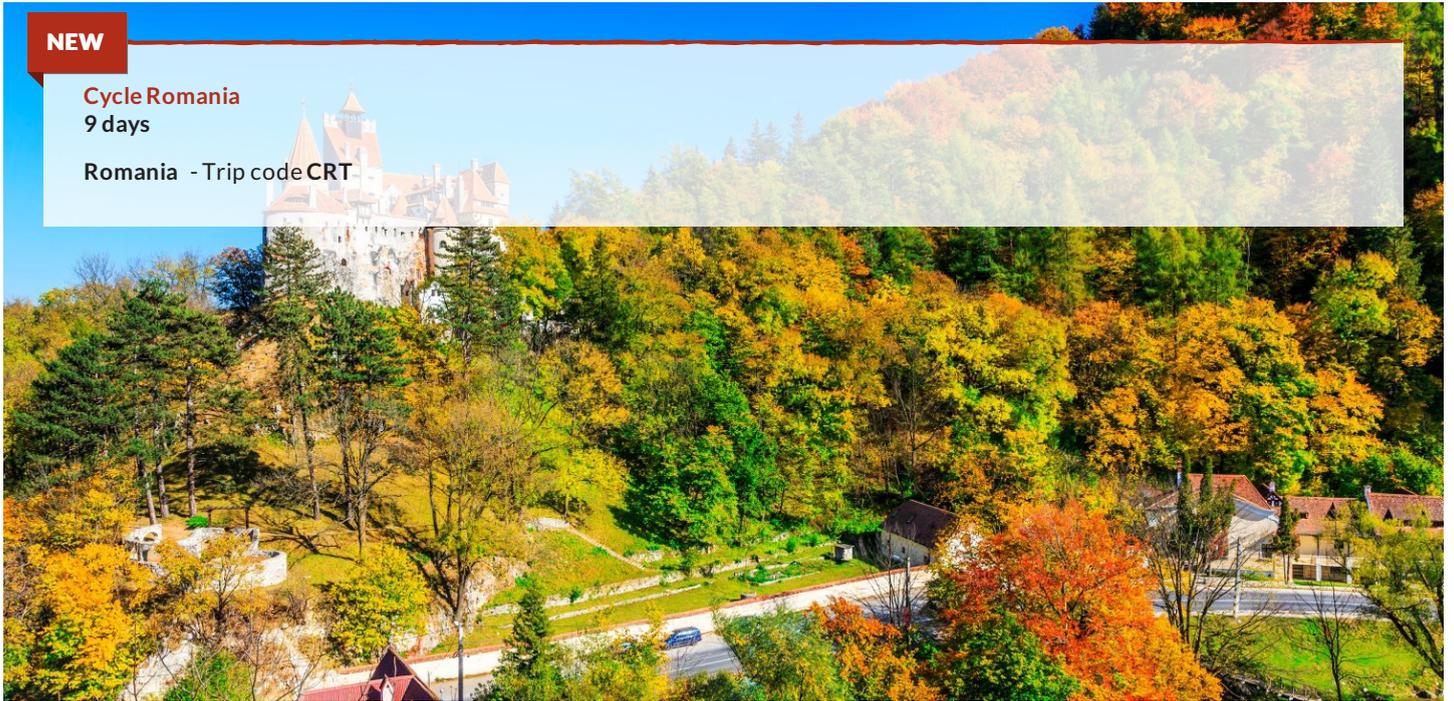


EXPLORE!

NEW

Cycle Romania
9 days

Romania - Trip code CRT



Cycle Romania

On this cycling holiday in Romania we discover beautiful countryside, experience local hospitality and explore historic towns. We get well off the beaten track travelling deep into the Transylvanian Alps, the legendary home of Dracula. Along the way we cycle through the imposing Bran Valley and to the foot of the Piatra Craiului Mountains. Visit the imposing castles of Peles and Bran, as well as the Liberty Bear Sanctuary.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Transylvania** - Get into the heart of the Southern Carpathians, cycle in beautiful countryside
- ★ **Bran and Peles castles** - Ornately decorated Medieval and Neo-renaissance castles
- ★ **Brasov** - Explore Medieval Old Brasov on foot
- ★ **Sighisoara** - Discover this beautiful UNESCO listed medieval town
- ★ **Bucharest** - Stay in Romania's capital city, known in the 1930's as the Paris of the East

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

CYCLING GRADE:**Moderate**

Medium length rides suitable for cyclists who are used to undulating routes with occasional energetic climbs. Mainly on trails and quiet roads and you should have a reasonable level of fitness.

