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GRAND TOUR OF ROMANIA- 10 Days



Grand Tour of Romania: the culture and history of Romania through a comprehensive 10 days tour which include the most important sights of Transylvania, Maramures and Bucovina Regions: medieval cities, castles, palaces, remote villages, churches and monasteries. All combined with beautiful landscapes, traditional customs, food and drinks.



Day 1 Bucharest Sightseeing Tour - Gura Humorului

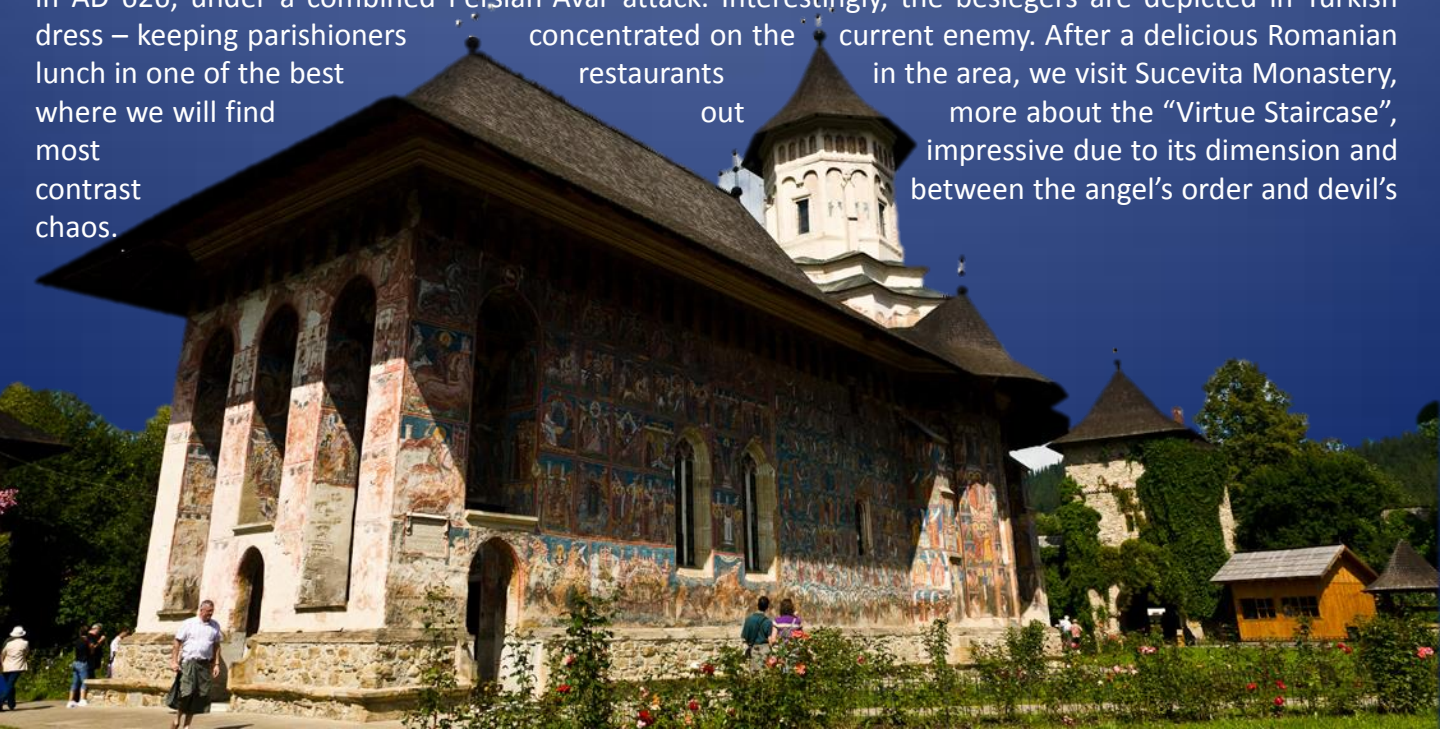
Today we take a panoramic tour of Bucharest. We will visit the most important sites and areas of the city such as: The Triumphant Arch, Victory Square, The Royal Palace (nowadays the seat of The National Art Museum - optional visit), Romanian Atheneum, Revolution Square, Victoriei Avenue, Union Square. This tour gives you the chance to visit the Parliament Palace, a "giant" built during the "golden age" of the communist totalitarian regime of Nicolae Ceausescu. We continue with a walking tour of the Old District, once the place of princely families and nobles, later an area of the craftsmen and today the Mecca of bars, restaurants and quaint cobblestone streets. In the afternoon we depart towards Gura Humorului. Overnight at Best Western Hotel in Gura Humorului.

