

# City of Smiles: How 'Dental Central' Budapest saved me €17,500

Dental tourism in Hungary

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Ed Finn (inset). Budapest image: Deposit

Dental tourism is booming in Hungary. Ed Finn found out exactly what it takes to get that winning smile.

## Set the mood

Budapest brings many things to mind - thermal spas, hearty cuisine, classical opera. Lately, you can add medical tourism to that list.

In need of a serious oral overhaul, I took a look at Europe's 'Dental Central' after checking out prices in Ireland . It quickly became clear that, short of re-mortgaging my apartment, the treatment wasn't going to be viable here.

A future of cracked and popping veneers seemed inevitable, until a colleague returned from Budapest, wowing us all with his winning new smile. A brief chat about 'Attila the Gum' and the costs involved, and I was Budapest-bound for a full mouth reconstruction.

I wasn't alone, either. Visit Hungary estimates some 2,500 Irish make the same journey every year... possibly even more.

## The treatment



I was quoted from €28k to €35k for 24 full porcelain zirconium crowns in Ireland. I paid €10.5k for the treatment in Budapest.

Naturally, I had concerns about taking several flights and having the work done overseas, but my dentist was remarkable and the Kreativ Clinic was a futuristic-style place of sanitised excellence. The local rep, Mary in Dublin, arranged everything (including free transfers and hotel stays).

Afterwards, my dentist held up the mirror and I was totally gob-smacked - a life-changing experience complete with a written guarantee and aftercare service. A year later, I haven't had a single problem - and I say that having paid the full whack myself!

## Jewel in the crowns

Hungary's dental tourism industry hasn't developed overnight. It has one of the most demanding medical and dental educations in the world, and visitors have been availing of it since German and Austrian patients first discovered the savings and superior treatments in the 1980s. Lower salaries, costs and insurance all contribute to a price difference that has only widened since Hungary joined the EU. I flew to Budapest, had my treatment and enjoyed the sights for a third of the price quoted at home.

## Insider intel



Be sure to take the waters in Budapest. The Romans and Ottomans went mad for the stuff and built the most magnificent architectural hammams and bath houses (the Szechenyi and Rudas baths are two favourites). Afterwards, put your new gnashers to work at the Great Market Hall. This is the place for goulash and oversized sausages with lángos - deep-fried bread topped with sour cream and grated cheese.

## Top tip

Hungary is a beautiful country, and there's a lot more to it than Budapest. Consider extending your trip with a visit to the scenic Lake Balaton region ([gotohungary.com](http://gotohungary.com)). Europe's biggest and shallowest body of water is bisected by a wild, 4km-long peninsula.

## Glitches

Make sure your root canal and other treatments have been done properly before your trip. My root canal treatment wasn't up to Hungarian standards - it had to be corrected (at no cost) before fitting my porcelain zirconium crowns.

## Get me there





[Aer Lingus \(aerlingus.com\)](https://www.aerlingus.com) and [Ryanair \(ryanair.com\)](https://www.ryanair.com) fly daily from Dublin to Budapest. I highly recommend [Danubius Hotels \(danubiushotels.com\)](https://www.danubiushotels.com); rooms from €40) - I stayed near the clinic at the Arena, the Astoria and also in their Spa Hotel on Margaret Island.

I had my full mouth reconstruction treatment at the Kreativ Dental Clinic (01 805-5526; [kreativdentalclinic.eu](https://www.kreativdentalclinic.eu)). You can find more clinics to choose from on Irish-run search site, [whatclinic.com](https://www.whatclinic.com).

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