GROUP SIZE:**10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts Bucharest Airport, explore Brasov on foot

On arrival to Bucharest airport we drive directly to the medieval city of Brasov. Brasov is one of the most historic cities in Transylvania, and we spend the rest of the day exploring. The town is a gem of old buildings, cobbled streets and local atmosphere all clustered within the medieval fortifications and overlooked by a magnificent 15th century Gothic cathedral. There are several churches dating from the 14th through to the 18th century and we shall include a visit to the Black Church as part of our orientation tour.



Accommodation: Coroana Brasovului (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Bran castle and Bear Reservation

Today starts with a short drive to Zarnesti at the foot of the Bucegi Mountains. From here we cycle to the Liberty Bear Reservation. The sanctuary was created to rescue over 50 bears found suffering in small rusty cages throughout Romania where they had been pets or attractions for restaurants and petrol stations. The bears now live in 160 acres of oak and hazel forest which is run by the Millions of Friends Organisation, our visit helps fund the upkeep of the sanctuary and you get to view these magnificent creatures in a natural setting. After our visit we cycle to Bran to visit the castle. Perched on a crag in a valley between two high mountain ranges, the castle controlled an international trade route, but is now a rural backwater. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 35km



Accommodation: Hora cu Brazi (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

DAY 3 - Piatra Craiului National Park

We have a full day cycling through the Piatra Craiului National Park today. Piatra Craiului (The Royal Rock) is probably Romania's most loved mountain especially by hikers and nature lovers. The shining glow of this huge white limestone ridge can be seen from afar and it is probably the source of its unusual name. The wildlife is diverse, and there are still black chamois on the high cliffs and brown bear, wild boar, deer and stag, foxes, wolf and even lynx in the forests. The Piatra Craiului Mountains are further known for the abundance and diversity of flowers and plants. We cycle through the former Walachian territory (mainly flat) with spectacular views of the Transylvanian Alps. On your way, there should be many opportunities to see rare flowers, birds and butterflies. We make stops during our ride to visit an old wooden mill and a Romanian monastery. Late afternoon we will arrive to the town of Bucium at the foot of the Transylvanian Alps where we spend the night. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 40km



Accommodation: Casa Moga (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 4 - Cycle to Arpasu, visit the Sambata Monastery

Today we continue cycling along the Carpathian Mountains on forested paths. We make a stop to visit the Romanian orthodox Sambata Monastery, dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God and is one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in Romania. You may see a street wedding on your way with gypsy music. We then continue cycling to the small town of Arpasu where we spend the night at the foot of the Transylvanian Alps. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 60 km



Accommodation: Hotel Albota (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 5 - Drive to Sibiel, cycle to historic Sibiu

This morning we start with a drive to Sibiel one of the shepherd villages at the foot of the Cindrel Mountains. This area is home to a farming community who take advantage of the natural irrigation of the Cibin River and its many tributaries. Rich with beech forest, birch and conifers as well as many wild flowers and butterflies, makes it an attractive, lush region. We continue cycling to Rasinari and then further on to historic Sibiu. Sibiu was the largest and wealthiest of the seven walled citadels built in the 12th century. You'll have some free time to explore the city as you please. Stroll through the historic town squares (Piazza Mare and Mica, Huet Square) with beautifully restored medieval patrician houses, Gothic and Baroque churches as well as many interesting museums such as the Brukenthal National Museum, which is home to over 1000 works of art, sculptures and a Gothic exhibition. Sibiu is a good spot for food lovers with a range of restaurants and some of the best, which are frequented by the locals, can be found around the Small Square. A speciality is 'Ciorba' which is a sour soup that comes in various varieties with vegetables or meatballs. Many local establishments in the town serve their beer by the metre! Your total cycling distance today is approximately 30 km



Accommodation: Best Western Hotel Silva (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Cycle along the Harbach valley to Agnita