BUKOVINA PAINTED MONASTERIES

Day 2: Day tour of The Painted Monasteries of Bucovina

Bucovina is among the most attractive and frequently visited tourist areas on Romania's map. First visit of the day is at the famous painted monastery of, Voronet. On the western wall, the exterior murals depict traditional scenes, and the famous Last Judgment scene, unique in the whole world. The tour continues with an egg painting demonstration given by one of the many local artists from Bucovina.

Driving on one of the most beautiful roads in the country, crossing the gentle slopes of Bucovina Mountains you'll reach Moldovita Monastery. The central painted church has been partly restored and features impressive frescoes from 1537. The southern exterior wall depicts the Siege of Constantinople in AD 626, under a combined Persian-Avar attack. Interestingly, the besiegers are depicted in Turkish dress – keeping parishioners concentrated on the current enemy. After a delicious Romanian lunch in one of the best restaurants in the area, we visit Sucevita Monastery, where we will find out more about the "Virtue Staircase", most impressive due to its dimension and contrast between the angel's order and devil's chaos.



Day 3: Gura Humorului- Sighetu Marmatiei

Today the journey is long and beautiful. We leave Bucovina and head to the remote region of Maramures (The Land of Wood). Crossing the Eastern Carpathian Mountains through Borgo Pass you will discover a mysterious realm, the same one described in Bram Stoker's Dracula. We'll have a break at Castle Dracula Hotel, with a fantastic view over the surroundings. Next stop is in Bistrita Medieval Town for a short sightseeing tour and lunch. Reaching Maramures region will visit Barsana Moastery, one of the highest wooden churches in the world with splendid gardens, and Toader Barsan's house, a local wood carver who took part at the Smithsonian World Festival in Washington, famous for the wonderfully carved wooden gates. Accommodation: Casa Iurca in Sighetu Marmatiei (4*).

MARAMURES VILLAGES

Day 4: Sapanta Merry Cemetery-Sighetu Marmatiei- Breb Village

In the morning we meet the local farmers who sell their products at the vegetable market in Sighetu Marmatiei. We continue our Maramures day tour, with Sapanta Village, famous in the whole world for "The Merry Cemetery". Ancient beliefs viewed death as a beginning, not as an end, and this faith is reflected in the carvings in the town's unique Merry Cemetery. Blue wooden crosses feature a carved scene and humorous epitaphs that endeavor to capture essential elements - both the good and the imperfections - of the deceased's life. Next on our list is the small town of Sighetu Marmatiei, where we stop at the "Memorial to the victims of Communism", located in the building of the former Sighet Prison used by the communist regime to silence its opponents, in the 50's. Meet a Romanian family in their home for traditional lunch and take a stroll in the Breb Village to discover its hidden treasures. You'll visit a local distillery, used by the locals to prepare tuica or palinca, a sort of plum brandy. Not far from the distillery you'll see how the locals are washing their carpets in the way they did 200 years ago. You'll continue your walking tour on the streets of the village admiring the wooden gates, the wooden houses, the local architecture and the locals. Accommodation: Casa Iurca in Sighetu Marmatiei (4*)





