

04 **Bucharest**, the story of a thrilling city

08 **Wallachia**, the country of flat plains and stately mountains

12 **Oltenia**, amazing traditions and a landscape always different

16 **Banat**, the nations speak the language of prosperity

20 **Maramures**, among millenary traditions and vibrant colors

26 Map of Romania

28 **Crîșana**, a country of small fast-flowing rivers

32 **Transylvania**, country of the great land beyond the forest

38 **Bukovina**, between the blue of Voroneț and the green of ridges

42 **Moldavia**, a creation of generous nature and kind-hearted people

46 **Dobrogea**, the land among waters

50 Useful Information



Romania

The land of authentic, welcoming nature
and exciting culture

If you are looking for a vacation where you experience inspiring places, then you opened the right pages. We bet you'll love Romania, an exciting destination for lovers of unbeaten paths and authentic culture.

Romania's natural features are unique in Europe, our country enjoys the embrace of the Carpathians, with their areas of true wilderness, and the ever-fresh beauty of the Danube Delta, as well as extensive plains scattered with little natural and cultural treasures. People enrich this natural treasure with unchanged traditions and a warm and generous personality. Our cultural sites, many UNESCO World Heritage Sites, give evidence to a unique history, with a heritage of Latin origin mixed with other great cultures of the continent. The stories of these places will surely fascinate you, and the deep spirituality of Romanians will impress you too.

The pages that you have in your hand now offer you a systematic guide to the historic regions of the country, its

unique places and traditions, about the Romanian way of life, and the historical, and cultural circumstance that made them possible.

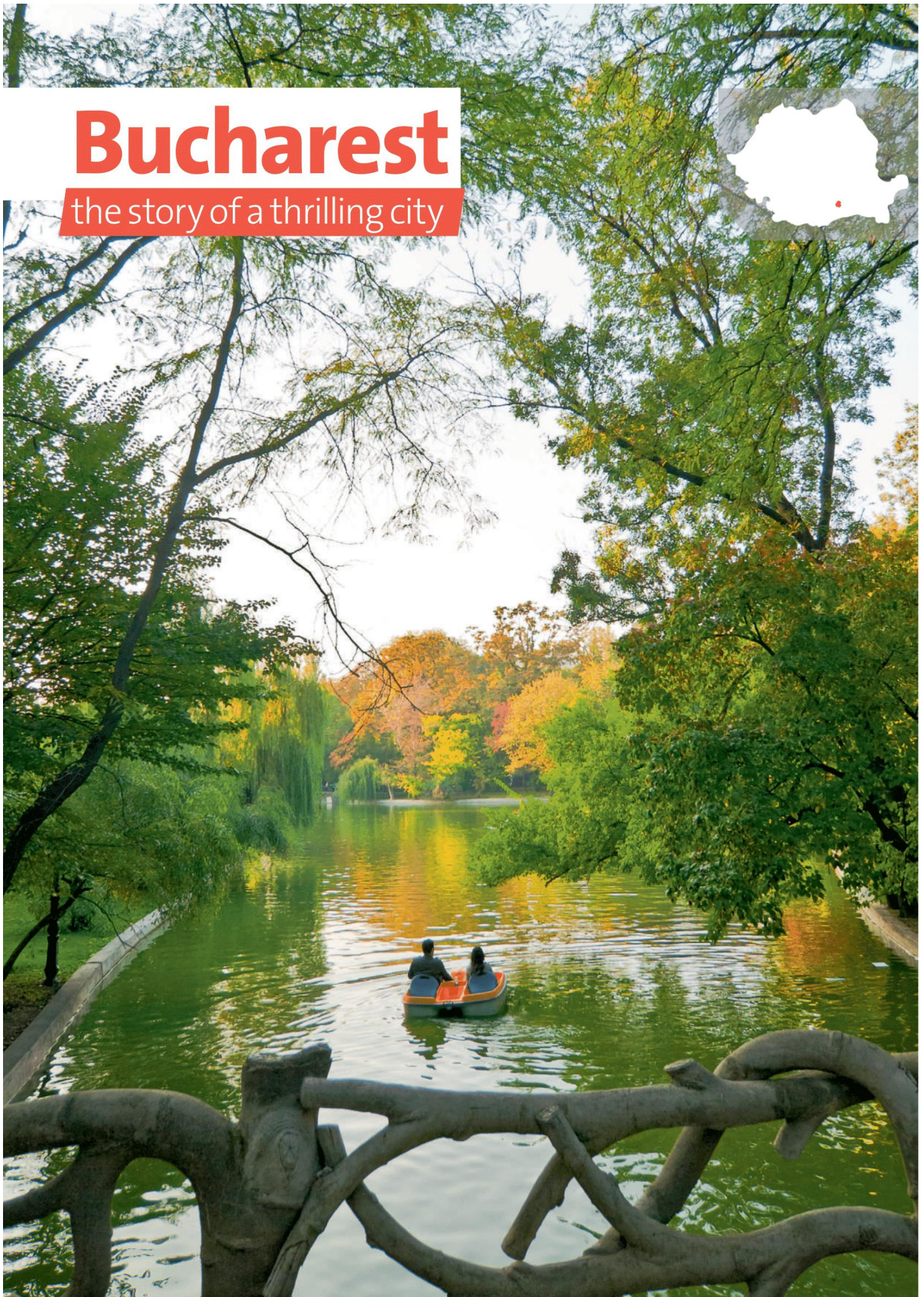
And to stir your interest in exploring Romania, we offer you some basic guidelines that you'll find explained in detail in the following pages. Walk with us on the paths of the Carpathian Mountains and enjoy the natural parks, which will rouse you to adventure and activity- all the more so as Romania is one of the most remarkable countries in Europe in this respect. The Danube Delta is a delightful, Moldavia and Bukovina's monasteries comfort your eyes and calm your soul. Maramures overwhelms you with its magnificent locations, traditions and people. Banat and Oltenia's caves and rapids flush you with adrenaline, while the fortified churches and strongholds in Transylvania take you back to the Middle Ages giving you pleasurable chills down your spine, and exceeding your imagination, even if you've read huge volumes of their history. Stop and pay attention to traditions and popular fairs, spa resorts, cultural heritage from the great cities and historical areas.

And if we've succeeded in awaking your interest, read the following pages, which will help you design an itinerary, and then go at your own pace. You will be amazed by the original and authentic destination so close at hand.

www.romania.travel

Bucharest

the story of a thrilling city





The Romanian capital is a happy combination of its past eras: it breathes the bohemian perfume of little Paris, as it was once called, boasts edifices of modern architecture, including remnants of its former communist regime (1945-1989), and is developing the attributes of a metropolis.

The lecture on what was once called the Little Paris of Eastern Europe rings in your ears from the moment you land at the international airport (17 km from Bucharest), which is named after Henri Coandă, the great Romanian inventor, born in Bucharest, whose mother was of French origin. While Coandă invented, in Paris, the first jet propulsion aircraft (1910), in Bucharest, French architects created Little Paris. After passing the Arch of Triumph and the Kiseleff Road, landmarks that remind you of the French capital, you remain surprised by the series of monumental Belle Epoque style buildings, which are scattered throughout the city, but especially on Victoria Avenue. This route is among the oldest in town. A leisurely walk on foot, on Victoria Avenue brings you the impressive elegance of buildings like the Cantacuzino Palace—the current George



Enescu Museum, Palace CEC - National Savings Bank branch, and cool bars with terraces, where live jazz can be heard from way up the street, and the shop fronts of famous companies.

Victoria Avenue ends its route at the meeting point with the Dâmbovița River, the river that runs through the capital. Not far away the Palace of Parliament makes its appearance. In front of it, Unirii Boulevard and the square of the same name open out. Face to face, two eras speak to each other, because here you can find Manuc's Inn, a building screening the entrance to the Old Town. On streets that seem to be gathered for a ball, you can find a land of paradoxes. Vibrant bars and clubs, elegant restaurants, chic cafes and lots of people always willing to have fun, but also some of the most important churches in the city. Visit the Princely Church of the Old Court (Biserica Domnească de la Curtea Veche), the oldest church in Bucharest, founded in its early form by the Romanian ruler, Mircea Ciobanu during the mid-XVI century and the Stavropoleos (exceptionally decorated, in Brâncoveanu style). The city catches your attention with its buildings, but breathes through its parks. Herăstrău is the most extensive, disposed on the natural lakeside with the same name. In the heart of the capital you can find the green oasis of Cișmigiu, the city's oldest public garden, with varied vegetation, landscape and an artificial lake, which, in winter becomes a skating rink. The Carol I park, located on a hill once covered by vineyards, is dominated by the huge mausoleum dedicated to the heroes of our Motherland.

The city will captivate the attentive and open-minded, traveler who is open to see and feel; a new face with every change of light, from sunrise to sunset and again at dawn, brought on by the gathering in of eras of history.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Revolution Square is named like that because it was from here that the last Communist leader of Romania, Nicolae Ceaușescu fled the Revolution of 1989. Just 50 years before, King Carol II had expanded the square to protect the Royal Palace (Palatul Regal) from fire, in case of... a revolution.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Bucharest City Tour.** In about one hour, for 8.5 €, you familiarize yourself with the important places of the city, travelling by double-decker bus.

❖ **Traditional Bierkeller.** One of the largest Bierkellers in Eastern Europe, decorated in gothic style, located in the Old Town (Centrul Vechi) invites you to sausages, house beer, live music and traditional dance performances.

❖ **Mogoșoia Palace** Located at the very edge of Bucharest, was built in 1702 in Brâncoveanu style (a Romanian architectural style) and named after the Romanian ruler Constantin Brâncoveanu.

DIARY

❖ **International Film Festival**
March, www.b-est.ro

❖ **EuropaFest**
May, music, www.europafest.ro

❖ **D'ale Bucureștilor**
June, street festival

CONTACT

www.bucuresti.ro
www.pmb.ro
www.otp-airport.ro
www.seebucharest.ro



PEASANTRY LIVING

The village inside the capital

The Village Museum (Muzeul Satului) is one of the largest outdoor museums of ethnography in Europe (13.5 ha). In Herăstrău Park (Parcul Herăstrău), presented by geographical area, you can discover approximately over 350 structures and 55,000 objects. Twice a year, the “The crafts-men’s fair” takes place here. You can admire the ethnographic richness of Romanians at the Romanian Peasant Museum (Muzeul Țăranului Român), named the “European Museum of the year, 1996” where over 60,000 pieces of folk art from all over the country are collected.

VILLAGE MUSEUM

www.muzeul-satului.ro

ROMANIAN PEASANT MUSEUM

www.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro

CULTURE FROM PAST TO PILLAR

The Great Brâncuși and the imposing Mammoth

There is a variety of museums you can visit in Bucharest: art, history, ethnography, geology, technical, and military, of natural sciences or of monuments. The largest is the National Art Museum, with its impressive galleries of ancient and modern Romanian Art. Here you can see Constantin Brâncuși’s sculpture “The Prayer” (Brâncuși is Romania’s most internationally renowned plastic artist). A fabulous museum, but little known, is that of the Storck family, the German, Karl Storck was the first sculpture master of the “School of belle-arte” of Bucharest. The oldest museum in Romania, just renovated, is the “Grigore Antipa” museum of Natural history, where you can find the skeleton of a mammoth, 10 million years old, a piece unique in the world.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART

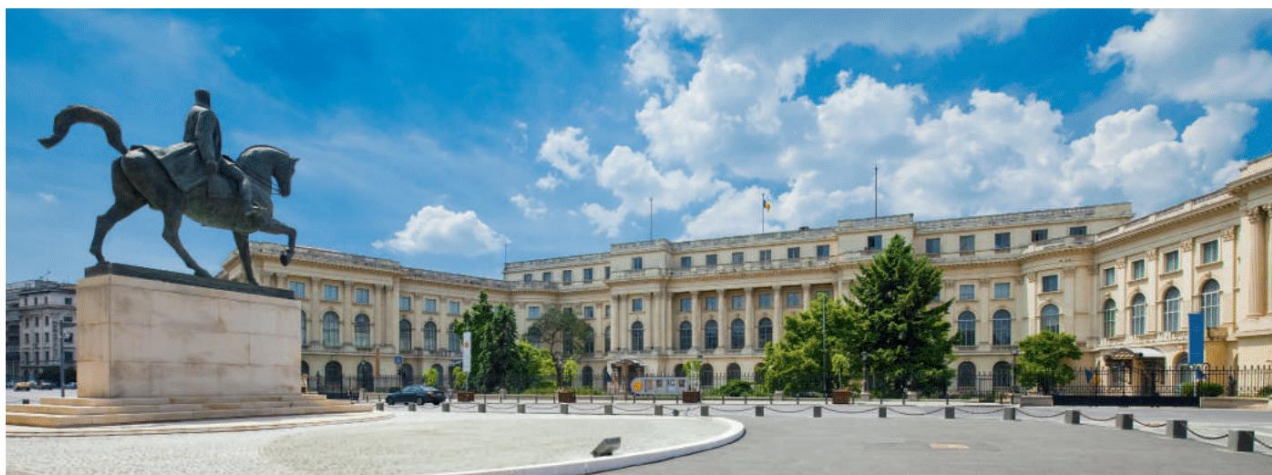
www.mnar.arts.ro

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY “GRIGORE ANTIPA”

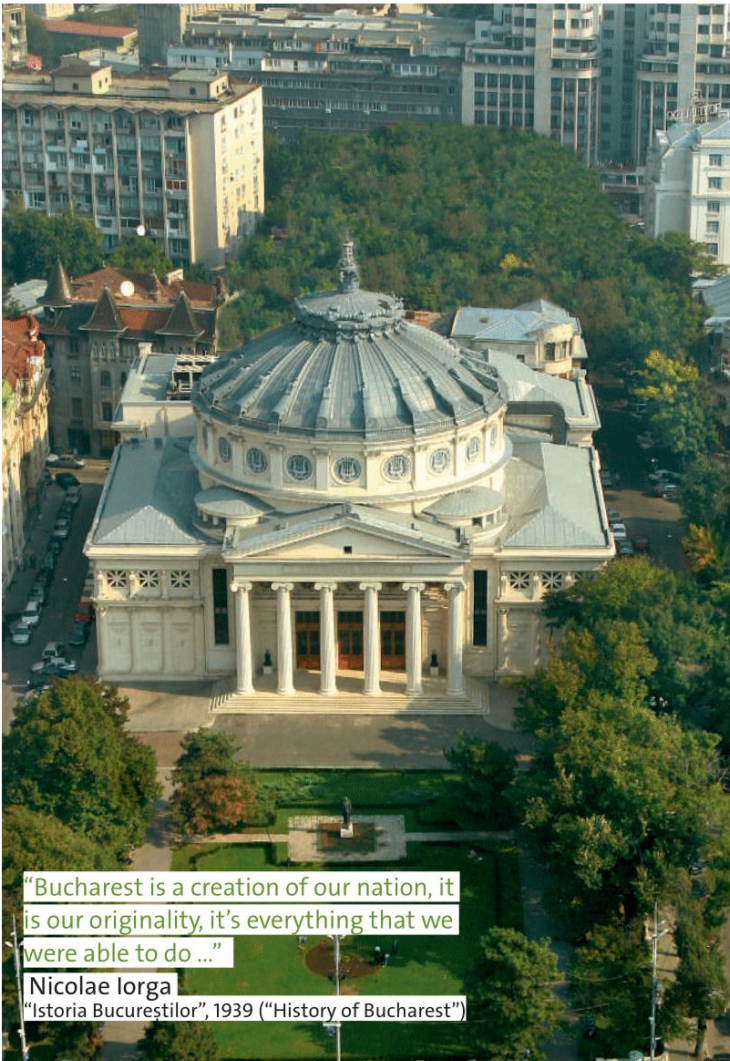
www.antipa.ro



At the newly-renovated Antipas’ museum you can find a 10 million year-old mammoth.



The National Art Museum is situated in the former location of the Royal Palace.



"Bucharest is a creation of our nation, it is our originality, it's everything that we were able to do ..."

Nicolae Iorga
"Istoria Bucureștilor", 1939 ("History of Bucharest")



SYMBOL OF BUCHAREST

Great Musicians at the Romanian Athenaeum

"Give a penny for the Athenaeum!" ("Dați un leu pentru Ateneu!") is the slogan of this architectural monument (year of completion, 1888), after its initial budget was exceeded. The edifice, in neoclassical style, was built at the initiative of a group of Romanian intellectuals. The edifice has become the symbol of Bucharest, being solely a place of music and the residence of the "George Enescu" Philharmonic. Inside the Athenaeum, with its exceptional acoustics the world's great musicians (such as: Yehudi Menuhin, Enescu's student, Zubin Mehta, Ion Voicu, Sergiu Celibidache and the Madrigal Choir) have performed. Every two years, each edition of "George Enescu International Festival and Competition" takes place in sold out conditions.

