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Understanding Hungary

# F1 field day

Formula-1 returns to Hungaroring



HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX WEEKEND GUIDE

# Parties, pit-walks and pole positions

**The Hungarian Grand Prix celebrates its 30th year this summer and in honour of this momentous occasion The Budapest Times is providing in-depth coverage. In the final piece of our three-part series, we give you everything you need to know about this weekend's event in our comprehensive Hungarian Grand Prix weekend guide: 30th anniversary edition.**

■ **LEE REANEY**

You know it's the heart of Hungarian summer when the Hungarian Grand Prix rolls into town and the Sziget Music Festival is right around the corner. With the GP celebrating its 30th year this weekend, you can bet that the crew at the Hungaroring is going to put on a celebration.

In Part One of this series, The Budapest Times took a look back at the history of the event and unveiled our Top 10 Hungarian GP moments. Part Two looked at the track itself – everything from its history to its layout to what you can see and do at the track.

This week, we'll give you everything you need to know about one of Hungary's most popular sporting events: find out where the best seats are in our 'Ticket Information' section; see what your options are for making the 22-kilometre trek to Mogyorod in our 'Getting There' section; check out what's going on and when in our 'What's Happening' section; find out how the drivers and teams are doing heading into the race in the 'Race Info' segment; and find out some of The Budapest Times' best advice with our 'Hot Tips'.

If you're planning to take in any of the events at the Hungaroring this weekend, be sure not to leave home without this guide!

## Three-day speed fest

For those that are uninitiated to the Formula One festivities, there is so much more that goes on in a weekend than just the F1 race. Besides the F1 practice ses-

sions and race qualifying that you can check out, there are a number of other racing events happening at the track to which your ticket provides access.

All the fun began on Thursday, when lucky three-day ticket holders were provided the opportunity to take a walk down pit lane and get up close and personal with both the drivers and their beautiful machines.

The up-and-comers in the F2 and F3 series' will be featured in several races over the course of the weekend, as will the drivers of the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup. All of the events culminate in Sunday's event finale, with the lower series' starting at 9.25am. The F1 Drivers' Track Parade begins at 12.30, with the Grid Presentation set for 12.45 and the 70-lap 30th Hungarian Grand Prix starting at 2pm.

If you happen to have one of the high-end Formula One Paddock Club tickets,

you'll have access to the pit area on all three days – just check the schedule for the times. This year, in honour of the 30th anniversary, organisers will throw a special 30th Jubilee concert this Friday.

Free to all ticketholders, the festive event will take place in the large parking area adjacent to the main entrance and will feature many of Hungary's hottest pop stars of the last 30 years. With a capacity of 10,000-12,000, you need to pre-register at [gpticketshop.hu](http://gpticketshop.hu).

Fans can expect to see the likes of Magna Cum Laude, Demjén Ferenc, Lerch István, Tóth Vera, DJ Dominique, Radics Gigi, Wellhello and others.

## Will Vettel break the curse? Or will Hamilton become King of the Hungaroring?

The 30th running of the Hungarian



Grand Prix will feature 20 drivers representing 10 different constructors' teams. Five of the drivers racing this weekend have won the race before (Fernando Alonso, Kimi Raikkonen, Jenson Button, Lewis Hamilton and Daniel Ricciardi last year).

The two British drivers alone have combined for a total of six of the last nine wins at the Hungaroring – Hamilton has won four times (2007, 2009, 2012, 2013) and Button has emerged victorious twice (2006 and 2011). Interestingly, four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel has yet to win the race – the only track in the world that can still make that claim.

The 2015 Formula One season has been a touch on the anti-climactic side. Currently Mercedes and their top-ranked drivers (Hamilton and Nico Rosberg) stand far ahead of the pack in both the constructors' championship and the drivers' standings.

The only driver to challenge the speedy duo is Ferrari's Vettel, which makes sense as Ferrari is a strong second in the standings. The only other consistently strong team on the calendar is the Williams-Mercedes duo of Felipe Massa and Valtteri Bottas.