MEDIEVAL TRANSYLVANIA

Day 5: Sighetu Marmatiei – Cluj-Napoca

Today we drive from Maramures Region towards Cluj-Napoca, the largest city of Transylvania. Once we reach Cluj we will take a tour of the most important sites. The focal point of the city is Union Square, with shops, cafés and restaurants and the monumental St Michael's Cathedral, dating from 14th century. Next to the cathedral, is the imposing equestrian statue of Mátyás Corvinus tramples the crescent banner of the Turks underfoot. His formidable Black Army kept the Kingdom of Hungary safe from banditry and foreign invasion for much of his reign. Next we visit The Pharmacy Museum that displays a beautiful collection of ancient prescriptions, jars and implements, as well as Baroque furnishings and glass cabinets. Down in the pharmacy basement something akin to a medieval dungeon – is the old laboratory, complete with an assortment of tools, pestles and containers. In the afternoon we will visit the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania, the oldest ethnographic museum in Romania. Our tour of Cluj will end with a walk around Avram Iancu Square, where is located The Orthodox Cathedral inaugurated in 1933 to celebrate the Romanians' triumph in Transylvania. Overnight in Cluj Beyfin Hotel 4****.

Day 6: Cluj-Napoca-Turda Salt Mine-Sibiu

Just 20 km from Cluj town is Turda Salt Mine, a real history museum of salt exploitation. Discovered first by the Romans, the Turda Salt Mine became an important exploitation center during the Habsburg's control of Transylvania. We continue our day enjoy a relaxing walking tour of Sibiu's Old District. Sibiu is one of the most important fortified towns in Transylvania. The city is reminiscent of old European cities such as Nurnberg and it was founded in 1190 and grew to be the chief city of the Transylvanian Saxons. This amazing place, with the "Old Town" (The Big Square, the Small Square, the Ursuline Church, The Franciscan Church, The staircase Tower, the Tanners Tower, the Liar's Bridge, the House of the Butcher's Guild and last Bruckenthal Museum) is a gorgeous place to see. Optional visit to Brukental Museum, the oldest museum in Romania with a vast collection of paintings, antiques, coins, and rare books. Overnight in Sibiu, at Continental Forum 3***.





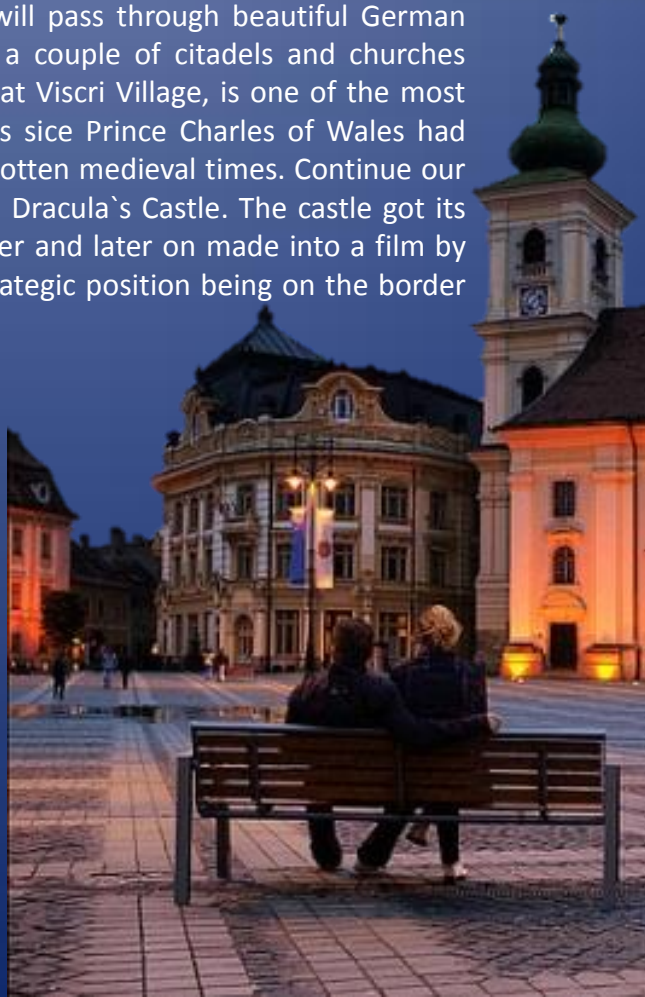
Day 7: Sibiu-Sheppard Valley-Biertan -Sighisoara