PHILHARMONIC "GEORGE ENESCU"

<http://fge.org.ro/ro.html>

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL "GEORGE ENESCU"

www.festivalenescu.ro



THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT

A rival to The Pentagon

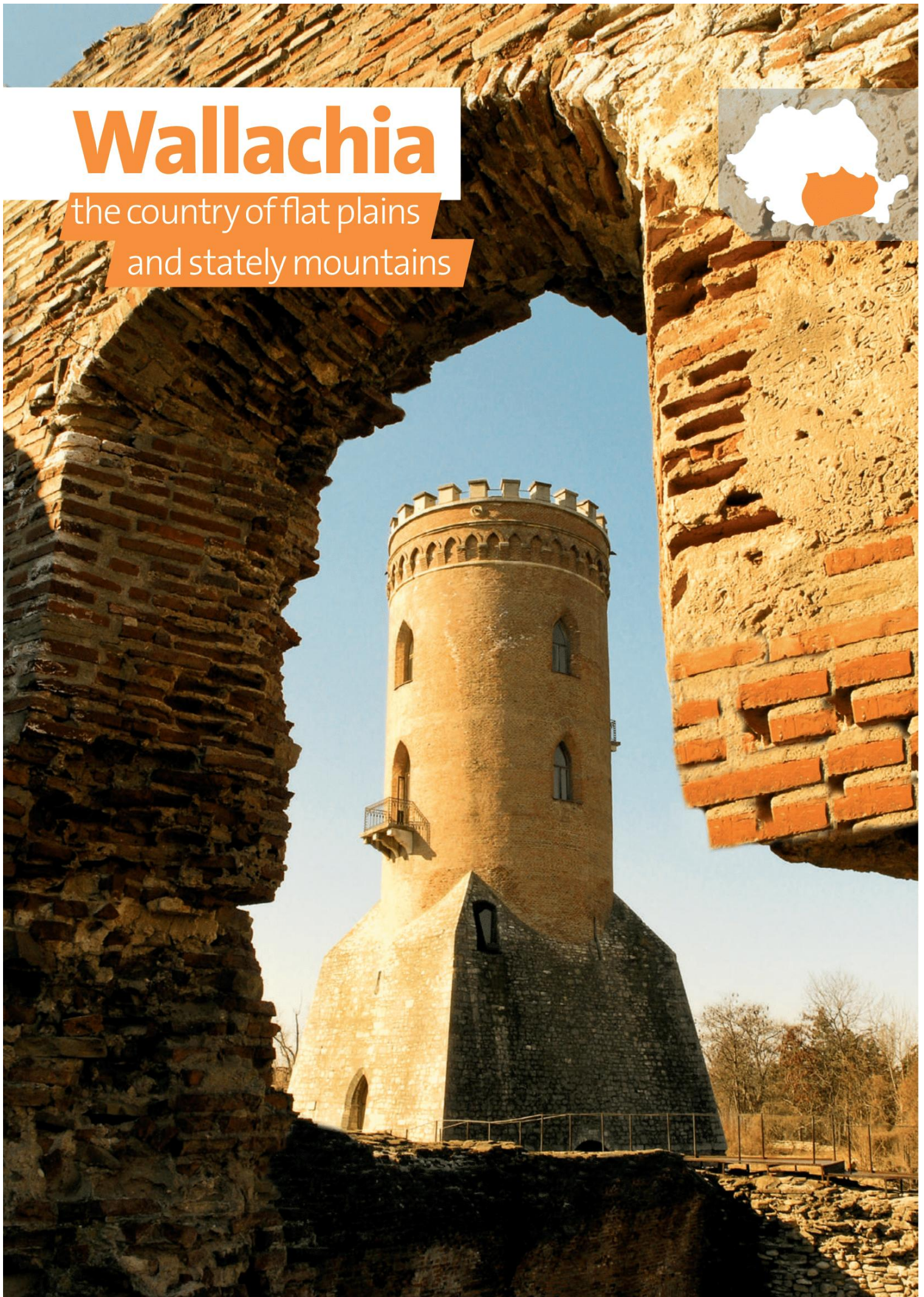
Parliament House is considered the second largest administrative edifice in the world (270m x 245m x 86m), after the Pentagon. One of the most visited sights of the capital, was built in five years to become the residence of the main communist institutions during Nicolae Ceaușescu regime period. Today, the colossal building hosts several public institutions as the Romanian Parliament and the Contemporary Art Museum distinguished by their significance.

THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT

www.cdep.ro

Wallachia

the country of flat plains
and stately mountains





The land of the Carpathians, the waters of the Danube and Olt, is as colorful as its name: Wallachia, land of the Vlachs (an ancient name for Romanians). This region is revealed bit by bit, starting from the “Bărăgan” up to the mountain crests that guard the most popular resorts in the country.

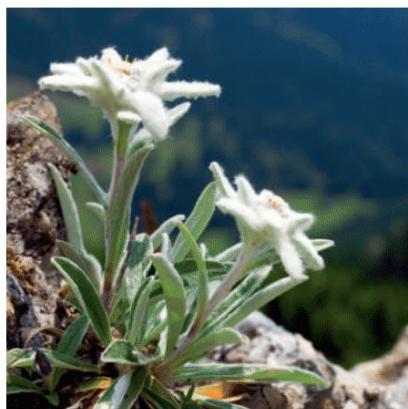
The region between the Danube, Olt River and Carpathian Mountains was once covered by the Vlasiei woods, cleared to make way for large cornfields. The richness in grains of the area has been noticed since the ancient times, when the soldiers of the great conqueror Alexander of Macedonia brought wheat ears to this land; along with his spears, “abundant crops” for an expedition to punish the eternally turbulent Getae, old inhabitants of the area. Nothing has changed in this regard, even today: The Bărăgan steppe of Wallachia is Romania’s granary.

Wallachia is as varied as its different names. The region is known as the Romanian Land or Wallachia, named after its inhabitants, the Vlachs. Here the legendary Vlad “the Impaler” ruled and became infamous (1456-1462), and later inspired the Irish writer Bram Stoker to create his vampire character, Dracula. Beyond the large plains of Wallachia rise the Carpathian Mountains, with the magnificent gateway to Transylvania, the Prahova Valley and its chain of resorts. Among them, the resort of Sinaia, where you will discover a masterpiece of German

neo-Renaissance architecture; Peleş, one of the best preserved royal castles in Europe.

Although less known and famous than the Prahova Valley, a great option for visitors is Teleajen Valley. In this area are situated “Vălenii de Munte”, Slănic Prahova and Cheia, the last two resorts are famous for their health benefits. For enthusiasts in natural phenomena we recommend the Mud Volcanoes (Vulcanii Noroişi) of Berca or Ialomiţa and the Dâmbovicioara caves.

Wallachia does not lack in centuries old places of worship. Snagov, Căldăruşani, Pasărea, Cernica are monasteries which well deserve attention. Besides the 400 year old Comana Monastery, a monument to silence, culture and faith, is the Natural Park with the same name, where the “secret delta” of Wallachia is found. It reproduces, on a small-scale, the biodiversity from the Danube Delta. Comana Marsh is the third largest wetland in Romania, formed by the gathered waters of Neajlov and Argeş rivers. Fortunately for fishermen, it’s only here you can find some rare species of fish. Among these, very rare in Europe is the “glossy” (ţigănosul), considered a true living fossil of the sweet water fish world.



DID YOU KNOW?

Căldăruşani Monastery is located in a beautiful landscape, being surrounded by water and woods. Here you can find the largest museum of the Romanian Patriarchy, with six icons made by the most famous Romanian painter Nicolae Grigorescu, who was a monk at the monastery.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Pleşcoi sausages.** You must try at least one of these spicy sausages, which originate in the Valley of Buzău.

❖ **Transfăgărăşan Route.** Cross the Alpine Road (2055 m altitude) with the longest road tunnel in the country (887 m) and spectacular scenery, following the Top Gear team who stated Transfăgărăşan was “the best road in the world”.

❖ **Feteasca Neagră.** Visit the Dealu Mare area, Romania red wine region, located at the same latitude as many famous vineyards, for a complex ruby-coloured wine.

DIARY

❖ **Ispas’ Fair**
May, Popular Art Fair, Topoloveni-jam – using a unique cooking technique

❖ **Drăgaica**
June, folk festival and fair, Buzău

❖ **Enescu and the world of music**
August, International Festival of Classical Music, Sinaia Casino

CONTACT

www.pmtgv.ro
www.cjarges.ro



"Under the ribs of Bucegi, in front of the highest and most beautiful peaks, the Prahova Valley opens from north to south, the valley is now the most populous and richest area in the country."

Alexandru Vlahuță
writer, Romania

Wallachia challenges you to rock and mountain climbing, sharing the highest mountain peaks in Transylvania.

SLĂNIC PRAHOVA

In the Cathedral of Salt

Slănic Prahova is now the largest centre of salt mining in the country. The spa resort is situated on a salt deposit with a thickness of 600 m. Very spectacular is Unirea Salt, now a museum. After going 200 meters down with a lift-cage, you discover 14 galleries on two levels, real salt cathedrals designed for those with respiratory problems and for leisure. Other attractions are the Cave and the Bride Lake. The last one was formed by the collapse of a mine roof, and the legend says that a bride drowned here, abandoned in her wedding night.

UNIREA SALT, SLĂNIC PRAHOVA
www.primariaslanic.ro/mina.htm



CURTEA DE ARGEȘ

A monastery of myth

In the former royal residence city is the monastery where several Wallachian voivodes are buried, along with all the Romanian kings. The monument, built in XVI century, is the symbol of the sad legend of Manole, the artisan. It is said that he built his pregnant wife into the building foundation, to complete it. Then he himself was killed by the projects sleeping partner, the voivode Neagoe Basarab. The deep meaning of the legend is that any creation requires sacrifices.



FORTRESS POIENARI

Eagles Nest

Climb the 1480 steps up to the traces of the citadel, fortified by voivode Vlad “the Impaler” (XV century), on an abrupt rock, over 200 m above the Argeş Passes. Once you reach the top, your effort is rewarded by an amazing view. The chronicle legend says that “the Impaler” (Țepeş) strengthened the fortress through the forced labor of rebellious boyars. Local folklore named this strategic point of anti-Ottoman resistance “the eagle’s nest of old mighty”.



MUD VOLCANOES

“Lunar excursion” on Earth

The lunar landscape of Pâclele Mari and Pâclele Mici (Buzău County) is unique in the country and very rare in the world: miniature craters, with gas emanations on a clayey ground. From the soil erupts, at irregular intervals, a gray and viscous paste. The mud that comes out and dries in contact with air to form conical structures, like volcanic craters. Cold mud comes from great depths. If you approach such a volcano, you can hear it bubbling in the deep. Mud volcanoes lie on about 30 hectares. You will be impressed not only by the landscape of this protected area but by the particular plants that have adapted to the salinity around. Among this salt-loving vegetation you can find plants adapted to this climate and soil, among which a plant found only in southern Siberia and Australia. Don't be surprised if you meet scorpions and termites, fauna that is found here because of the raised temperatures all-year-round.



PELEŞ CASTLE

The first royal residence

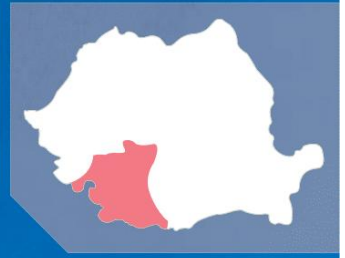
In the famous resort, Sinaia, we find the quiet area of the National Museum Peleş including Pelişor and Peleş castles, the watchtower and the park in which they are situated. Summer residence of the first king of Romania, Carol I, (1883), Peleş is the first electrified castle in Europe, built in neo-renaissantist German style.

NATIONAL MUSEUM PELEŞ

<http://peles.ro>

Oltenia

amazing traditions and
a landscape always
different





Oltenia is famous for its natural beauties and its traditions, but also for its ambitious, clever and humorous people. A truly mysterious land which can't be fully understood at a single glance.

In this region you always have something to discover. When you say Oltenia, you say "land that originates from the old Alutus river". In the Olt Valley, you will see the traces of the Dacians, ancient inhabitants of the region, or the chain of Roman defensive structures, showing the history of these timeless lands. The same area reveals monasteries and hermitages with a deep and peaceful medieval air: Cozia (XIV century), Tismana (XIV century), Horezu (XVII century), Polovragi (XVII century). These sacred places have served both as a place of prayer and schools and cultural centres, as well as a place of shelter against invaders and policy-makers. Meanwhile, the



stunning view and the architectural style of the monasteries have turned these places of prayer into places of pilgrimage for believers and for those willing to commune with the beauty of nature.

But Oltenia boasts especially with its people. And it really has a reason to boast! When you say Oltenia, you say Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul), the first ruler to unite the three Romanian countries (1600). – The Voivode was "ban de Craiova", the most important governor of the Romanian Country, military commander of all Oltenia, and that's where his rise began. When you say Constantin Brâncoveanu, you say the inspired ruler who gives its name to an era and an architectural style (XVIII century) and who was beheaded by the Turks, because of his faith together with his four sons. When you say Petrache Poenaru you say the inventor of the fountain pen, Nicolae Titulescu – the President of the general meeting of the League of Nations, or when you say Constantin Brâncuși, you say one of the world's greatest modern sculptors. The renowned Romanian artist has drawn his artistic vein in northern Oltenia, a rich ethno-folk region. Here you will see the towers (culele), fortified dwellings of the landowners of Oltenia who were defending themselves against the thunderous forays of the Turks who invaded across the Danube. In northern Oltenia, the economy of the villages are still based on traditional trades.

At Horezu, over 100 folk artisans create renowned ceramics by modeling, styling, coloring and distributing symbols. Here and only here the "cock of Hurez" originated and became famous. As here and only here in Oltenia, at Ponoare, you can find God's Bridge. In fact, a huge karstic dome remaining after the collapse of a cave. Moreover, the karstic landform is one of Oltenia's treasures, exposed in about 2,000 identified forms.

DID YOU KNOW?

The towers, fortified boyar houses in Oltenia, are believed to originate in Afghanistan or Iran. This type of construction is found in the whole Balkan area, but also in Italy, France and Spain.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Topolnița cave.** The charm of this cave is as hard to define as how big the risk was in first exploring the 11km of charted caves. The gigantic rocks and large lakes, crossed only by boat, attract like the stalagmites forests.

❖ **Horezu Monastery.** The most successful combination of Brâncoveanu architecture in the country, included in UNESCO World Heritage.

❖ **Sausages and wine, "zaibăr" from Oltenia.** Taste the delicious beef and pork sausages, and then appease your thirst with 'zaibăr', as people from Oltenia called a French breed that they adopted in their vineyards and named by its creator, Siebel.

DIARY

❖ Lilac Festival

May, agrarian holiday, in the wild lilac forest, Ponoare village

❖ Hurez Cock

June, fair of potters across the country, Stejarii-Horezu halt

❖ Romanian Gag

August, festival dedicated to the famous folk dance recognized as UNESCO World Heritage, Slatina

CONTACT

www.orasul-horezu.ro

Photo: (left) The Column of the Infinite in Târgu Jiu, work of the great Constantin Brâncuși, Buila-Vânturărița National Park (above, left); Romanian Gag (Călușul Românesc), dance named UNESCO World Heritage (top right) Horezu Monastery, Horezu, Oltenia



The Jiu Gorge (Defileul Jiului) is among the most appreciated rafting routes in Romania



IMPERIAL MINERAL WATER

Călimănești-Căciulata

The pearl of Olt Valley resorts was born around the oldest and the most important medieval monument in Oltenia, Cozia Monastery. Many crowned heads treated themselves with the mineral waters from Călimănești-Căciulata, from the founder of Cozia, the ruler Mircea the Old, to illustrious beneficiaries as emperor of Austria-Hungary, Franz Joseph, and Napoleon the Third, to whom the water was brought by the stagecoach to Paris. Other great resorts of Oltenia: Olanești, Govora Voineasa.

CĂLIMĂNEȘTI

www.primaria-calimanesti.ro

CLEAR ECOSYSTEM

Buila-Vânturărița

Over a relatively narrow area of over 4,000 ha spreads one of the wildest national parks in Romania, with almost unaltered mountain ecosystems. The park is dominated by a calcareous ridge formed by the two peaks that give the name of Buila (1885) and Great Vânturărița (Vânturărița Mare). The springs, narrow passes two metre passes with 300 m high walls, the 100 caves or the Trovanților Museum (Muzeul Trovanților) nearby, with strange sedimentary formations, form a charming landscape, for mountain and rock climbing. An additional attraction is the two churches built in the Bat Cave (Pestera Liliecilor), and the monasteries and hermitages in the area.

BUILA-VÂNTURĂRIȚA NATIONAL PARK

www.buila.ro



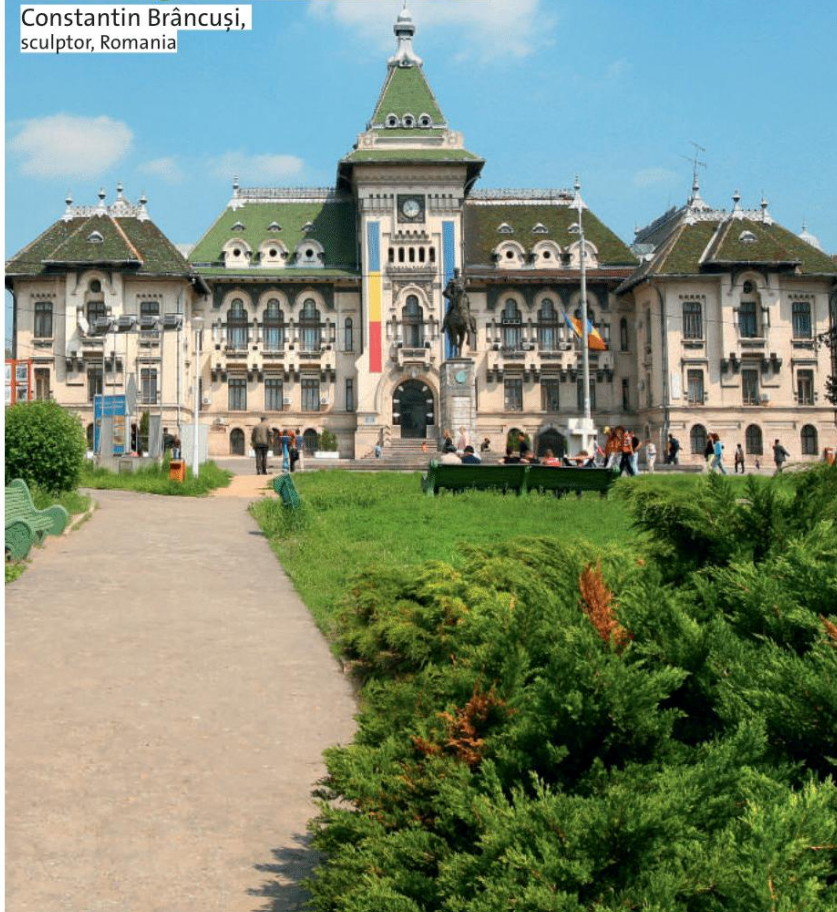
INFINITE ART
Brâncuși Ensemble

The main attraction of Târgu-Jiu is the National Cultural Complex Constantin Brâncuși. Impressive works of the world-renowned Romanian sculptor, student of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin, are the only outdoors creations of the artist. The pieces are spread on an axis that runs through the city for more than 1.7 km. Well known: Table of Silence (Masa Tăcerii) (in the Public Garden), also called "the Dacian table" ("Masa Dacică"), made of stone; Gate of the Kiss (Poarta Sărutului) (in the Public Garden), like a triumphal arch; The Column of the Infinite (Coloana Infinitului) (Eroilor Street) a massive monument of 16 cast brass modules, that recalls the wooden pillars of peasant verandahs from Gorj. Brâncuși has dedicated these works to the fallen heroes of the First World War.

