to cool. A small corner nook may also serve as a sleeping place for children and elderly people.



HUNGARIAN CUISINE

There is no probably other country in the world where they use as much sweet paprika powder as Hungarians do. However, it has not always been like this. In the early Middle Ages, Hungarian cuisine was well-known for its wide variety of dishes. The royal cooks used an astonishing range of spices and herbs including ginger, thyme, sage, anise and even saffron.

TRADITIONAL



ARTS AND CRAFTS

In the 16th and 17th centuries, Ottoman rule brought drastic changes to the country as the invaders took most of the cattle from the peasants. They left only the pigs as Muslims do not eat pork. This is one reason why this type of meat became the main ingredient in most of our traditional recipes.

The Mongol invasion, the Habsburg Monarchy and especially the Communist era had a significant cultural influence. Quantity became more important than quality and slowly the standard of the Hungarian cuisine began to deteriorate. In the 19th century, the paprika powder made from ground peppers became a key element in Hungary's spiciest dishes such as fish soup (*halászlé*) and goulash (*gulyás*).

It was only in the 2000s that the gastronomic revolution reached Hungary and put an end to this gradual decline and helped to preserve what was left from our centuries-old traditions.



Outdoor cauldron cooking is popular in Hungary. Hungarians mostly prepare goulash: a beef stew dating back to the Middle Ages. Common folk added paprika to make stew (*pörkölt*), while upper classes softened the dish with sour cream and side dishes as egg noddles (*nokedli*).



GINGERBREAD

MAKING

Gingerbread has long been a sweet canvas for expressing Hungarian cultural heritage. The dough of flour and boiled honey is baked into hand-carved wooden molds and decorated with piped-on icing of egg whites and powdered sugar.

TRADITIONAL



ARTS AND CRAFTS



MUSIC AND DANCE

The folk music of Hungary is one of the country's most important expressions of national identity. Hungary's geographic location, together with a cultural heritage that bears influences from central Asia to western Europe, has long supported diverse and lively musical traditions. The documentation and scholarly analysis of Hungarian folk music began in the late nineteenth century and achieved spectacular results, thanks to the efforts of composers Béla Bartók (1881-1945) and Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967). They not only established scientific methods for collecting and interpreting Hungary's folk music traditions; they also composed and disseminated folk songs. Their goal, as Kodály wrote in 1906, was to recognize "the basic layer of our folk music, the rock upon which a culture can be built." Today the repertoire of recorded folk tunes numbers some 300,000.

In recent decades, there has been a surge of interest in folk music. The proliferation of dance houses (*táncházak*) in urban areas is helping to ensure the survival of traditional melodies and to maintain the vitality of folk dance and music.





DANCE CULTURE IN HUNGARY

There are five basic types of traditional dance found throughout the Carpathian Basin: round dances (*karikázó*); jumping dances (*ugrós*); men's dances (*legényes*); slow and fast couples dances (*csárdás*); and stick dances (*botoló*), which are vestiges of weapon dances.

Each of these five basic dance types varies, depending on its geographic region. For instance, the dances found in the regions of the Danube and Tisza rivers tend to be simpler and more lighthearted than the more complex dances of Transylvania (Romania).

Solo dances and couples dances are typically freeform, which means there are countless possibilities for individual improvisation. This feature distinguishes Hungarian dance culture from that of western Europe and the Balkans, and it accounts for its immense richness.