A lovely half-hour drive of the medieval city of Sibiu takes you into the pastoral landscape of Hartibaciu Valley, once an important commercial route is nowadays almost forgotten. Passing through this valley, we arrive in Biertan and visit one of the most majestic and valuable fortified churches in Transylvania. In 1995, the fortified church of Biertan was included in the list of the world architectural patrimony under UNESCO patronage. Our next stop is Sighisoara medieval town and fortress. In 1431, in the house at Museum Square 6, within the shadow of the old town's Clock Tower, a woman whose name is lost to posterity gave birth to a son called Vlad, who in later life earned the title The Impaler, abroad better known as Dracula, derived from Dracul or "the Devil" referring to his father Vlad Dracul, whom the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Hungary made a knight of the order of The Dragon in 1431. The Clock Tower, the Church on the Hill, the Scholars Stairs, The Monastery Church, the towers of the citadel (originally fourteen), The Shoemakers Town, the Tailors Tower, the Tinsmiths Tower are only a few of the marvels of this place called Sighisoara. Overnight in Sighisoara Hotel Casa cu Cerb 3***

Day 8: Sighisoara-Viscri- Brasov

We leave Sighisoara on route to Brasov area. The road will pass through beautiful German villages and one can admire their architecture and also a couple of citadels and churches which can be seen from the main road. First stop will be at Viscri Village, is one of the most famous tourist destination of Romania. It's being like this since Prince Charles of Wales had discovered this amazing location, a fairy tale from the forgotten medieval times. Continue our route to Bran and visit the famous Bran Castle also called Dracula's Castle. The castle got its fame from Dracula's legend written in 1897 by Bram Stoker and later on made into a film by Francis Ford Coppola. Along the ages, the Castle had a strategic position being on the border between Transylvania and Wallachia.

In the 20th century the castle was donated to the Romanian royal family and became a royal summer residence. The castle museum preserves the furniture and objects from that period. End the day in Brasov, with a short tour of the magic medieval center of Brasov (2 hours). The city of Brasov is one of the oldest in Europe, dating from 1235. During the Middle Ages, Brasov was known as a powerful fortress surrounded by high stone walls and defended by bulwarks, towers and other small fortresses. The buildings and the streets still preserve a medieval note. Council Square, Black Church, White and Black Towers, Weavers Bastion and Catherine's Gate are the tour highlights. Accommodation: Bella Muzica in Brasov 3***





Day 9: Brasov- Sinaia- Peles Castle- Bucharest

Start your tour in Brasov with the Town Hall Square, where you can admire the colorful painted and ornate baroque structures. Visit the Black Church, the largest gothic church in Romania. Continue your visit and see Catherine`s Gate erected in 1559, the only original gate that still survives since medieval times. Visit The Weavers Bastion, the largest medieval bastion in Brasov and the best-preserved among the seven original watchtowers constructed around the city walls. On your way to Bucharest we stop in Sinaia Mountain Resort where you will visit Peles Castle. The famous Peles Castle, a masterpiece of German New-Renaissance architecture, commissioned by King Carol I in 1873 and completed in 1883. Its 160 rooms are adorned with the finest examples of European art, Murano crystal chandeliers, German stained-glass windows, walls covered with Cordoba leather, Meissen and Sevres porcelains, ebony and ivory sculptures. Accommodation in Bucharest: Rembrandt Hotel 3***

Day 10: Airport Transfer or extra day in Bulgaria
We can transfer you to the airport or take one day trip to Bulgaria Countryside

Inclusions:

- 9 nights accommodation at 3*** and 4**** hotels (all centrally located) on BB Basis.
- Fully insured sedan/minivan with climate control, for the entire distance.
- Fuel & parking fees included
- All sightseeing tours & cultural connections
- Professional English speaking guides (driving) to accompany you throughout
- Guides' expenses and portorage (except for customs areas).
- VAT and local tax
- Detailed maps of Romania
- Transfers from / to the airport

BOOK & PAY EARLY SAVE UP TO 120 EURO		BOOK BEFORE:		
		15 January and you save 10%		
		31 March and you save 7,5%		
For 2 persons	For 3 persons	For 4 persons	For 5 persons	For 6 persons
€1,299 each	€1,225 each	€1,175 each	€1,025 each	€980 each

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