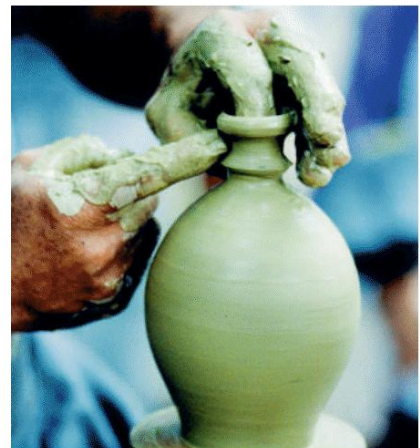
NATIONAL CULTURAL COMPLEX
CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI
www.centrulbrancusi.ro
www.targujiu.ro


"I want my works to stand in parks and public gardens, no one should know what they are and who made them, but everyone should feel their need and their friendship, as something that belongs to the soul of Nature."

Constantin Brâncuși,
sculptor, Romania



The Prefect's Office Building, Dolj, Craiova



110 km away from Craiova is the most known settlement of potter's artisans - Horezu. Visit the city and you can admire its traditional pottery and glazing techniques.

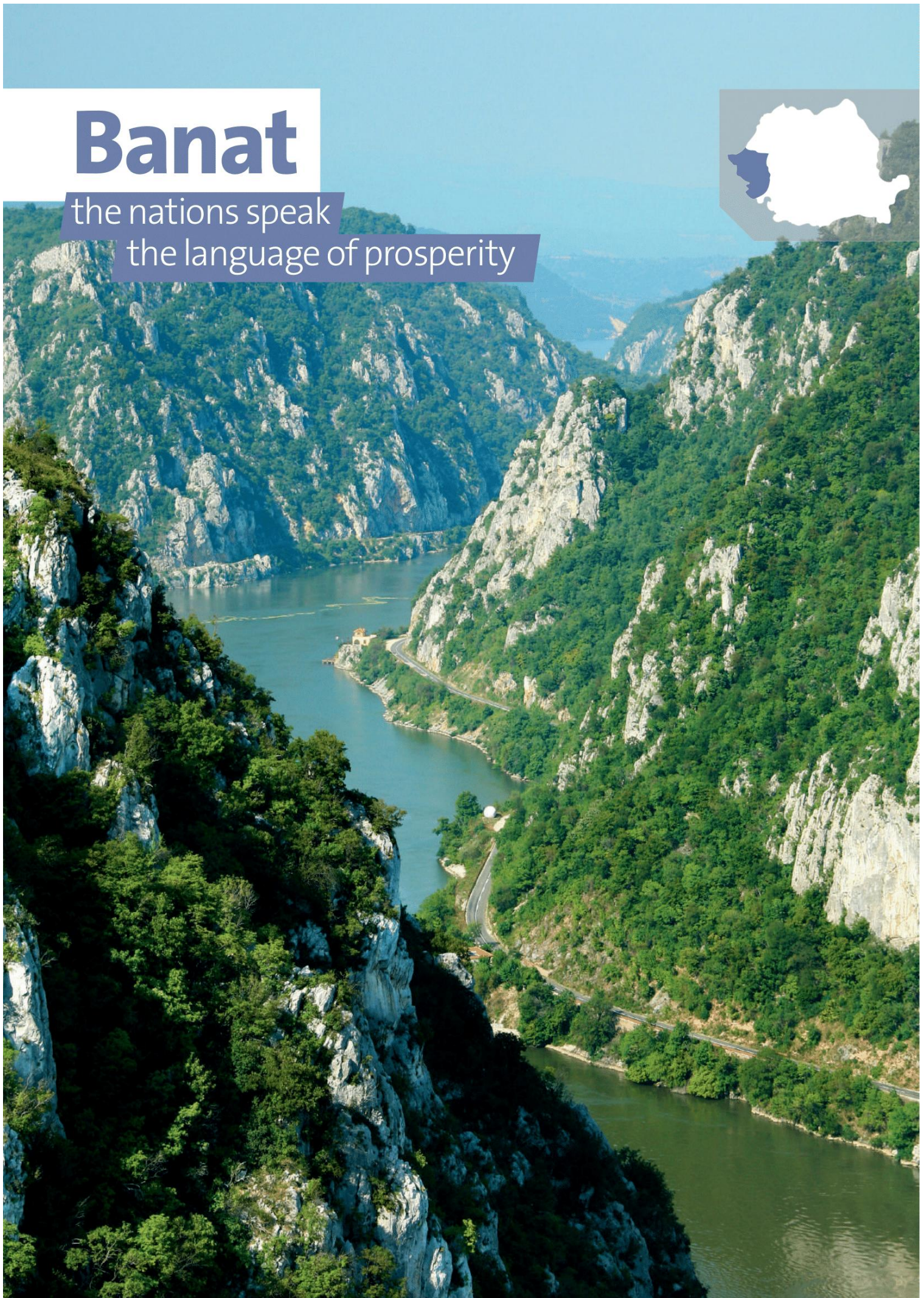
IN THE MONEY CITY
Capital of all people in Oltenia

Craiova is also called "Bănie", meaning the money city of the military leaders of medieval Oltenia, one of the principalities of the Romanian Lands. Here was born the genius inventor of sonics, Gogu Constantinescu. In this powerful academic center, the famous sculptor Constantin Brâncuși received his artistic education. Seven of Brâncuși's works are at the Art Museum of Craiova. The museum itself is located in a special building, in Jean Mihail Palace, edifice built respecting the French architectural plans of Paul Gottereau Alfred Jules, who designed the CEC Palace in Bucharest.

CRAIOVA
www.primariacraiova.ro
www.aeroportcraiova.ro

Banat

the nations speak
the language of prosperity





The western region of Romania is proud of its superlatives, breathes Western air and holds varied traditions, and its multi-ethnic and multi-confessional character.

The history of this region has convinced many nations and tribes to settle on its compact territory blessed with a gentle nature, and a terrain that brings prosperity. Perhaps this fertile nature is the secret behind hundreds of years of coexistence of all these nations. Self-esteem and unity



are basic features of people from Banat, hardworking inhabitants, who boast of leading the field. This stereotype of local patriotism covers both the history and the present of people from Banat. The 1989 revolution started in Timișoara, the flag-city of the region, became a martyr city and declared itself free of communism. But Timișoara was the first city in Europe with electrically lit streets (1884), with the benefit of one of the oldest public water supply systems (1732) and the first electric tram, in Romania (1899). Superlatives in Banat can continue with nature: the Danube Valley is the largest transversal line of the Carpathians and the Buhui Cave is crossed by a long underground river (3220 m). Beyond the superlatives, Banat invites you to explore parks and nature reserves such as the Iron Gates (Porțile de Fier), Nera-Beușnița Passes, Domogled-Cerna Valley or Semenice-Caraș Passes or to enter the Blue Cave from Pietroasa. Finally, on the beautiful valley of Cerna, Banat leads you to rest or treat yourself in the timeless and famous Herculane Resort. And if you're the active type, a bike ride through the Semenice Mountains will take your breath away, and not because of the effort, but because of the calm and gentle beauty of the mountains, because of hundreds of colors that meet your eyes and the bluest of skies. Here, everything seems to be as quiet as the early days of the world. We've already said that Banat's attractions would be worthy much less without the local people. The inhabitants of Banat are proud of their myriad of ethnicities – Romanians, Hungarians, Germans or Serbians lived in harmony. Even today, Banat continues to live peacefully and develop harmoniously.

DID YOU KNOW?

Johnny Weissmuller, five times Olympic champion in swimming and famous Tarzan actor, was Swabian (German ethnic), born in Timișoara.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Nera Passes.** Have an adventure, try rafting in these passes, visit Beului Eye Lake, of which water does not freeze during the winter, attracting migratory birds for wintering.

❖ **Danube Valley.** Sail in the most picturesque part of the Danube Defile, between Dubova and Eselnita. You will see the river "boiling" at Cazane due to the narrowing of the deep fast-flowing river.

❖ **Red Miniș.** Try this great red wine from the Miniș vineyard, named "king of wines" 150 years ago, in London.

DIARY

- ❖ **Serbian Christmas**
January 7, Traditional Christmas, Timișoara
- ❖ **Fair Kiss**
February, feast of newly married women, Hălmagiu village
- ❖ **Iorgovanul**
May, folk festival, Sântana, Arad

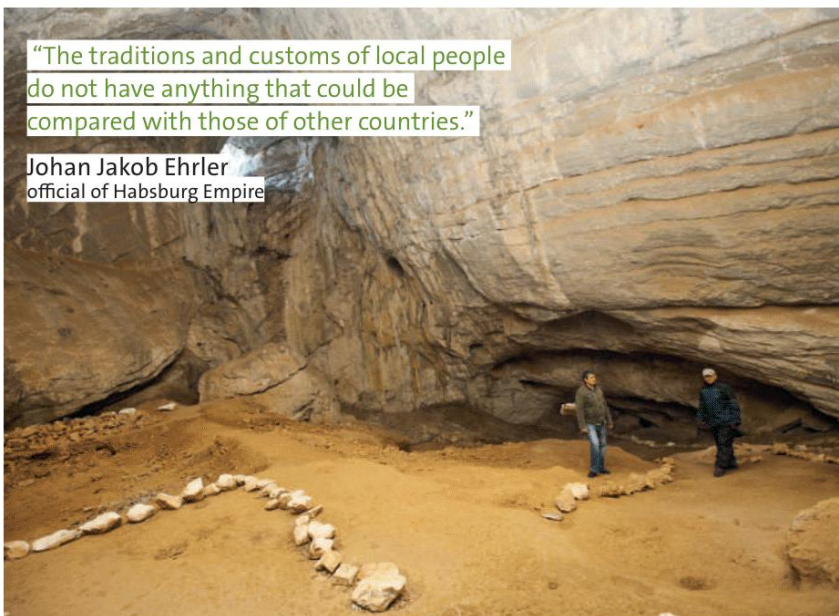
CONTACT

www.timisoara-info.ro

Photo: (left) Cazanele Mari near Dubova Gulf; (above, left) shrine of neolithic sanctuary at Parța, in the Museum of Banat in Timișoara; the Eftimie Murgu complex of Rudăriei Valley, counts 22 horizontal mills (top right); Corcoaiei Passes in the Domogled-Cerna Valley National Valley.

"The traditions and customs of local people do not have anything that could be compared with those of other countries."

Johan Jakob Ehrler
official of Habsburg Empire



Veterani Cave is near Cazanele Dunării

VETERANI CAVE

Searching for treasure

Veterani Cave in the Cazane Reservation, 25 kilometers far from Orșova, is a tourist attraction accessible only by boat or motor boat. Veterani was the first scientifically mapped cave in the world (1692). Here bear and hyena fossils were found, as well as fragments of ancient pottery and human remains, thousands of years old. Used by Dacians as a sanctuary to the God Zamolxis, the cave was converted, in Roman times, into a military outpost for navigation control on the Danube. Count Federico Veterani, an Austrian officer of Italian origin, mapped and fortified the cave, and repelled, in 1692, an Ottoman army that was trying to sail up the Danube. From that time dates the spread of treasures hunters' legends, for example, the legend that the Empress Maria Theresa had hidden her secret treasure in the system.



With a length of about 22km, Nerei Canyon allows you an extended rafting session

BEEKEEPING

Banat is like honey

The inhabitants of Banat have been enjoying the bees' hard work for thousands of years. The Greek historian Herodotus was the first to mention the existence of beekeeping in Dacia. The Banat inhabitants have always valued the gift of bees, from the sweet and healthy honey to wax and other apian products beneficial to health. And today, bees are a wealth to Banat, the small insects taking advantage of the mild climate, vast meadows and nature untouched by civilization and pollution.





Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral of Banat in Timișoara

The martyr city, where the Romanian Revolution of 1989 broke out, Timișoara enjoys an excellent reputation among visitors. The Viennese architecture in Baroque style caused it to be dubbed Timișoara - Little Vienna.



BĂILE HERCULANE

Two millennia of health

Băile Herculane is the ideal spa resort: combining healing of the body, through treatments for many diseases, with healing for the soul, for two millennia of history, since the Romans founded the settlement, naming it after demigod Hercules. As an extra bonus: the gorgeous landscape offered by the Cerna river Valley.

BĂILE HERCULANE

www.baileherculane.ro

ON MOUNTAIN PATHS

The Semenic peaks

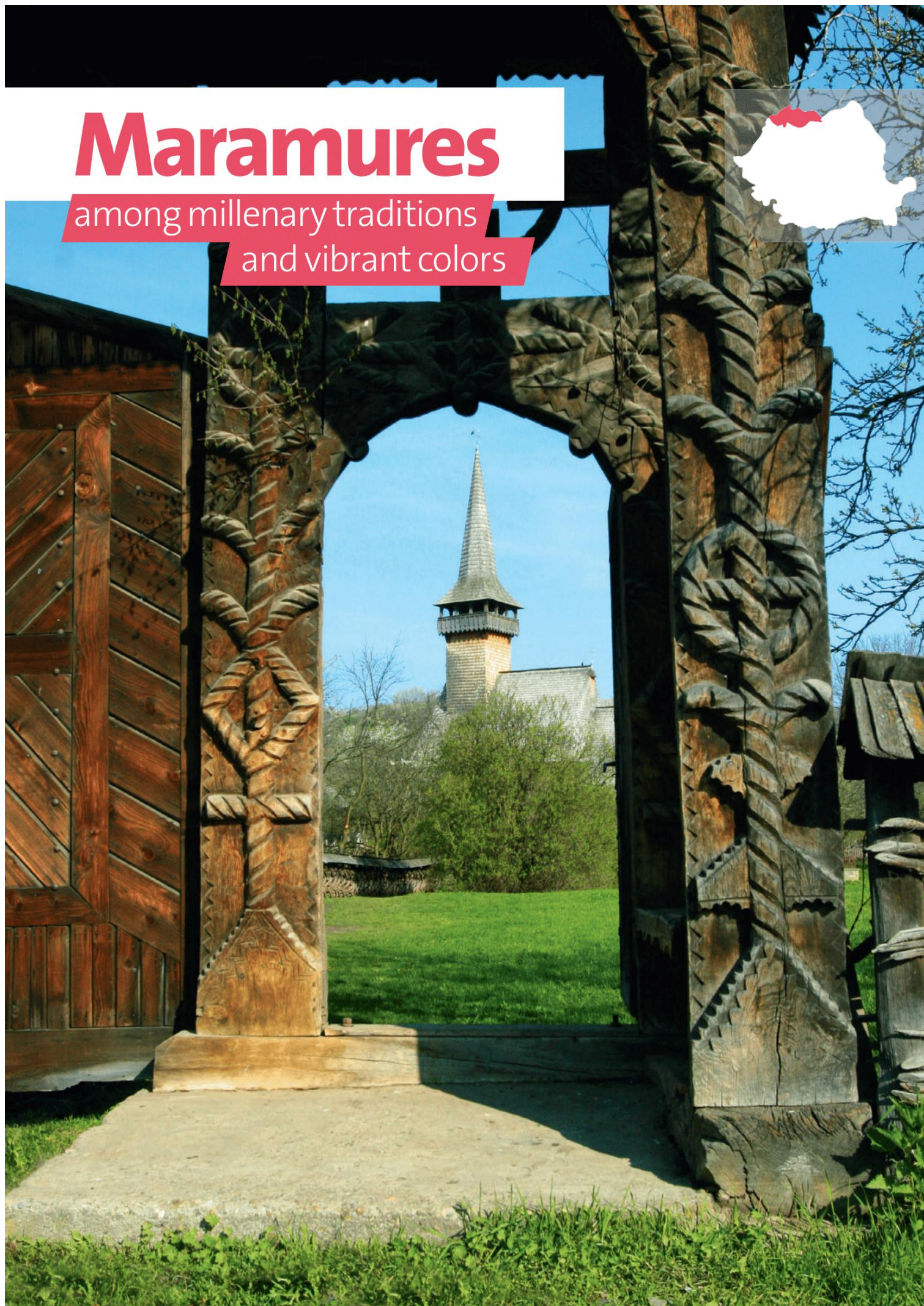
The highest point of the Banat Mountains is found in Semenic, Piatra Goznei peak (1445 m).