Hamilton – who is far ahead in the drivers' standings – will look to pass the legendary Michael Schumacher as “King of the Hungaroring” by winning his fifth Hungarian title this weekend, while Vettel will look to mark off that one blemish that still remains on his racing resume.

Look for similar results as in Monaco – and most other races this year – with Vettel joining the Mercedes team of Hamilton and Rosberg on the podium. The Budapest Times' prediction? 1-Hamilton, 2-Vettel, 3-Rosberg, 4-Bottas, 5-Raikkonen.

### Where to sit and how much it will cost

Hungarians planning to attend this weekend's special event will have no shortage of good seating options as the

course was designed to adapt to the natural, bowl-like terrain that offers spectators a good view of most of the track from wherever they sit. In fact, it's likely that the Hungaroring is the single, most spectator-friendly track on the Formula One circuit when it comes to sightlines.

That being said, some sightlines could be considered even better than others – leading to the differently priced categories of gold, silver, bronze, and general admission. No matter where your ticket finds you though, you won't need to worry – the track is fitted with large TV screens so that no matter where you are, you'll be able to catch all of the action.

A couple of important things to remember when buying tickets: (1) one-day tickets offer poor value for money as they will save you only 10% off the cost of a three-day pass; (2) three-day passes will allow you to attend the Jubilee concert with many of Hungary's most popular musical groups, and access to any seating area this Friday as part of the “Free Friday” promotion – this way you can check out what tickets you will want for next year. Here's a quick look at the ticket options:

**General admission: (EUR 90 for a 3-day pass)** For those just looking for the cheapest option available, the general admission tickets are for you. The pass allows access to the green fields on the east side of the track, near Turns #9 - #14. You'll want to bring a blanket and some food for a picnic and don't forget to pack your binoculars. Due to its elevated nature, you'll still be able to see much of the action; and whatever you miss will be on the TV screen in front of you. Friendly reminder – you can't bring folding chairs with you into the Hungaroring.

**Bronze seating: (EUR 99 to EUR 119 for a 3-day pass)** There are two separate bronze sectors available to ticketholders – the 2,000-seat Bronze 1 section will give you a seat with a view of Turn #5, while the 3,500-seat Bronze 2 area overlooks Turn #6. The Bronze 1 tickets are the

least expensive in Europe and offer the best value-for-money option available to those looking to save a few euros.

**Silver seating: (EUR 195 to EUR 250 for a 3-day pass)** There are six separate silver seating areas, with Silver 5 offering the least expensive option at EUR 195. This 5,500-seat area is located on the short straightaway between Turns #11 and #12. The rest of the areas – Silver 1-4 and the Red Bull Area – are EUR 55 more expensive but worth the cost if you can afford it. The Silver 1 seating area is located around Turn #14, Silver 2 is a little nearer to the pit area, Silver 3 offers sightlines of the final turn and the pit area, Silver 4 is a little higher up and offers views of Turns #12-#14 and the Red Bull Area right in the middle of them all, offering a straight-on view of the course's straightaway, Turns #11 and #12, and the pit area. For new visitors to the race looking at this price range, we recommend the Silver 3 or Red Bull areas.

**Gold seating: (EUR 195 to EUR 495 for a 3-day pass)** The Gold seating areas offer plenty of options as well, from the less expensive Gold 1 and Gold 2 areas right through to the EUR 495 Super Gold seating, and obviously, among the best views of the race. Gold 1 seats offer a good view of the start and finish, as well as the pits, but little else. We recommend Silver seats or upgrading your Gold ticket instead. Gold 2 is along the straightaway as well, but at least you'll be able to catch the drivers exiting Turn #14. Gold 3 is along the straightaway and allows viewers to see the drivers as they accelerate and get ready to attempt to overtake at Turn #1, but are not the best option available in the Gold area. Gold 4 is at the end of the straightaway, where you can see the cars as they speed down the straight and offering the best views of the passing opportunities provided at Turn #1. They're also your best bet for the Gold section. The Super Gold seats are the most expensive available, and



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the only ones that are covered. If you are looking to stay out of that hot Hungarian summer sun, and you can afford it, these are the seats for you.

