A day around the Balaton lake

Last week, I had one of the best travel days of the year when I went to Lake Balaton in Hungary, and honestly, it was so much better than the weekend I had spent in Vienna not long ago. While Vienna is a beautiful city with grand buildings and a lot of history, my time there was rainy, grey, and a bit disappointing. That's why my day at Lake Balaton felt like such a perfect contrast. The sun was shining from the early morning, the sky was a beautiful blue, and the water of the lake looked like something from a postcard. I had taken advantage of the Student Hungary Pass, which is one of the best deals for students in Europe, in my opinion. With only 5 euros, you can travel anywhere in Hungary by train, and it made the whole day not only beautiful but also incredibly cheap. I woke up early and caught the train from Budapest. I had a window seat, and I watched the countryside change from the busy streets of the capital to green fields, small towns, and eventually the view of the huge lake sparkling in the sunlight. When I arrived, there was already a nice buzz of activity. Families were riding bikes, couples were sitting near the shore, and children were playing in the sand. I found a quiet place near the water, took off my shoes, and stepped in. The water was cool and refreshing, and after swimming for a while. Lake Balaton has been an important place in Hungary for centuries. The region around the lake is full of historical sites and stories. I walk around the ruins of the Benedictine Abbey of Tihany, which was founded in 1055, and it felt incredible to stand in a place with such a long past. The Tihany Peninsula itself is a protected area with beautiful old buildings, narrow streets, and views that probably haven't changed much in hundreds of years. I also saw some traditional Hungarian houses made of stone and wood, showing how people used to live in this area. What surprised me was how the lake has always been a meeting point for people, not only for fun, but for culture and relaxation, even during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many famous Hungarian writers and painters spent their summers here, inspired by the calm water and green hills. Walking through the town of Balatonfüred, with its 19th-century buildings and quiet charm, I felt like I was stepping back in time. I would recommend Lake Balaton to any student interested in both nature and heritage, with the student travel pass, discovering this history is easy, cheap, and unforgettable.