The Semenic Mountains gladden your eyes with their high broad peaks and deep valleys. Moreover, in the Bârzavei, Nera and Timiș Valleys you will find the oldest permanent high altitude settlements, picturesque villages inhabited by welcoming and hard-working entrepreneurs.



Maramures

among millenary traditions
and vibrant colors

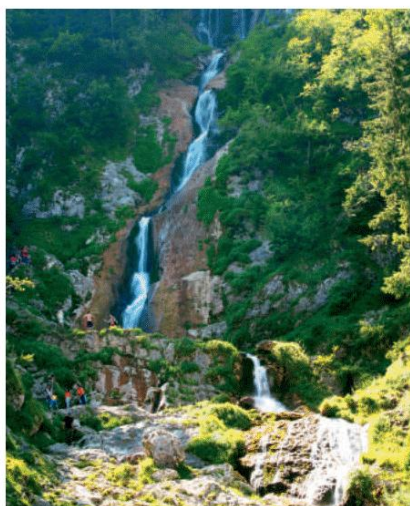




In Europe you can barely find a place where ancient traditions are so respected as in northwestern Romania, where the customs and domestic universe remain unchanged.

In the historic county of Maramures, village life seems frozen in time. People still dress like their ancestors of two thousand years ago. In the villages of Iza, Mara or Tisa Valley, men wear tight peasant trousers, long coarse-woven peasant coats and sandals, and women the homespun peasant skirt.

Even if people from Maramures have not given up their ancient habits, this does not mean that the visitor will not enjoy all the hospitality and comfort of Maramures civilization. So set off without fear to the land where you can admire popular costumes, famous shirts with inset and hanger, old-fashioned techniques, such as the use of whirlpools for washing fabric,



or pastoral feasts, which are part of an untouched world.

The centre of this universe is the extraordinary civilization of wood, developed from necessity: In the 18th century, Hungarian Catholic nobles banned the Orthodox Romanians from building stone churches. So, from the ingenuity of local craftsmen, the maramures gothic style was born; reflected in the painted churches and monumental gates, meticulously carved with specific symbols – the sun, the tree of life, the belt.

Eight of the famous churches of oak or fir, with their towers reaching the sky, are included as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and are part of the tourist routes - their names are Bârsana, Budești, Desești, Ieud, Plopiș, Poienile Iza, Rogoz and Șurdești. Usually located on the highest point in the village, many of the 100 churches of the region date from the XVII century. The one in Bârsana, a real architectural jewel, is a synthesis of all other edifices from Maramures: a shingle roof with double eaves, and a tower above the narthex, with elongated gazebo and helm. In addition, until 1997, when the construction of Săpânța-Peri Monastery was completed, Bârsana was considered the highest wooden building in Europe (steeple measuring 57 m).

Although a less extensive region, Maramures has accrued many superlatives in Romania: in the Șomcuta Mare Cave you can explore one of the youngest karstic formations in the country, and near Baia Mare and you can walk through the largest edible chestnut forest in the country (270 ha) and the most northerly of its kind in Europe. Above all these, the region boasts a spectacle unique in the world: the Cheerful Cemetery (Cimitirul Vesel) in Săpânța, a place of eternal rest where colorful wooden crosses for the dead, and waggish rhyming epitaphs, recalls the habits of the ancestral Dacians, who defeated death through faith in another Life.

DID YOU KNOW?

Maramures wooden gates arose in the feudal period, and consist of three pillars, a threshold and a roof. The pillars are decorated with ropes, trees of life, solar rosettes, snakes, trees and the wolf's tooth. They had as spiritual role the defence of the household.

THREE EXPERIENCES

- ❖ **The Gates of Vadu Iza.** This village is said to have the most beautiful carved wooden gates in Maramures.
- ❖ **Horincă.** Drink a fruit brandy (plums) from Maramures, double distilled, very fragrant, but exceptionally strong.
- ❖ **Creasta Cocoșului.** In this nature reserve in the Gutai Mountains, you discover a bizarre form of topography, part of an ancient volcanic crater. If you reach the summit (1428 m), you'll get a great view.

DIARY

- ❖ **Tânjăua.** April, agrarian celebration, Hoteni-Ocna Șugatag
- ❖ **Sâmbra oilor.** The first Sunday of May, celebration called Ruptul Sterpelor, in all villages of Maramures
- ❖ **The Onion Fair.** September, holiday and folk festival, Asuaju de Sus

CONTACT

www.romaniatourism.com
www.visitmaramures.ro
www.baiaclarecity.ro



HEALTH AND SPORTS

Maramures that heals

Borșa resort takes advantage of its situation and mild climate offering the visitors ozonized air free of allergens. From here, you can go to Pietrosu Rodna Reserve (Pietrosu Rodnei) and close by is Horse Falls (Cascada Cailor), the highest in the country. In Borșa you can keep your fitness at its peak, practicing winter sports: the cable car, three ski coasts and Olympic natural take off, unique in Europe. You can ski at the spa resort of Izvoarele and at Mogoșa hut (Baia Sprie).



FERTILITY RITUAL

The Man Who Gets Wet from Șurdești (Udătorul din Șurdești)

Each year, the second day of Easter, Șurdești village celebrates the man who gets wet, the first married man to go ploughing. The whole village gathers in front of the church, to find out who the most diligent landowner has been and who has not observed Lent. Following a complex ceremony, preserved from ancient times, the man who wets is led to the river and sprinkled with water, to bless the community. After this ritual of purification and fertility, the village people express their joy through folk dances. The man who gets wet show is rounded off by the fact that the Șurdești church, built in 1724, is among the highest wooden structures in Europe (tower measuring 54 m).



Whirlpool for washing laundry in the Călinești village

RODNA MOUNTAINS

Towards the Ineu Peak (Vârful Ineu)

Rodna Mountains are the most impressive of the Eastern Carpathians, with peaks of over 2,000 m high. The highest peak is Pietrosul (2,303 m), followed by Ineu (2279 m) and Ineuț (2222 m). Pietrosul is part of Rodna Mountains National Park, a Biosphere Reserve since 1979. The uniqueness of flora and fauna, glacial cirques and lakes, the panorama of Rodna and Maramures mountains, Vișeu Valley, and cities of Borșa and Moisei recommend Pietrosul Rodnei for adventure hiking.

RODNA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK
www.parcrodna.ro



ON IZA VALLEY

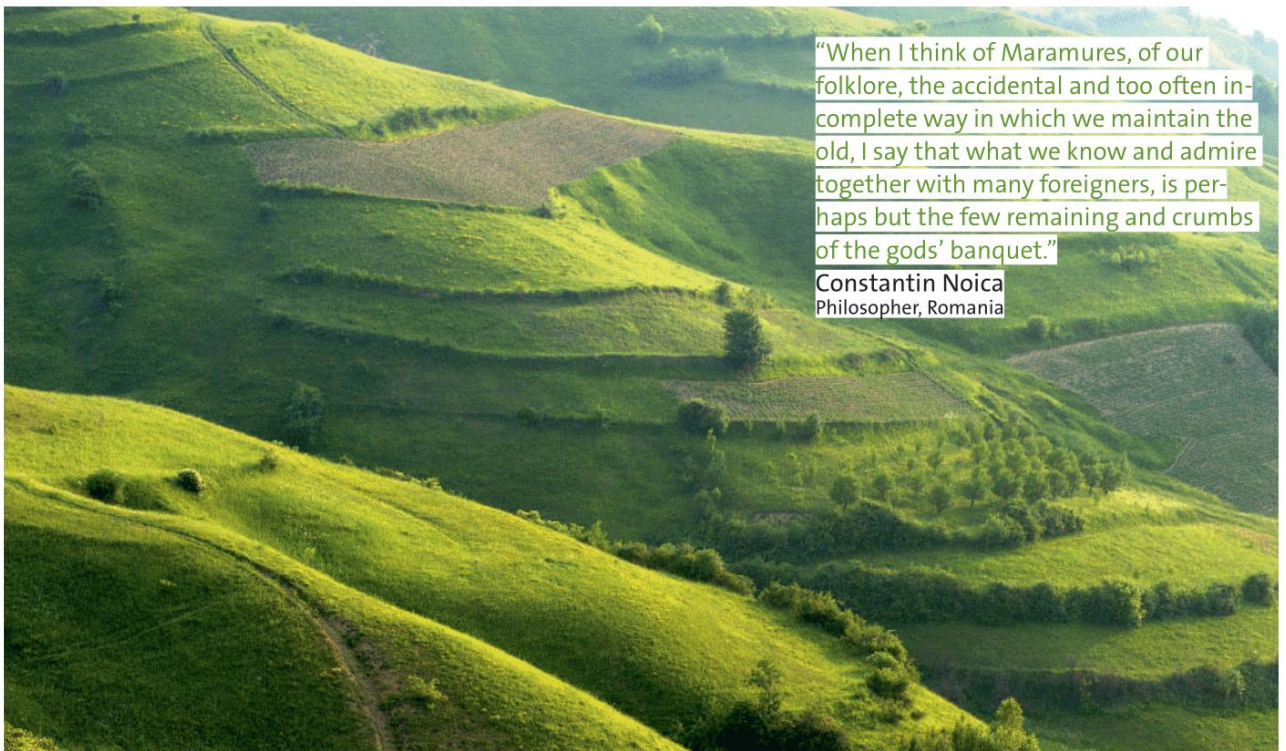
At Maramures Cathedral (Catedrala Maramureșului)

Ieud village of Iza Valley, is a true ethnographic hot-spot thanks to the locals who still wear the traditional costume and the women who wash clothes in the river and whiten the linen and wool rugs in whirlpools according to old traditional methods. Ieud village has two wooden churches, both UNESCO monuments. The one in the valley, known as the “Cathedral of Maramures”, hosts a valuable collection of icons on glass.

CHURCHES IEUD
www.primariaieud.ro



Ieud village, Church on the hill, Maramures



“When I think of Maramures, of our folklore, the accidental and too often incomplete way in which we maintain the old, I say that what we know and admire together with many foreigners, is perhaps but the few remaining and crumbs of the gods’ banquet.”

Constantin Noica
 Philosopher, Romania

COMMUNIST PRISONS

Sighet memorial

In Sighetu Marmăției, the most northern city in Romania, you can visit the prison where, after World War II the Communists wiped out the political and cultural elite of Romania. Arranged as a museum, the former political prison recalls, especially to Romanians, about half a century of oppression and falsified history of the communist regime.

VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM
AND RESISTANCE MEMORIAL
www.memorialsighet.ro



THE SINGERS FROM MARAMURES

100 peasant choirs

Maramures is charming because its people are great singers, attested by the fact that the choral movement has a 200-year tradition. Documents show that there are over 100 peasants choirs, and the passion for singing is felt in each square kilometer. In Satulung commune you find six choirs in an area of 10 square kilometers. Ardasat is a village famous for its folk choir, honoured in both national and international competitions. The Children's Choir of Ieud astounded audiences with its carols in a tournament in December 2011 in the United Kingdom. Other known choirs are those of Finteușu Mare, "Chioarului voice" ("Glasul Chioarului") of Șomcuta Mare or "The Horas" ("Horitoarele") from Poșta.

CITY OF GOLD

Mining and painting

Baia Mare, first attested in 1329, is a mining center, especially famous for processing gold and silver. The medieval charm of the city is found in Liberty Square, with Stephen's Tower, about six centuries old, and Elizabeth House, built (1446) by the Prince of Transylvania, Iancu de Hunedoara, for his wife. A visit to the old school of painting will take you to a park of oaks, where you can find the tulip tree, one of the first plants to appear on Earth 60 million years ago. As for painting, from 1896 onwards, Baia Mare has been a major center for fine arts, the school was founded by Simion Corbul-Hollosy. You will find fine modern art near Mara Hotel: the Solar Arc (Arc Solar) monument of art consists of 76 elements of wood in combination. You should stop at the Mineralogy Museum (Muzeul de Mineralogie) to admire the mine flowers.

BAIA MARE
www.baiamarecity.ro
www.baiamareairport.ro



MARAMURES

TIMBER AND TOURISM

Ride with Mocănița

If you've taken the Mocănița from Vișeu de Sus, you've wandered into a narrow gauge train ride pulled by a steam locomotive in a breathtaking landscape. The railway, built between 1930-1933, was intended to facilitate logging. Vaser Valley pioneers were settlers of German origin who had been here since the second half of the XVIII century, and former settlers are known as today "țipțeri" from their territory of origin, Zips.

They were the first to exploit the wood from the old forest in Vaser Valley. Today, the train carries lumber and tourists through the Vaser Valley, the only way to access a beautiful mountainous area with its wilderness. The Vaser River follows a narrow valley where nearly untouched ancient forests alternate with steep cliffs, meadows and springs of mineral water. Mocănița goes slowly, with many stops for passengers, refueling and loading logs, but mainly for you to enjoy the scenery and fresh air.

VIȘEU DE SUS

www.cffviseu.com

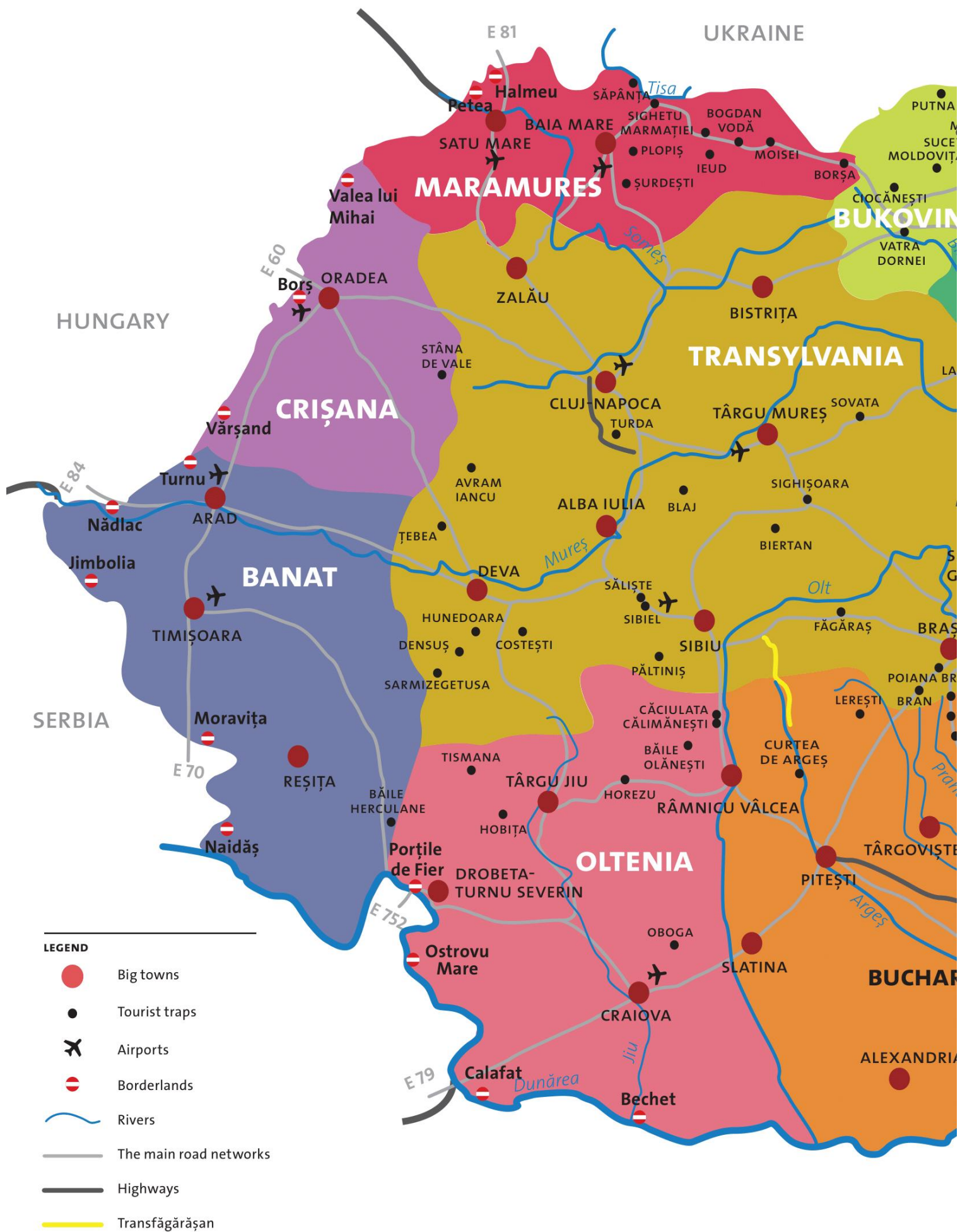


WOODEN CHURCHES

Permanent Museums

The Wooden Churches of Maramures are museums that are almost always open to the public, and services are held here regularly. In comparison to the massive stone churches, these small places of worship of Maramures organise their space differently: they are narrow, built of oak logs placed horizontally, with shingle roofs and double overlap (the roof has an ornamental "skirt") and with high and slender towers.







HISTORIC REGIONS OF ROMANIA

Each historic region of Romania astonishes you with the specific folk costumes, the appearance of the houses which changes with different landforms and habits, the local traditions, but also with the food variety. Some areas are multicultural and have a large variety of tourist attractions. These nine regions presented in the brochure can be identified on the map by different colors: Wallachia, Oltenia, Banat, Maramures, Crișana, Transylvania, Bukovina, Moldavia, Dobrogea.

Crisana

a country of small
fast-flowing rivers





Crișana is the region which applies the principle that strong essences are kept in small containers. Gorges, waterfalls, caves, are all gathered in an area little bigger than a county.

