

## Ballet Shoes In Budapest

It is amazing how seeing, hearing or smelling something can suddenly evoke long-lost forgotten memories. This happened to a friend of mine recently when she was on a weekend break in Budapest, Hungary. While wandering down one of the city's many shopping streets, her eyes were suddenly drawn to a pair of ballet shoes sitting in one of the shop windows. Upon seeing the ballet shoes she was transported in an instant to another time and another place entirely.

The story begins in war torn Germany, where her mother was born. She was a Jew living in Berlin and was still only 15 years old when she was taken to a concentration camp along with her mother and father. As they were taken from their home, my friend's mother grabbed a pair of ballet shoes that she had been given by her parents for her birthday just a few days before. When they reached the concentration camp she was separated from her mum and dad, so for the next few years she kept those ballet shoes with her at all times as a constant reminder of her missing parents.

The fact that she managed to keep the ballet shoes hidden from her captors became a source of great hope for her, instilling a deep belief that she would see her parents again one day. Sure enough, when the war was over, they were reunited and eventually resettled in England, where she kept those ballet shoes as a constant reminder of what hope and belief can achieve in times of great despair.

My friend had never known about her mother's ballet shoes until she passed away. It was only while going through her mother's belongings after her death that she found the ballet shoes along with a diary, which told the story of how they had helped her survive the Holocaust. My friend vowed to keep them safe forever and pass them on to her own children, to keep the story of her mother's life alive. Tragically, just a few months later there was a terrible fire at my friend's house. Almost everything was destroyed, including the ballet shoes and the diary. Of course, the insurance covered most of the damage, but there was no amount of money that could ever replace those ballet shoes.

Understandably, whenever my friend sees a pair of ballet shoes now she gets quite upset, but on this occasion in Budapest there was something different. The ballet shoes in the shop window were really old and almost identical to her mother's. The moment she saw them she knew she had to buy them. When she went into the shop and started asking questions about them, it turned out they had belonged to an old German ballet dancer who was famous for having survived the Holocaust. The ballet shoes were very expensive but it did not matter, as soon as my friend bought them she knew had reclaimed just a little bit of her mother's life.

For further information regarding our range of ballet shoes, please visit our website at <http://www.dancedirect.com>.

## About the Author

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