Cycling today is along the Harbach valley passing numerous villages and fortified churches en route to Agnita. We will see horse wagons loaded with hay, and villages in which time seems to stand still. The farmers here still use traditional methods including scythes and sickles to farm their land. Visit the Hosman castle with interesting Gothic sculptures. See the Bacon Tower, it initially served as a chapel, but later was used for food storage (especially bacon, hence the name). There is also a chance that the custodian will climb up the clock tower with you so you can view the ancient clock mechanism. Cycle to Agnita, a renowned crafts town where we spend the night, it is considered locally as being the central point of Romania an important location fortified to help defend the Kingdom of Hungary from the Ottoman Empire Your total cycling distance today is approximately 65 km



Accommodation: Casa Elisabetha (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 7 - Cycle to UNESCO listed Sighisoara

Our final day on the bikes, we cycle to Sighisoara which is an UNESCO World Heritage Site. On arrival you are free to explore the town on foot including the old town fortifications, the Church on the Hill, covered stairs and the clock tower. You may want to try the delicious cakes and coffees that the local cafes have to offer and that the town is known for. Tonight you have the opportunity to dine in the medieval fortress at the Casa cu Cerb, the 'House with the Deer Antler'. Your total cycling distance today is approximately 30 km



Accommodation: Hotel Korona (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Swimming pool available

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast and Dinner

DAY 8 - Drive to Bucharest, visit Peles Castle

Today we drive Bucharest (290km); it will take about 6 hours but we will make plenty of stops. One of these stops will be to see the wonderful Peles Castle. Built for the Hohenzollern monarch Carol I, Peles resembles a Bavarian chateau and is richly decorated with stained glass, Persian carpets, Renaissance weapons, ebony and mother of pearl. Our journey ends in Bucharest, Romania's largest city and became the capital in 1832. In the past Bucharest has been thought of as somewhat drab and dull, but thanks to a period of urban renewal and modernisation, it's now a bustling city at the centre of Romanian culture, art and media. We spend our last night in Romania here and look back on the great week of cycling in Transylvania before heading home in the morning.



Accommodation: Hotel Ibis Parlament Centre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 9 - Trip ends Bucharest

After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Cycling information

General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 260km over six days (an average of 43km per day). We generally cycle on quiet tarmac country roads with little or no traffic. Day 3 is more or less flat but all other days have at least one hill. We have graded the route as easy to moderate.

Bike included

21 gear Pegasus Piazza or Drive hybrid bike

Bike information

Your included bike will be a 21 gear Pegasus Piazza or Drive hybrid bike with front suspension and will be the correct frame size for your height. A water bottle holder is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. The support vehicle does not accompany the rides but can be called on in an emergency situation. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

Cycling grade

Moderate

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7
Dinner: 5



Transport

Bus
Bicycle



Accommodation

8 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

Romania Trips

Climate

Romania's climate is continental, temperatures being strongly influenced by the physical features of the Carpathians. Temperatures will fall from highs of 18°C (by day) to lows of 6°C (at night) in October; by January they will hover around freezing during the day and go down to -10°C at night. They will then rise to reach October temperatures again by April. Temperatures will generally be lower in the mountains than in Bucharest. Snowfall may occur at any time.

Time difference to GMT

+2

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Eastern Orthodox

Language

Romanian

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

We recommend you bring padded cycle shorts and quick drying cycle shirts for the daily cycling. Soaked cotton clothes tend not to dry while cycling. Cycling gloves are strongly recommended as they will protect you from sunburn and may also help protect your hands if you fall. A jumper or fleece is also advisable for the evenings as temperatures can drop sharply. A raincoat is advisable for early spring as there may be sporadic rain showers.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to trips that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage

20kg

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip. Accordingly you should allow at least GBP 20 for tipping local crew.

Country Information

Romania Trips

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£8

Dinner price

£10

Beer price

£1

Water price

£0.7

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Romanian Leu.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Sterling Pounds, US Dollars and Euros cash can all be exchanged for local currency. Old style £10 and £20 notes are not accepted.

Where To Exchange

Please note that the exchange rates at the airport on arrival are particularly low.

ATM Availability

In most towns, your tour leader will advise you.

Credit Card Acceptance

Major stores and restaurants only.

Travellers Cheques

It is not possible to exchange Travellers Cheques on the tour.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Bicycle

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Romania: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationalities, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Romania Trips

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, although we recommend vaccination against tetanus, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. The Foreign Office currently recommend considerations of vaccination against rabies if travelling in rural areas of Romania. Check latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.