Crișana is in the western part of Romania and includes Bihor and Arad county. It is called Crișurilor Plateau (Țara Crișurilor) from the many rivers bearing this name, the most important being: Crișul Repede, Crișul Negru and Crișul Alb. Legend says that a greedy lover forced the sons of Criș cel Bătrân to seek a gold treasure. A witch turned the paths upon which the three sons of the king walked into running water. The soldiers who escorted them were transformed by the witch into small, fast-running, "crișuri".

The real gold of Crișana, not a very large territory, is hidden in its many tourist attractions, especially in the natural ones. Here is the longest cave in the country, the Wind Cave (Peștera Vântului) (47 km), but also one of the best equipped karstic formations in the country, Bears' Cave (Peștera Urșilor). As the name implies, Bears Cave hosts large quantities of bones of cave bears, disappeared 15,000 years ago. Another magnificent destination, Galbena Passes (Cheile Galbenei) which suddenly begins at the foot of a vertical wall of limestone, forming the largest and wildest canyon in the Apuseni Mountains. Nearby there are the Ponor Cities, the monumental opening of a karstic complex of eight underground chambers. Among them you'll find the Lost World. An inspired name for a complex karstic and speleological landscape, consisting of a forest with potholes (circular caves), caves and springs (springs with

intermittent flow). To reach these wonders of nature one can leave Arieșeni, a Bihor Mountains resort, situated at an altitude of about 1.000 m, renowned for its ski slopes. For rest and recovery, there the Western Apuseni, the Băile Felix, and the Stâna de Vale spa resorts.

In addition to these beauties of nature, man has left his mark in Crișana. You should make time to see the vestiges of the City of Oradea, a citadel with five bastions at its corners, or the ancient Dacian fortress, Ziridava. You can find time for quiet reflection at the Church with Moon Church (Biserica cu Lună) (Oradea), which received its name from a clock installed in its tower in 1793. This complicated mechanism built by an ingenious mechanic in the city, reproduces exactly the rotation of the celestial body. And if you want to know what a water-powered board-saw looks like, and to admire the beautiful folk costumes of the region, go to Pietroasa village, a remarkable folk centre.



DID YOU KNOW?

Bears Cave (Peștera Urșilor) was discovered accidentally in 1975, and named for numerous cave bear fossils, a species which disappeared 15,000 years ago. In addition to this, chamois, cave lion and hyena fossils have been discovered.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Izbucul** (a spring with intermittent flow) in Călugări (Izbucul de la Călugări). In the Cărpineț commune there is an intermittent spring, whose water flows every 20 minutes, a very rare hydrogeological phenomenon.

❖ **Diosig Cellars.** Diosig-Cadea-Săcuieni vineyard draws the attention with its complex of 25 cellars for aging wine, the one pictured was built in 1830.

❖ **Hell Valley.** Along 42 km of scenic route in Apuseni Mountains, there are waterfalls and caves such as: Iadolina, Devil's Mill, Sărtoarea Ieduțului.

DIARY

❖ **Fair in Beiuș**
Weekly trade fair, Beiuș-Bihar

❖ **Song, folklore and folk dance Festival**
July, folk festival

❖ **Felix spa resort**
Fair of Vascău
Weekly ceramics fair, Vascău

CONTACT

www.turismbihor.info
www.primariaarad.ro

ON CRIȘUL REPEDE

Architecture that embraces the city

Oradea is a city on the western border of Romania, situated on Crișul Repede and populated by an ethnic mosaic. The two major cathedrals, Roman Catholic and Orthodox, are known for their architectural beauty. The first is the biggest in a baroque-style in the country, the second is in a Byzantine style. Have you ever wondered what Oradea shares with Gustav Klimt? The secession style that the Austrian artist invented, and which the city on Crișul Repede adopted with enthusiasm.

ORADEA

www.oradea.ro



FELIX SPA RESORT

Gerovital Revitalization

Just 9 km far from Oradea, in this spa resort treatments are practiced with original revitalizing Romanian Gerovital and Aslavital products. Other treatments in the Felix spa resort are based on hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, laser therapy and thermal water inhalations, among other processes. Its smaller neighbor, 1 Mai spa resort, has mineral waters and therapeutic mud. Here there is a thermal lake with a relic lotus; *Nymphaea lotus termalis-termalis*, from the tertiary era, the only one of its kind in Europe.



GOURMET STOP

Bulz at... Bulz

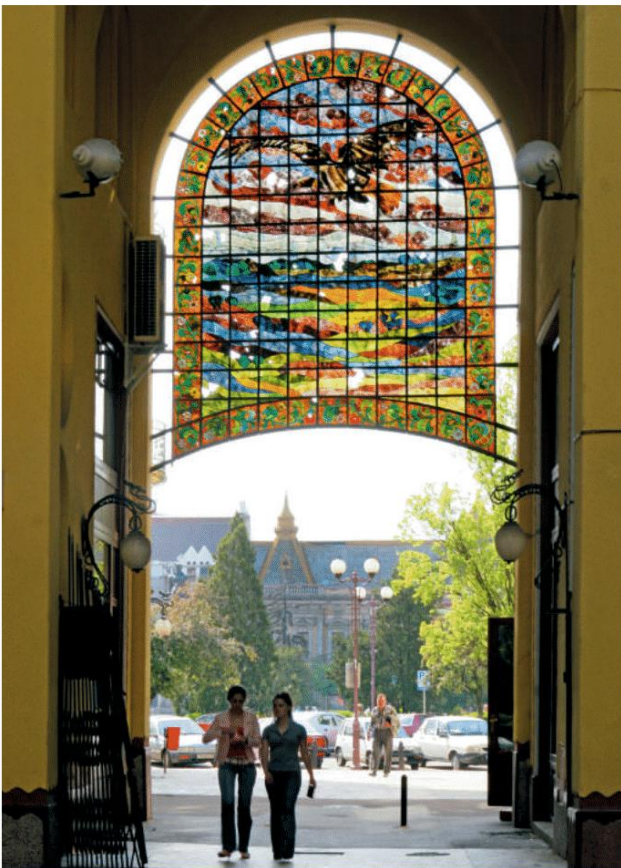
Bulz is a tasty and nourishing food that is quick and easy to prepare, made of a maize porridge neither too soft nor too hard, with thin slices of fried chop and cheese. The whole composition is then baked a few minutes, in clay bowls, then removed and served with a fried egg on top. Cheese is then grated over it. A well prepared Transylvanian bulz keeps hunger at bay for a whole day. Interestingly, this dish can be eaten at one of the guest houses in... Bulz village, in Apuseni Mountains, Bihor county. It is a quiet area where there is a small cave and two nature reserves. Enjoy your meal!

RĂDEASA CITIES

At the source of the Warm Someș (Someșul Cald)

Rădeasa consists of a cave and canyon, near Someșul Cald, in the Apuseni Mountains. Through a 200 m tunnel you cross large rooms and chimneys that came through the ceiling of the cave to the surface, forming natural windows. The cave floor is covered with large blocks of rock, including flows of water, forming waterfalls that must be crossed. The amalgam of darkness with the light which enters from outside as a reflector, the dry scree and streams make crossing the cave like a walk through a magical maze. The entire route of the Rădeasa underground is not difficult, 260 m and a 36 m bump. Experienced explorers advise not to enter the cave if it rains, because it may form a flood. The cave ends in a narrow canyon, 50 meters long. From here you enter into Poiana Rădeasa where Feredeul and Rădeasa springs merge and give rise to Someșul Cald Defile. The narrow gorges of this river provide, in turn, extremely picturesque views of limestone cliffs, over 100 m high. The steep cliffs continue up to the valley.

CAVE RĂDEASA CITIES

www.parcapuseni.ro


THE URBAN SYMBOL

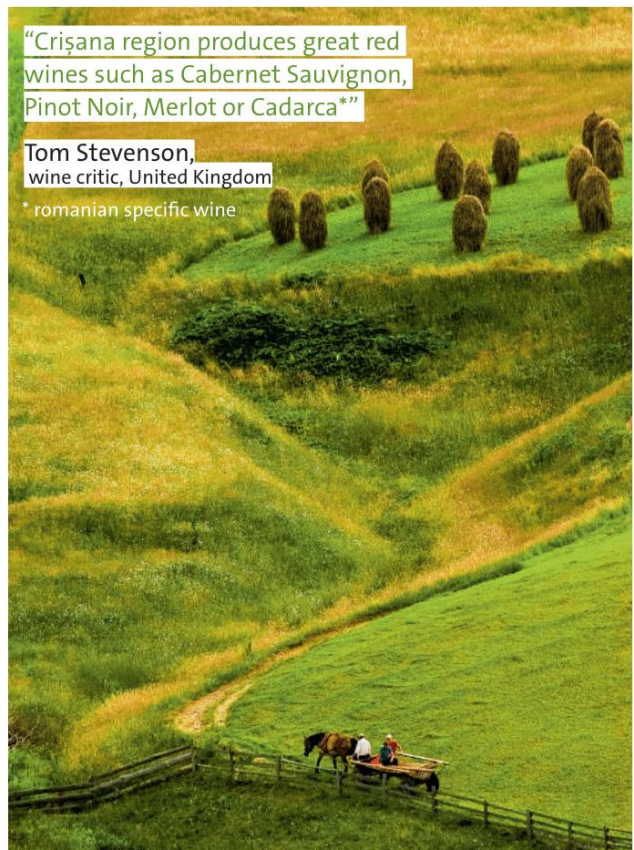
Black Eagle

Black Eagle Palace is a multifunction edifice composed of the palace and the passage, both carrying the same name. The building is one of the most important architectural monuments in the Crișana Secession style, with facades decorated with colourful floral, geometric and landscape symbols. The passage is inspired by the famous gallery Vittorio Emanuele from Milan, being covered with colored glass, with openings onto three streets, dominated by an eagle-emblem. The palace had the largest auditorium in the city, which now is a cinema. The inhabitants of Oradea chose the Black Eagle as a symbol of their city in 2011.

"Crișana region produces great red wines such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Merlot or Cadarca"

Tom Stevenson,
wine critic, United Kingdom

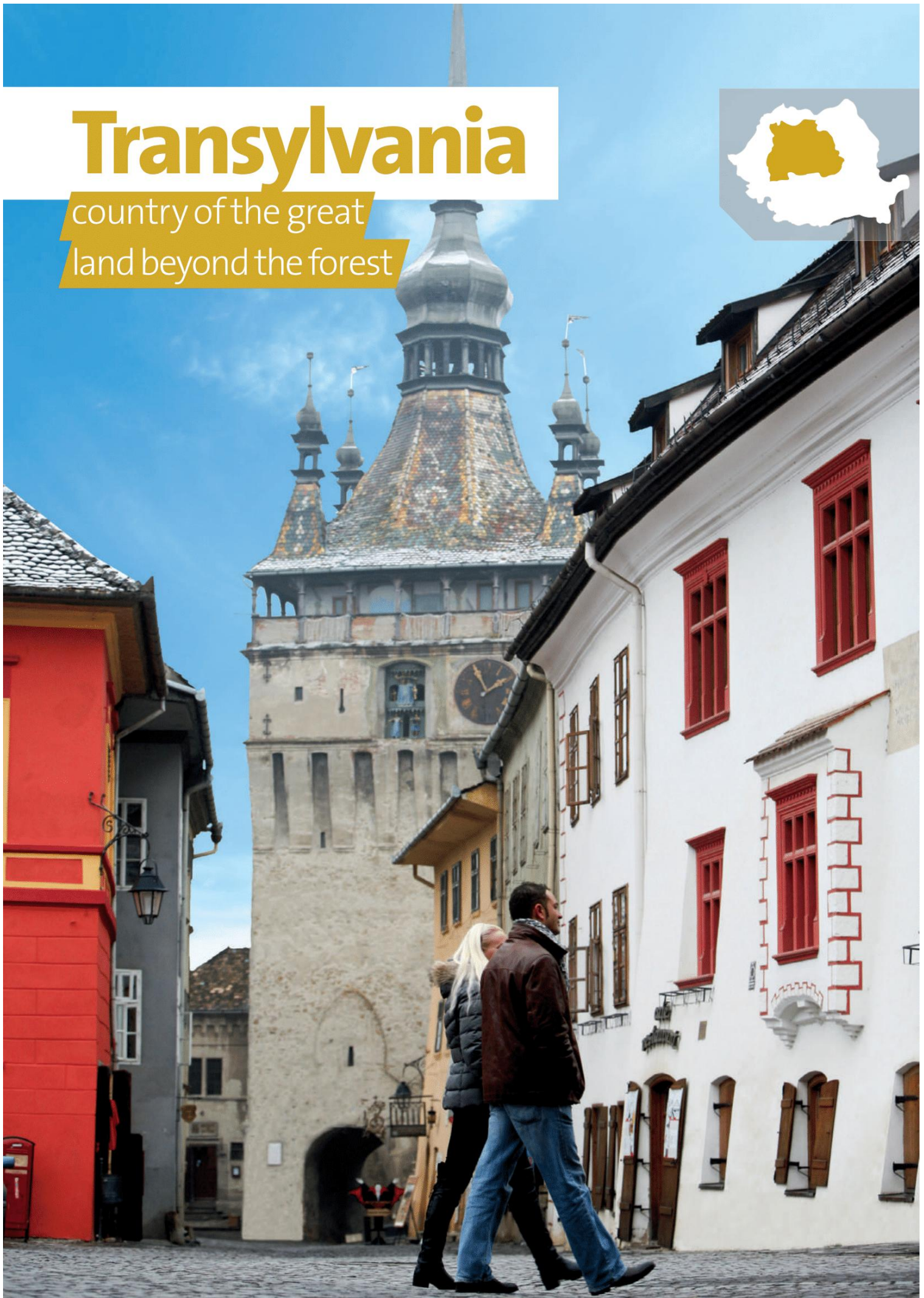
* romanian specific wine



On the Crișana hills, grass and vines are always in evidence.

Transylvania

country of the great
land beyond the forest





Transylvania is a natural stronghold, with dense forests, protected by mountains. The region enjoys a mild nature, a fertile plateau and a multiethnic, creative and hardworking population.

There's nothing like the feeling you get when you drive through the villages on the Târnave rivers, on a summer evening when the air smells like hay and old city, when the sun is about to slip beyond the hills and when children are running happily to their houses. Maybe just the feeling that time is standing still at midnight in a still inhabited medieval fortress. Both sensations can be experienced in one stay in Transylvania.

As a tourist, with a map in your hand and a little attention to the places you pass through, you find that Transylvania resembles a fortress protected by the Carpathian Mountains. In turn, it hosts ancient castles and old churches. Here are some of the best preserved medieval centres in Europe, with Saxon architecture: Braşov (central regions), Sibiu (former European Capital of Culture, 2007), or Sighișoara (one of the few inhabited city-citadel in the world).

Fortified churches that are scattered through the Transylvanian villages will be your reference points: Biertan, Saschiz and, especially, Prejmer, one of the largest fortified churches in Southeastern Europe. Seven of the approximately 150 Transylvanian fortified churches are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Transylvania is a multiethnic space known to foreigners thanks to the writer Bram Stoker and his famous Count Dracula. The films produced by Hollywood about the vampire character underlined the confu-

sion between the fictional character and the real ruler Vlad the Impaler, who inspired Stoker in the creation of his Dracula. Sorting fact from fiction is one of the goals of many travelers to Transylvania. And rest assured that they will have nothing to regret, quite the contrary. The name of Dracula is linked to one of the most famous castles of Transylvania - Bran (near Braşov).

The Transylvanian mountains shelter treasures made by medieval man, but also natural treasures: glacial lakes from Retezat, Scărișoara Ice-Cave, Piatra Craiului National Park, where bears are in their element, the Orăştiei Mountains, with the highest density of Dacian settlements, and Sambata de Jos, with the largest herd of Lipizzaner horses in the country. As for the local people, if you get to, for example, Țara Moșilor, in the gold-rich Arieș Valley (Valea Arieșului) you will immediately understand how much and how harmoniously Transylvania combines the archaic lifestyle with modern expectations.



DID YOU KNOW?

Cold Mountain, with Jude Law and Nicole Kidman, was filmed mostly near Râșnov, the old peasant fortress Rosenau. The local landscape from here is strongly reminiscent of the North Carolina (U.S.) of the XIX- century, which is the film's setting.

THREE EXPERIENCES

- ❖ **Ice hotel.** At night you sleep at -2 / +2 ° C in the building built of ice blocks, extracted from glacial Bălea Lake (Făgăraș Mountains).
- ❖ **Ewe-cheese.** Enjoy the excellent salt-cheese, with its inimitable taste. The best cheese is found among the shepherds from Mărginimea Sibiului.
- ❖ **Găina Mountain.** Climb the Găina Mountain (1486 m), at the intersection of Arad, Alba and Hunedoara counties. In July, the Girls Fair takes place here, a folk celebration where girls come of age come to present their heritage and to meet their future husbands.