**F1 Paddock Club seating: (EUR 4150 plus VAT for a 3-day pass. 1- and 2-day passes available for less)** If you are looking for an exclusive seat or hospitality package, the Paddock Club is the closest thing the Hungaroring has to offer. With premium seats, pit lane access at selected times, and gourmet food and beverages, at least you'll know where you spent your money.

### Busses, and trains, and helicopters

The drawback to the wonderful sightlines offered at the Hungaroring is its distance from Budapest. Located 22 kilometres northwest of the city near the small town of Mogyoród, getting to the track can be an adventure that takes time and can test your patience. Thankfully, organisers have provided plenty of options for race fans to get to the track – from event-only shuttle busses to dedicated taxi lanes to private helicopter delivery. Take a look below to see what option best suits you. Our only recommendation? Leave early.

**Shuttle bus: (Free; 90 minutes, including a 30-minute walk)** For anyone holding a ticket or a ticket voucher, the free shuttle bus is one of the most popular options of getting to the track. The “Volánbusz” leaves from the Volánbusz bus station near Árpád Bridge, which you can reach by Metro Line 3 (the blue line). You will be dropped off in central Mogyoród (Templom Square), from which it is about a 20-30-minute walk to the track. This option is also good if you are planning to drink alcohol, as there is zero-tolerance for drinking and driving in Hungary.

**Public transport (train): (EUR 2; 65 minutes, including a 30-minute walk)** If you haven't purchased a ticket yet and are looking to get to the track by public transportation, your best bet is to take the HÉV local train. Trains leave every 20-30 minutes from Örs Verez tere, which is accessible via Metro Line 2 (the red line). You'll need to exit the station,

cross the intersection via the underground pass, and head to the suburban train station. You'll need to find the H81 to Gödöllő. You can buy your ticket in advance or from a conductor once on the train. There is a special Hungaroring stop available on grand prix weekend, or if you would like to enter through Gates 3, 4, or 5, get off at the Szilasliget. For Gates 1, 2, 7, or 8, get off at Mogyoród. Expect a 30- to 40-minute hike from any of the stops. Don't worry about getting lost – just follow the crowds.

**Taxi: (EUR 40; 30 minutes)** One of the most popular options – and fastest – is to take a taxi to the track. Taxis leave from Deák tér or Liszt Ferenc Airport and up to six passengers can ride for the same fare. The official grand prix taxis have access to a special route to the Hungaroring and will drop you off much nearer to the track. This is the best option for those who are part of a group, don't fancy a 30-minute walk, or are looking to have a few adult beverages. Look for taxis operated by any of the following three companies: 6x6 Taxi, Taxi 2000 or City Taxi.

**Drive yourself: (EUR 10; 20-50 minutes, depending on traffic)** If you'd like to take your own car to the track, you'll need to purchase a special “vignette” pass that will allow you access to the motorway. A weekly pass will set you back EUR 10 but that is offset by the free parking at the track. The 22-kilometre drive along the M3 motorway is well signposted, so you shouldn't get lost. It normally takes about 20 minutes to drive to the Hungaroring but significant delays can be expected on grand prix weekend. If you decide to drive and want to avoid the traffic jams and find decent parking – leave early.

**Private helicopter: (EUR 300-EUR 400 return; does the time it takes really matter?)** Again, if you are looking to do up your Hungarian Grand Prix weekend in style, you'll want to look into taking a private helicopter trip directly to the track. Plenty of companies now offer this service, so it shouldn't be a problem booking a time. Best part? Looking down gleefully at all the traffic queuing to get to the track while you effortlessly glide there in your majestic air chariot.



Photos vipheheli.hu