DIARY

- ❖ **Feast of the lads**
March, Scheii Braşovului (Braşov's old district), the feast of the transition of the local lads from adolescence to youth
- ❖ **Medieval fortresses**
August, Mediaş, medieval shows
- ❖ **Stuffed cabbage rolls festival**
September, Praid (Harghita county), International Gourmet Festival

CONTACT

www.visitcluj.ro
www.turism.sibiu.ro
www.brasovtourism.ro



Portal of Râmeț Passes (Cheile Râmețului), Apuseni Mountains



PIATRA CRAIULUI

In the search of Carthusian Pink

Piatra Craiului Massif is in the Meridionali Carpathians, on the western and northwestern wing of Rucăr-Bran passage. These mountains have the longest ridge of the Carpathians, of about 25 km. Maximum altitude: 2238 m on Om Peak or Baciú's Peak. Piatra Craiului Mountain has only a few permanent springs, so take your own water supplies. Local flora exceeds more than 1170 species of plants, of which 180 are protected. The Carthusian is the most valuable ridge plant that grows only in this mountain range. The Latin name, *dianthus callizonus*, means "very beautiful Carthusian belts". And a detail that will surprise you, here you will find 41 species of mountain orchids. Do not expect to find exotic plants as spectacular as those in hot countries, because the orchids from temperate lands are small.

PIATRA CRAIULUI NATIONAL PARK

www.pcr.ai.ro

BRAN CASTLE

Following Dracula

Built in the XIV- century by merchants from Braşov in a strategic position on the site of an old fortification of the Teutonic Knights' crossing a transcarpathian commercial road, Bran Castle is famous due to its association with the Dracula legend. The story says that the wife of a prince who was fighting the Turks, killed herself after being convinced that her husband had died in battle. Angry with God, the prince makes a pact with the devil and becomes an immortal vampire who will always look for women resembling his wife who killed herself. The legend is inspired by the Wallachian historical figure prince Vlad (1456 – 1462), known as the Impaler for his execution of his enemies by impalement. The historical truth is that Vlad Tepeş only ever visited Bran Castle in passing. The castle is now a museum.



Bran Castle

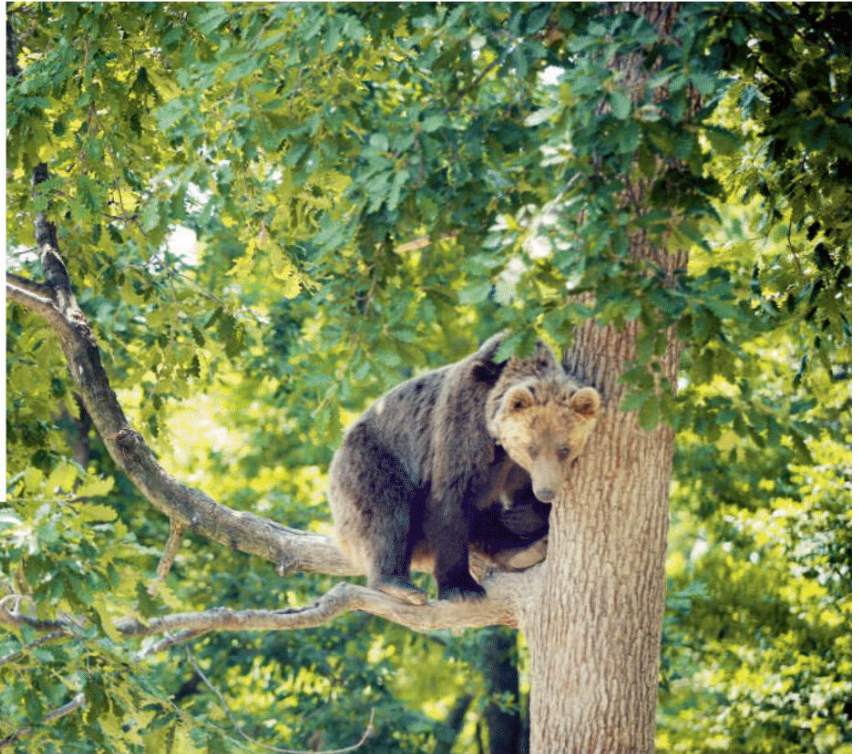
BEARS SANCTUARY

Shelter of Gray Beard Martin (Moș Martin)

Bears Reserve in Zărnești of about 60 hectares, houses many animals saved from a humiliating captivity. The park can accommodate up to 100 bears. Among them there is Mura, a bear-star, who danced almost all life at the circus. Another case is Miro, a bear cub lost in the forest, near Brașov. The Reserve can be visited by appointment only in weekends.

LIBEARTY BEAR RESERVE

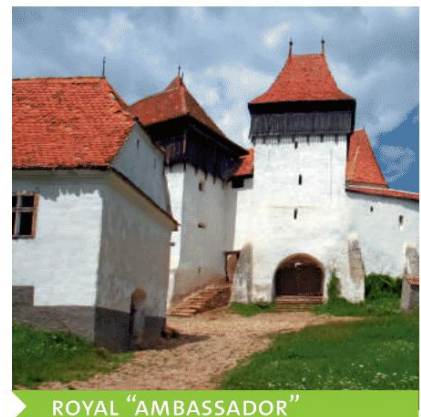
<http://primaria.zarnesti.net/informatii-utile/rezervatia-de-ursi-zarnesti>



Bears reservations from Zărnești



Biertan Fortified Church was one of the most powerful in medieval Transylvania



ROYAL "AMBASSADOR"

Passion for Viscri

Viscri is a village listed by UNESCO due to its fortified church, which is said to be the most picturesque in Transylvania. So splendid is the place that it impressed even the heir of the British throne. Prince Charles often visits Transylvania, where he is patron of a foundation and where he is attracted to new properties, especially the Guest House in Viscri. "I find that Transylvania is a combination of natural ecosystem and human cultural system. People long for that sense of belonging and identity. In Transylvania, there is a strong connection between nature and people. This unique relation is extremely important, said the man who has become a truly defender of the Transylvanian heritage.



TURDA SALINE

Mining salt

Turda Saline is a veritable museum of the history of salt mining. The mine complex is excellently preserved and arranged for visitors. A panoramic elevator lowers you into Rudolf Mine, where there is a huge wheel with 6 gondolas. Here you find minigolf courses, pool tables, sports fields, a children's playground, bowling and a theater with 200 heated seats, an ideal place for concerts. Joseph Mine (Mina Iosif) has great acoustics too, known as The Hall of Echoes (Sala Ecourilor) due to the special resonance of the salt walls. From Rudolf mine you go down by stairs or take the elevator to Terezia Mine (Mina Terezia), where there is a lake with a jetty where you can rent a boat. Turda Saline is an important treatment technique centre for speleotherapy. Upon reaching the surface, you can visit Crivacului Hall (Sala Crivacului), where a rare and yet functional piece of salt extraction is displayed, a "machine" used to lift the salt vertically from the well.

TURDA SALINE

www.salinaturda.eu



Detunata volcanic basalt Columns, from Apuseni Mountains



Fortified church Prejmer

FORTIFIED CHURCHES

Prejmer the one with solid walls

The cruciform church of Prejmer, of early Gothic times, inspired by Cistercian (Burgundy) architecture and of Roman Catholic communion, was completed in 1250. Later, around this, the most powerful peasant fortress of Transylvania was constructed in 1427. Tartlau Fortified Church (German name of Prejmer) served as a retreat and place of defence for peasant families in nearby villages. Each family had its own room, situated on one of the four floors of the surrounding wall. The fortress was designed to withstand any siege, with thick and high walls, bastions, iron gates and mobile bridges and a secret passageway through which the water and food supply of the besieged was assured.

Among the defense systems, a device called "death organ" is conspicuous, consisting of several guns placed together, which fired simultaneously. Very well preserved, the fortified church from Prejmer was listed as a World UNESCO Heritage monument.

"There is no better export product for Romania than Transylvania. The United Kingdom has no such treasure"

Prince Charles,
Heir to the throne of Great Britain



Sibiu Small Square (Piața Mică)

MILITARY ARCHITECTURE

Corvineștilor Castle

It is the most important historical monument of secular architecture in Gothic style of Transylvania (XIII). King Sigismund of Luxembourg gave the city to the Romanian Prince Voicu, whom he ennobled with the feudal domain of Hunedoara and its royal city. His son, Iancu of Hunedoara, the famous fighter against the Ottomans, fortified the city and made it his noble seat. Among the old buildings stand: The Knights' Hall (Sala Cavalerilor), The Diet Room (Sala Dietei), The Neboisa Tower (Turnul Neboisa), The White or Mace Bastion (Bastionul Alb sau Bastionul Buzduganului) (a place of sightseeing the city of Hunedoara). In the Matei wing we can see a faint painting of the legend of the raven, origin of the name of the followers of Iancu of Hunedoara (Corvineștii).

CORVIN CASTLE AND MUSEUM

www.castelulcorvinilor.ro



Corvin Castle

IN BRAȘOV

Crown City

Tourist city par excellence. In the Market Square, surrounded by Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical houses, there is the Black Church (Biserica Neagră) the symbol of the city. The church, named "Black" after a fire, is considered the biggest religious edifice in Gothic style in Transylvania. Inside you find one of the biggest organs in Europe, with 4,000 pipes. Among all the medieval fortifications of Brașov are preserved fragments of its walls and ring towers named after the guilds that supported them: Butchers (Măcelarilor), Tanners (Cojo-carilor), Drapers (Postăvarilor), Blacksmiths (Fierarilor), which have been transformed into museums, shops or restaurants.

BRAȘOV

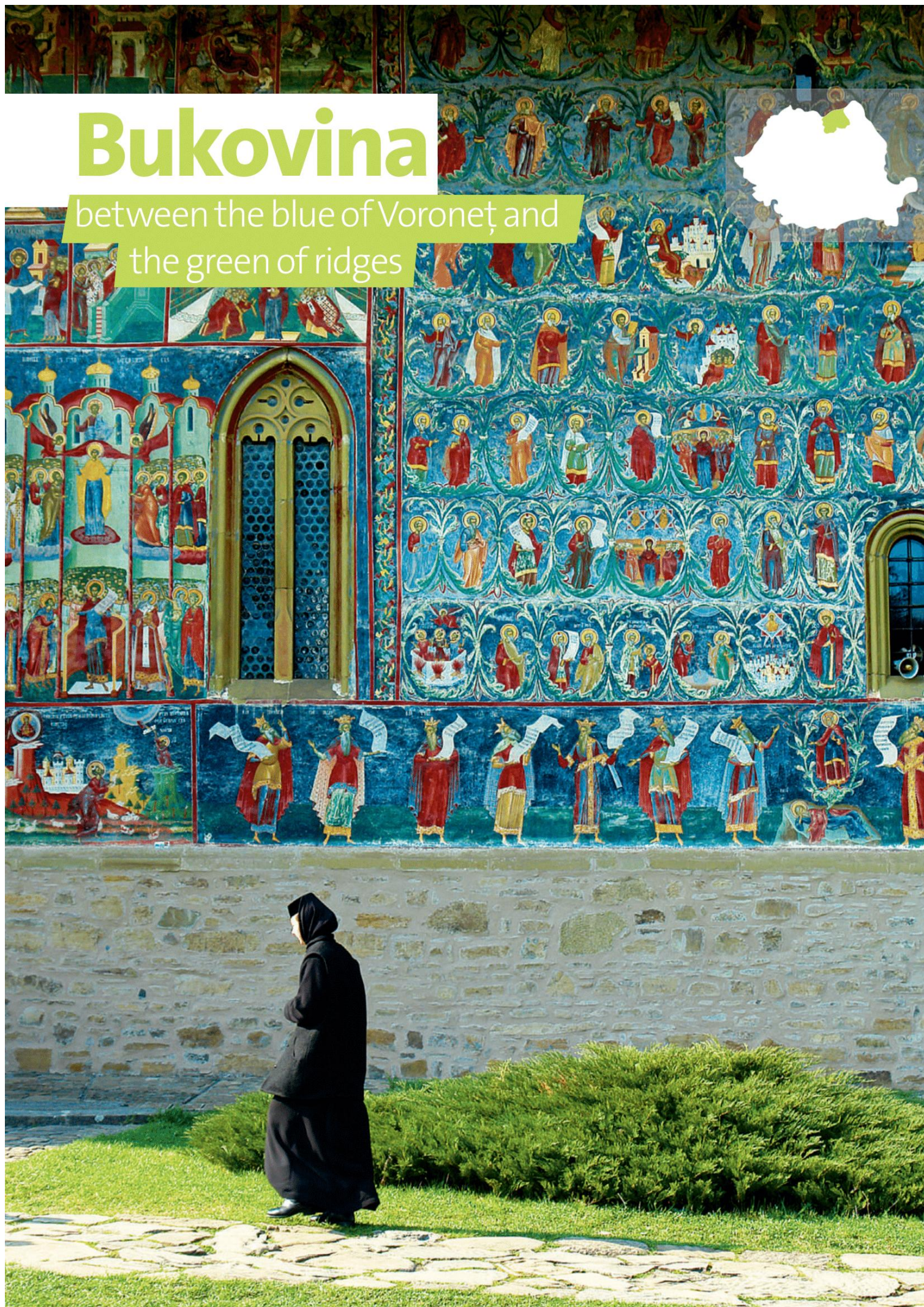
www.brasovcity.ro



The Piața Sfatului square, Brașov

Bukovina

between the blue of Voronet and
the green of ridges





Bukovina is a region where nature, divinity and humanity shake hands. In this region, it appears that the divinity painted the landscapes, and then helped people to paint churches.

This region, hidden in the mountains, is famous for the pure blue Voroneț, a famous monastery which is also called the "Sistine Chapel" ("Capela Sixtină"), but also for other expressively painted monasteries that adorn it. Listed as UNESCO World Heritage, the churches with exterior frescoes made in XV-XVI centuries, are the main tourist attraction in the region. Bukovina is the area with the greatest density of religious facilities in the country. Neculce Ion, the Moldavian chronicler, said that Stephen the Great (Ștefan cel Mare), the most

important Moldavian ruler (canonized by the Orthodox Church), founded a church after every battle won against his enemies. Almost all Moldavian princes of the Mușatinilor dynasty had this habit, and splendid monasteries have become places of eternal rest. The most important of the 22 painted churches are The Tree (Arbore) (amazing combination of colors on the outside), Probota (first shrine with outside mural), Moldovița (colored in yellow).

The frescoes of holy places reconstruct the sacred and profane history of the world, painted in specific colors, as is the case of the unique "blue of Voroneț". Legend says that the exterior painting of the monasteries ceased at Sucevița after a painter fell from the scaffolding and died, and the west wall of the monastery is thus left uncovered. The color and charm of Bukovina consists of its amazing churches, but also its Obcine, parallel rows of hills covered with beech, fir or spruce forests. Moreover, Bukovina means the "land of beeches" (Buchenland), the name given by the Austrians after the region became a province of the Habsburg Empire (1775). Also in Bukovina there are the Călimani Mountains, a large volcanic massif with spectacular natural forms. This gorgeous space is populated with people for whom the respect for traditions is the rule, and not the exception.

The popular genius has created the beautiful doinas and folk ballads of Bukovina, the barks and "lăicere" (woven war rugs peasant house), Rădăuți ceramics and the black ceramics of Marginea and its painted eggs. Craftsmen have created wonders in wood, found everywhere, from homes with an open porch, to meticulously decorated churches. All this make Bukovina to resemble an open air ethnographic museum.



DID YOU KNOW?

The formula for the colours used in murals covering the exteriors of monasteries in Bucovina is still unknown. It is amazing how 500 years ago craftsmen were able to recreate almost perfectly the natural colors, and make them endure unchanged over centuries.

THREE EXPERIENCES

❖ **Accommodation at the monastery.** Stay as a guest for one or more days in a little room at one of the monasteries, offering accommodation and food for pilgrims, made from natural ingredients.

❖ **Rafting on the Bistrița.** Embark on the Bistrița River on a raft of logs, a means of transport used for centuries by local. August is the perfect month for a perfect ride.

❖ **Potter's wheel.** Try to make yourself a clay pot at one of the master potters' workshops of Rădăuți and Marginea.

DIARY

❖ **Wedding customs in Bukovina**
June, folk festival, Straja commune

❖ **Peacock eyes**
July, master potters' fair, Rădăuți;

❖ **The Lasso (Arcanul)**
August, international folk festival, Rădăuți and Fundu Moldovei

CONTACT

www.bucovinaturism.ro



ETHNOGRAPHIC CENTRE

Houses in Ciocănești

Ciocănești village is a remarkable ethnographic centre located in the Golden Bistrița (Bistrița Aurie) valley. The wooden houses, covered with shingle, have facades decorated with multicoloured stylized geometric and floral symbols, the same ones as found on local costumes. Also typical are the carpets representing animals of the region and pastoral scenes. In the area you can hunt in hunting reserves and fishing is also an option.

IN VATRA DORNEI

Sports adventure

Vatra Dornei is a famous spa resort, known for the cheese produced here, but also as a base for sports. For winter sports there are ski and toboggan slopes. Routes of tens of kilometers are waiting for Nordic walking or mountain biking. In the neighboring resort villages, you can cycle, raft and boat on the Dorna river, like on the Golden Bistrița (Bistrița Aurie). For rock and mountain climbing, the best choice is Rarău-Giumalău massif, in the Lady's Rocks (Pietrele Doamnei) area.

VATRA DORNEI

www.vatra-dornei.ro



Ski route in Vatra Dornei.

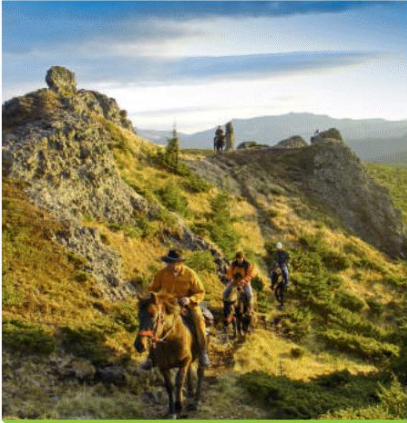
CULTURAL HALT

Humor Monastery

6 km north of Gura Humorului there is one of the most representative monuments of Romanian medieval art. The Humor Monastery was founded by the great chancellor Bubuiog Toader (1530), Prince Petru Rareș' artillery commander, who decided to decorate the exterior with frescoes. Because the monastery was built by a nobleman, not by a gentleman, it has no tower. The UNESCO monument has exterior frescoes in Byzantine style, made by the painter Toma of Suceava (1535). The dominant color is red-brick paintings, which individualizes Humor from other churches.



Humor Monastery



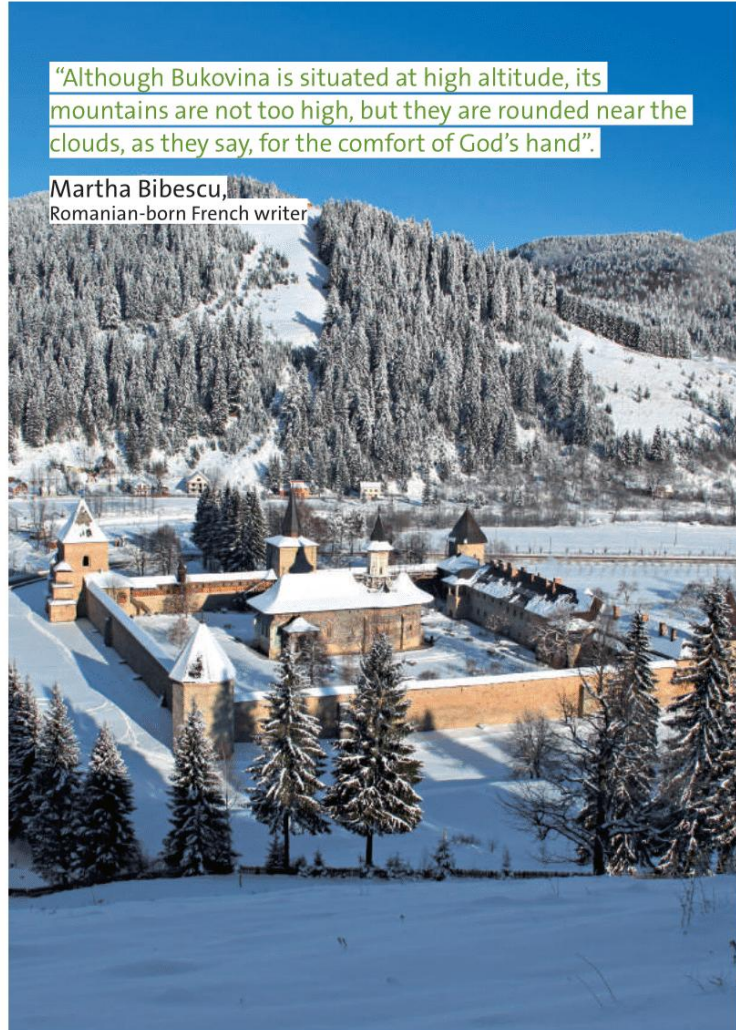
RIDING THE HIGH

Riding through Călimani

Equestrian tourism is successful in Călimani, where equestrian trails have been created, graded by difficulty. Enthusiasts can rent Arabian gallopers and the local Hutsuls breed. For beginners there are courses and pony riding. Guides and riding instructors are employees of the Călimani National Park. A common point of departure for expeditions is the horse base in Haitii Mouth (Gura Haitii), a place of confluence of the major routes. And nothing is more enjoyable than to conclude such an incomparable trek through untouched nature than a healthy dinner with local products from the villagers' households. A real treat for body and soul.

CĂLIMANI NATIONAL PARK

www.calimani.ro



"Although Bukovina is situated at high altitude, its mountains are not too high, but they are rounded near the clouds, as they say, for the comfort of God's hand".

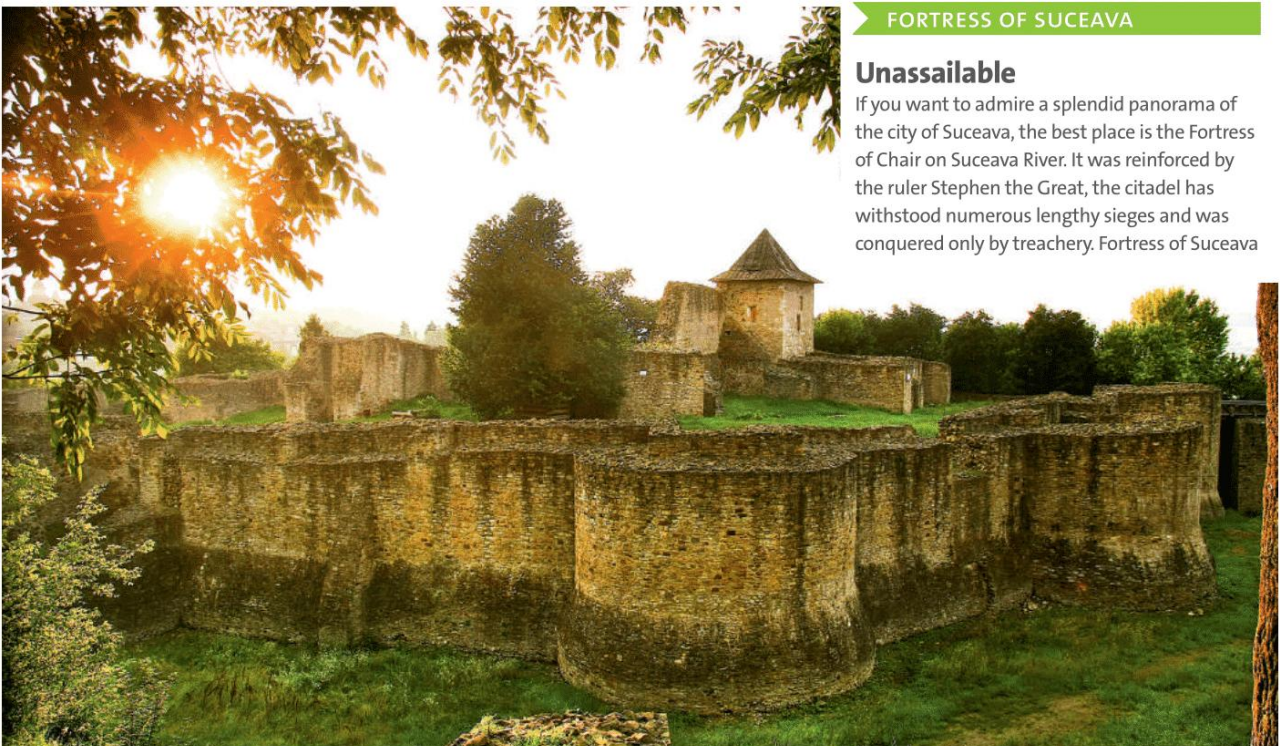
Martha Bibescu,
Romanian-born French writer

Sucevița is the last of the churches with painted exteriors.

FORTRESS OF SUCEAVA

Unassailable

If you want to admire a splendid panorama of the city of Suceava, the best place is the Fortress of Chair on Suceava River. It was reinforced by the ruler Stephen the Great, the citadel has withstood numerous lengthy sieges and was conquered only by treachery. Fortress of Suceava

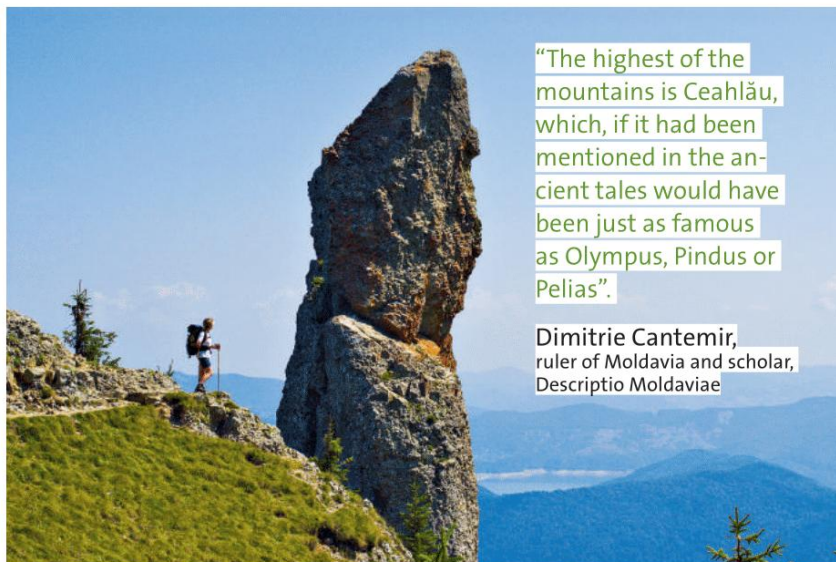


Fortress of Suceava

Moldavia

a creation of generous nature and
kind-hearted people





"The highest of the mountains is Ceahlău, which, if it had been mentioned in the ancient tales would have been just as famous as Olympus, Pindus or Pelias".

Dimitrie Cantemir, ruler of Moldavia and scholar, Descriptio Moldaviae

Moldavia is a region where nature and pastoral charm meet spirituality and gentle traditional culture. Romania's national poet and the first gymnast ever given a perfect 10 were born here.

Enjoying a harmonious blend of high mountains and swift and clean water, streaked with poetic hills undulating toward the sky, and with a plain allowing Siret River to flow gracefully to the Danube, Moldavia wins the eye at first sight. Over this fascinating natural fabric, Moldavians have added their history, their traditions, their temperament and their passions.

The legend says that the foundation of Moldavia is the result of a bison hunt, which caused this animal to become the symbol of the new country. The bison from the Moldavian arms is now a rare and protected animal. You can admire it in the reserve of Vânători-Neamț. Moreover, Neamț County is one of the main attractions of Moldavia. Here we find the largest nunneries in the country (Agapia, for example, hosts 300 nuns) and the Moldavian monastery (Neamț). In Neamț you can also explore Ceahlău Massif, the mount Athos of Romanian Orthodoxy and the supposed abode of Zamolxis the supreme god of the Dacians, the ancient inhabitants of these lands. Half of Ceahlău combe is drenched by one of the largest intra-mountainous artificial lakes in Europe, the Mountain Spring (Izvorul Muntelui) on the Bistrița Valley. In this spectacular tourist area you can admire the extremely rocky walls forming the Bicaz Passes, crossed by a Transcarpathian road.

Moldavia is pleasant for the eye and

spirit. It is the region from where the Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu comes, along with our famous storyteller Ion Creangă, whose traditional home of Humulești is a veritable museum and offers a glimpse of Moldavian peasant mentality and on the lifestyle of the XIX - century. The first gymnast ever to gain a perfect 10, the famous Nadia Comăneci, is also a Moldavian citizen. The historical spirit of Moldavia can be completely understood after seeing its main attraction in the north, the painted monasteries, centuries old, about which you will read in the Bukovina Chapter. Finally, a visit to Moldavia is incomplete without tasting the famous authentic Romanian white wines, "Grasă de Cotnari" and "Galbenă de Odobești".



Specific peasant museum near Târgu Neamț. Acquainted folk artisan

DID YOU KNOW?

Tristan Tzara, co-founder and main promoter of avant-garde Dada movement, was born in 1896, in the Moldavian city of Moinești.

THREE EXPERIENCES

- ❖ **Bicazului Passes.** (Cheile Bicazului). From Transylvanian Bicz all along to the Red Lake resort you will cross one of the most spectacular canyons carved by a river in Romania, with walls of limestone rock that reach heights of 400 m.
- ❖ **Poale-n brâu.** Try these delicious Moldavian cheese pies. The salted ones are served before meals with sour cream and the sweet ones are seasoned with honey dessert.
- ❖ **Cucuteni type ceramics.** In Piatra Neamț county museum, you can admire one of the richest collections of Neolithic pottery (about 7,000 years old), unique in Europe.

DIARY

- ❖ **Healing Spring**
The first Friday after Easter, Orthodox pilgrimage at the Bistrița Church, Neamț
- ❖ **Garlic Festival**
August, contests, food with garlic, Miss Garlic, Copălău commune (Botoșani county)
- ❖ **Ceahlău flowers**
August, folk contest for children and youth, Piatra Neamț

CONTACT

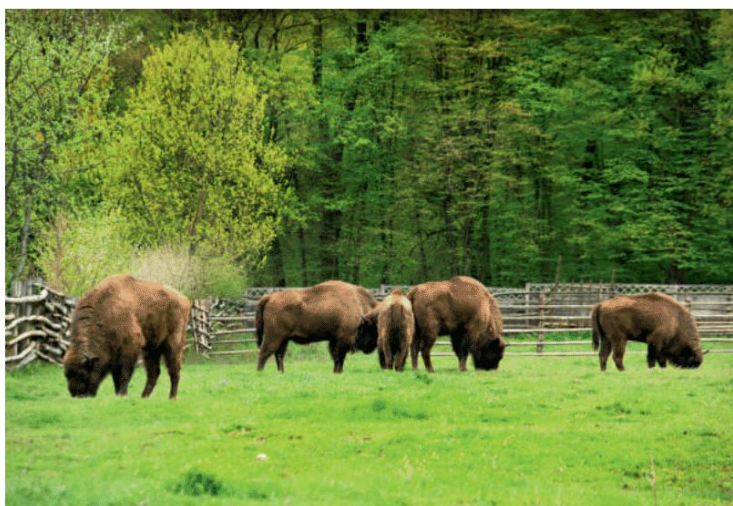
www.visitneamt.com
www.bibgtkneamt.ro

VINEYARD ROAD

From Cotnari to Odobești

If you leave without drinking a “Grasă de Cotnari” or “Galbenă de Odobești”, it means that you have not visited Moldavia. These two wines are Moldavia’s most famous. Moldavia is one of the most famous wine regions, and is well known for its potency.

Odobești Vineyard is the largest in the country and its price of its was once haggled over by Germany, Russia and Turkey. White varieties, especially the semi-sweet or sweet, are the best known at international level. Cotnari Vineyard has collected numerous awards with Grasă, White Fetească (Fetească Albă), Frâncușa or Tămâioasă, authentic Romanian varieties. Nicorești and Huși are two other wineries that have won numerous medals. Huși’s cellars can store 2,300 barrels of wine.



VÂNĂTORI-NEAMȚ

The bison reserve

In Dragoș Vodă reserve, Vânători-Neamț commune, you get the chance to admire an endangered animal that looks just like the American bison. The 11,500 ha Reservation is one of the four protected areas in Vânători-Neamț Natural Park and one of the largest in Europe, of this type. Dragoș Vodă Bison and Carpathian Fauna Reserve.

CARPATHIAN RESERVE OF BISON AND FAUNA DRAGOȘ VODĂ

www.viziteazaneamt.ro/2009/09/rezervatia-de-zimbri-dragos-voda-targu-neamt

SLĂNIC MOLDOVA RESORT

Pearl of Moldavia

The pearl of spa resorts in Moldavia enjoys the benefit of over 20 mineral water springs and of the saline climate near Targu Ocna, recommended for the treatment of many diseases. Slănic Moldova has infrastructure for spa tourism, an art gallery and a theater/ architectural monument. In the resort park, with its amphitheater form, you can also find examples of the “zâmbbru” tree (Pinus cembra), a veritable natural monument.





Cetatea Neamț, Târgu Neamț



Tower of Royal Court, Piatra Neamț

NEAMȚ FORTRESS

A barrier to invasion

Neamț Fortress is one of the best-restored medieval fortresses in Romania, turned into a museum both inside and out. You can admire the thick defense walls which have stood in the way of Hungarians, Poles, Tartars and, especially, Ottomans, in the dark Middle Ages. In the 15th century during the reign of Stephen the Great (the brave Romanian ruler who was named “The Athlete of Christ” by Pope Sixtus IV for his resistance to the Turks) Mehmed II “the Conqueror” besieged the citadel for eight days without success.

Built by Stephen the Great, the Royal Court of Piatra Neamț, is guarded by “Stephen’s Tower”, an “arbor” with four buttresses that retains its original shape.

TOURIST INFORMATION, PIATRA NEAMȚ

www.cetateaneamtului.ro



Orthodox Metropolitanate of Moldavia

CULTURAL CAPITAL

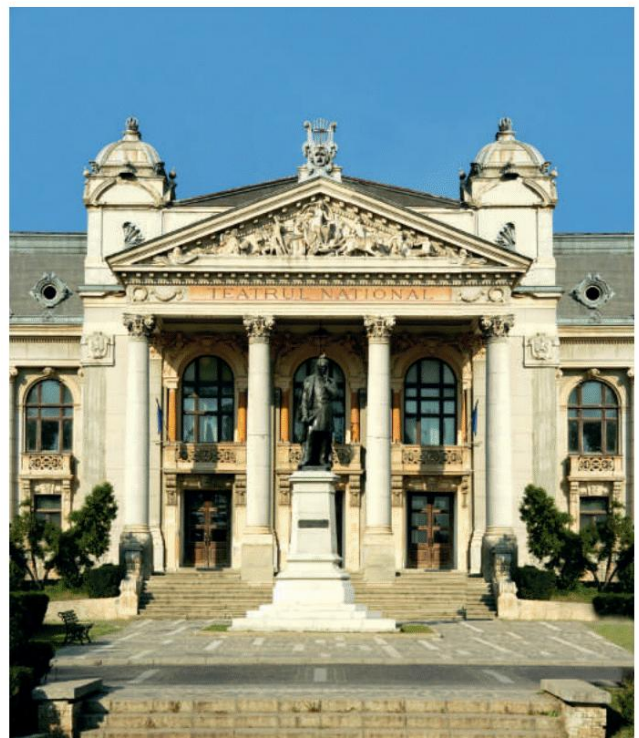
On seven hills

Town sitting on seven hills, Iași boasts the first newspaper published and the first university established in Romania. It is among the few cities in the world with over 100 Orthodox churches, most in the city center known as the Golden Plateau (Platoul de Aur). In the heart of Iași you find the Three Hierarchs Church (Biserica Trei Ierarhi) founded by Prince Vasile Lupu (1635). Its facades are completely covered with carved stone decoration in oriental motifs, which were once gilded. Vasile Lupu would have spent a considerable amount to bring relics of St. Paraskeva to Iași in 1641. He is celebrated annually as the protector of the city and of all Moldova. The holy relics are now kept at the Metropolitan Cathedral.

IAȘI

www.turism-iasi.ro

www.primaria-iasi.ro



National Theatre in Iași

Dobrogea

the land among waters





Between the Danube and Black Sea there is a land filled with history, both wet and dry, young and old, an area where many ethnic groups live together peacefully.

Dobrogea is a land of contrasts, spread over Tulcea and Constanța County in south-eastern Romania. The Danube Delta is the newest-formed part of Romania, and the largest and best-preserved delta in Europe (2681 km). Since 1991, it has been classified as UNESCO World Heritage.

The Măcinului Mountains, within a National Park, are the oldest in the country and the steppes of Dobrogea is one of the driest climates in Romania. The sunny coast of the Black Sea completes the varied series of paradoxes that made Dobrogea a region for all tastes.

Throughout its history, the region has known Greek, Roman and Byzantine civilization, remains of these cultures being found today throughout Dobrogea: Histria Greek

colony, the oldest settlement in the country (founded, according to tradition, in 657 BC), Tropaeum Traian in Adamclisi (109 AD), a Roman triumphal monument to celebrate victory of the Roman legions against the Dacians, the most impressive of its kind built by the Romans in the Lower Danube, the oldest monastic ensemble in our country, situated in Basarabi-Murfatlar (St. Andrew's Cave near the village Ion Corvin, Constanța county) 982 and 992 being the years marked on the walls of two of the six rock churches.

The sensation of travelling back in time created by Romania's early Christian history is continued. Between the arms of the Danube Delta – Chilia, Sulina and Sf. Gheorghe – in the exotic maze of reeds, canals, lakes, marshes, laurels (floating reed and cane islands) and sandbanks, you can enjoy the many species of fish, rare birds and even more species of trees and plants. Here are unique colonies of pelicans, and sturgeons, the fish that produce precious caviar. The Delta is a paradise of plants, animals and insects, so the protection against mosquitoes is a must. But perhaps the most important wealth of these lands is its people, a unique mix of ethnic groups who have chosen to settle in one of the wildest environments and turned it into "home". In the few unflooded areas of the Delta settled Romanians, Lipovans, Ukrainians and Turks, Greeks or Armenians.

The alternative to the tranquility and adventure of the Delta is the fun and sun of a Black Sea spa resort. Along 75 kilometers of coastline stretch resorts and villages with beaches of fine sand (10 to 12 hours of sunshine / day). The most popular: Mamaia (pearl of the coast, gondola, water parks, nightlife), Costinești (a favorite among the young), 2 Mai and Vama Veche (for those of an alternative bent). You can enjoy the Black Sea from May to September.

DID YOU KNOW?

Jules Verne, the famous writer and visionary, perfectly described the landscapes and cities of Dobrogea - Medgidia, Babadag and Tulcea – in the novel, *Keraban the Stubborn* (*Keraban Incapatanatul*) (1883), although French novelist had never travelled to Romania

THREE EXPERIENCES

- ❖ **Fish borsch.** Prepared in any village of the Delta from several species of fresh fish. At Mile 23 you can taste soup cooked on the spot, in a hanging cauldron.
- ❖ **Mangalia Herd.** Rent an Arabian galloper from the stables of the southern resort of Venus. Ride through the nearby forest, populated by deer and pheasants.
- ❖ **Dobrogea Wines.** The white wines as well as the red ones from this region have great personality and nobility. The naturally sweet wines are produced from grapes picked at the point of withering.

DIARY

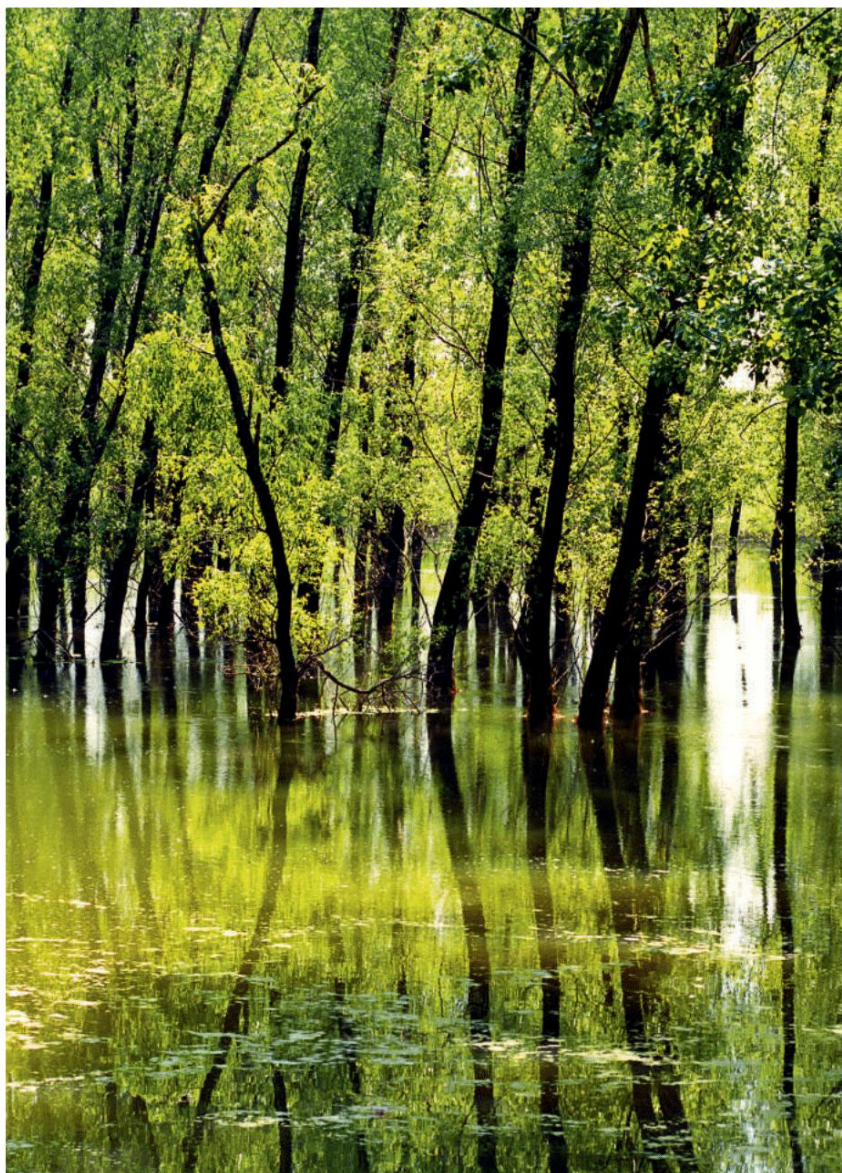
- ❖ **Navy Day**
August 15, Constanța, parade, sea-faring games, naval exercises
- ❖ **Stufstock**
August, Vama Veche music, film and theater festival
- ❖ **Romania tatarlar türkler**
September, Constanța, parade and artistic festival of Turkish-Tatar minority

CONTACT

www.romanianriviera.ro



Photo: (left) Airy view over a Danube channel, (above, from left to right) Vadu beach, Histria fortress, founded by the ancient Greeks, Lipovan women maintaining their dance traditions.



LETEI HILL

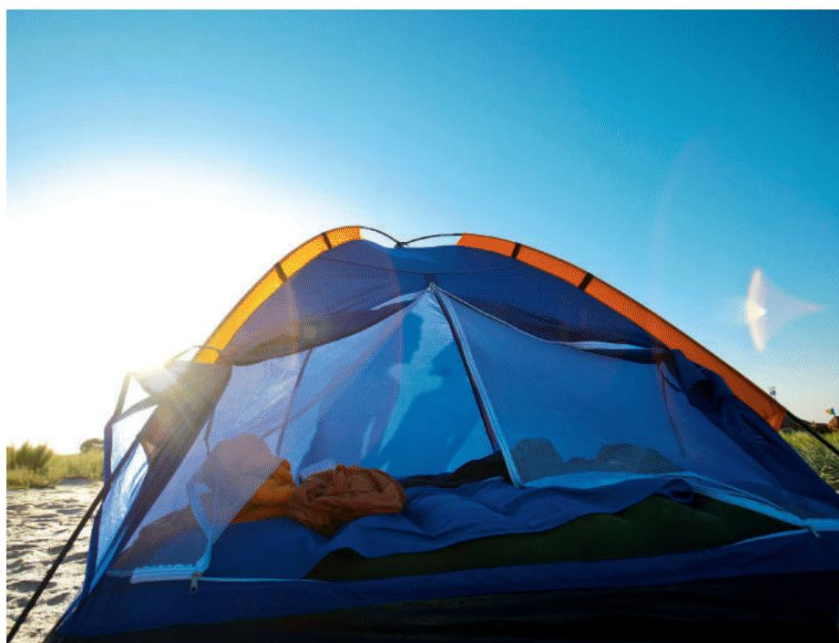
Galloping among the dunes

The most northerly subtropical forest in Europe was formed on sandy Letea Spit in the northern Delta. The sudden change of scenery, from subtropical forest to desert sand banks, occurs over only 200 – 300 m. A feature of the forest is the abundance of climbing plants that look like creepers, called by locals “hasmacuri”. Here grow the grove and greyish oak (aged over 150 years, 1 m in diameter and 30 – 35 m high), white and black poplar, meadow ash, fluffy ash (a botanical rarity). Fauna includes over 2,000 species of identified insects, sand viper, and three species of hawk and eagle. The free living horses are one of the most surprising aspects, they can be observed galloping together along the sand dunes.

VAMA VECHE

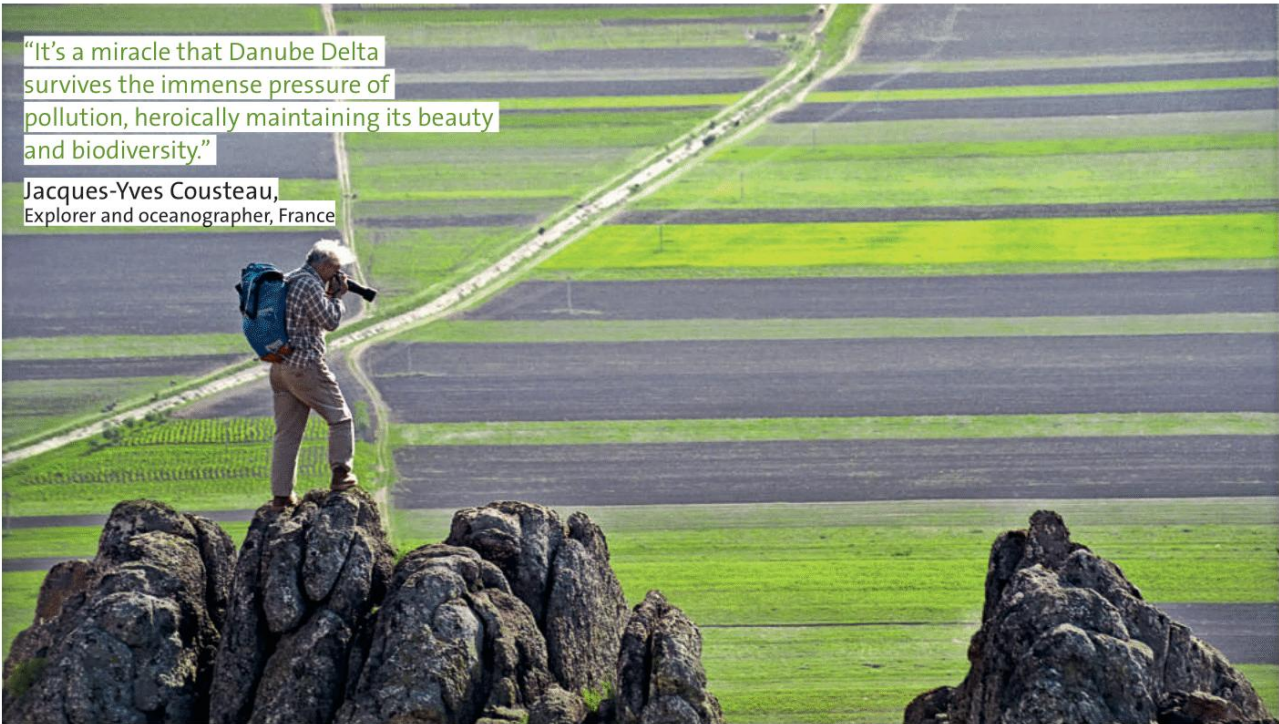
Back to nature

He who has never camped on the beach cannot understand the charm of slipping into sleep to the sound of wave and being woken by the sun's touch at dawn. If you want to enjoy this experience, the beaches of Vama Veche or 2 Mai are waiting for you as soon as the season opens on the Black Sea (May). You will enjoy the feeling of freedom that camping gives you but of proximity to clubs and chic bars and fish restaurants with their delicious menus. And if you wake up simultaneously with the first rays of sun, you can watch the fishermen bringing ashore the fish that you will enjoy for lunch.



"It's a miracle that Danube Delta survives the immense pressure of pollution, heroically maintaining its beauty and biodiversity."

Jacques-Yves Cousteau,
Explorer and oceanographer, France



The Măcin Mountains are the oldest in Romania

DELTA VILLAGES

Home with the Lipoveni

Traditional villages in the Delta seem petrified in time. You can be a guest in their painted reed covered homes. Tourism is a second occupation of the fishermen, who provide services at reasonable prices. Mainly, the fishermen are "Lipoveni" (Russian Orthodox Old Rite) and "haholii" (Ukrainian), the majority in the Delta, who are part of Dobrogea ethnic mix. At the Danube Delta Biosphere Reservation Office (DDBRA) you'll find maps, information about accommodation, tours and passes in protected areas.

DANUBE DELTA BIOSPHERE RESERVE OFFICE
www.ddbra.ro



Pelicans are a protected species, long admired and photographed

HOLIDAYS AT THE SPAS

Healing mud

At about 15 km from Constanța, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud and Techirghiol lake – with mineralized water and a mud known for its healing qualities, are some of the most attractive Romanian seaside spas. Techirghiol has been popular for its mild climate, beautiful lake and therapeutic qualities since the early twentieth century, when Romanian writers such as Mircea Eliade and Tudor Arghezi used to summer here.



Another modern treatment centre is Neptune Resort

Useful information

LOCATION

South-east Europe, in the north of Balkan Peninsula.

geographic coordinates: 45° N, 25° E

ACCESS

Hungary (north-west), Ukraine (north and east), Moldavia (east), Black Sea (south-east), Bulgaria (south), Serbia (south-west).

TOTAL AREA

238.391 km²

THE LENGTH OF FRONTIERS

3,149.9 km, of which 1085.5 land frontiers and 2064.4 km river and maritime.

POPULATION

19.310.216 (2017)

CAPITAL

Bucharest, 1.883.400 inhabitants (2017)

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Republic

OFFICIAL TIME

Eastern European Time (GMT + 2). From the last Sunday of March to last Sunday of October is Romanian Summer Time (GMT + 3).

LEGAL HOLIDAYS

The first and the second day of January; January 24; the first and the second day of Easter; May 1; June 1; the first and the second day of Pentecost; August 15; November 30; December 1; the first and the second day of Christmas - 25 and 26 of December

CLIMATE

Continental

LANDFORMS

The variety and proportionality show the symmetrical character of the landforms of the country: 35% mountains (Carpathians), 35% hills and plateaus (sub-Carpathians hills and plateau of Transylvania) and 30% plains (Romanian Plain (Campia Romana) and West Plain (campia de Vest).

ELEVATION

Lowest Point: Black Sea - 0 m

Highest Point: Moldoveanu Peak - 2,544 meters



MEASUREMENT UNITS

Metric system

EMERGENCY CALL

© 112

EUROPEAN STATUTE

Romania has been a member of the European Union since January 1, 2007. Also part of the UN, International Monetary Fund, European Council, NATO, UNESCO and has embassies and consulates in many countries.

CURRENCY

1 leu (abbreviation: RON) = 100 bani

FLAG

Three equal bands, vertical, in red, yellow and blue, with the blue band near the stick. 

NATIONAL DAY

December 1. Historical Significance: Unification Day of Romanians from Transylvania and Banat with the homeland, celebrated on December 1, 1918.

CREDIT CARDS

Major hotel and restaurants chains accept credit cards, including MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Dinner Club.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

National Consumer's Authority
021-9551 | cabinet@anpc.ro | www.anpc.gov.ro

More information on www.romania.travel

Copyright © Ministry of Tourism



Photo: Ship on the Black Sea

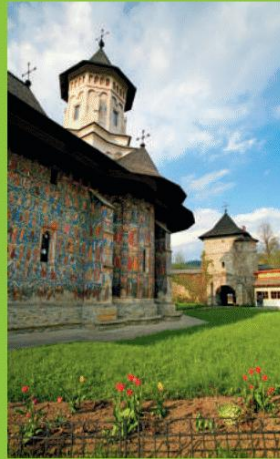


Photo: Transalpine Road, Moldovița Church, young folk dancers from Oltenia; cover 4: pelicans in the Danube Delta




România
explore the Carpathian garden