

# EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



## Why book this trip?

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Romania is a country still steeped in tradition. Even on the streets of the capital, Bucharest, new cars travel beside horse and carts. On this highlights trip get back to nature in Apuseni National Park, explore medieval towns and discover fairytale castles.

- **Apuseni** - Take lakeside walks, explore by bike or just relax and enjoy the mountain scenery
- **Medieval architecture** - Wander through the cobbled lanes of Sighisoara, discover the Alba Iulia Citadel and explore the old town of Cluj-Napoca
- **Transylvania** - Delve beneath the Dracula myths at Castle Bran and marvel at the exquisite Peles Castle



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 7  
Lunch: 1



**TRIP STAFF**  
Explore Tour  
Leader  
Driver(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus



**ACCOMMODATION**  
1 nights  
comfortable  
guesthouse  
6 nights  
comfortable hotel



**TRIP PACE:**  
Moderate



**GROUP SIZE:**  
10 - 16

## Itinerary

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

### DAY 1 - Join trip in Cluj-Napoca

This trip begins in Romania's second largest city, Cluj-Napoca. There are no planned activities today so you are free to arrive at any time. If you wish to receive a complimentary transfer you need to fly in to Avram Iancu Cluj International Airport (CLJ), which is located less than 10km from the city centre.

Your leader will meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm this evening and following a welcome meeting there is the chance to go out to dinner and have a first taste of hearty Romanian food.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Hotel Victoria (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**



**MEALS PROVIDED: NONE**

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## DAY 2 - Explore the old town of Cluj-Napoca. Drive to Apuseni National Park

This morning we will explore the city on a walking tour. Blending a rich cultural infusion of Saxon, Hungarian and Roma influences, we stroll through the Baroque city centre stopping to view landmarks like Taylor's Bastion, the Banffy Palace and the Gothic Cathedral of Saint Michael, which has changed its religious denomination a total of five times since its initial construction and still dominates the downtown market area.

There will be plenty of time to explore on your own and have lunch before we leave the city and travel to Apuseni National Park. On the way we'll stop off and visit the Bride's Veil waterfalls, named because the water fans out as it cascades over the edge, giving the impression of a bridal veil!

Our accommodation for the next two nights is a small guesthouse set in the heart of the Apuseni Natural Park. It's the ideal place to relax and get away from it all, with a outdoor terrace ideal for soaking up the backdrop of the western Carpathians.



### ACCOMMODATION:

Poiana Soarelui Guesthouse (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 3 - Take a morning walk alongside the Warm Somes River. Free time to relax or hire a bike and explore more

After breakfast we'll take a gentle walk along the side of the Warm Somes River. The gravel path is undulating, and hilly in places but we take our time and enjoy the surrounding as we walk. The route takes us to a small village where we can relax for a while before returning to our guesthouse for lunch.

This afternoon is free to relax as you choose. There are plenty of easy walking routes and bikes are available to hire with routes following quiet gravel roads. Our leader will be on hand to give advice on the options. There are tennis courts close to the guesthouse if you are feeling active, or for a chilled out afternoon there is a lovely terrace and a jacuzzi to really relax.



### ACCOMMODATION:

Poiana Soarelui Guesthouse (or similar)



## Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### DAY 4 - Drive to Sighisoara and explore this charming medieval town

Today we visit Sighisoara, a UNESCO World Heritage Site which feels like we are stepping back in time. We'll walk through the town and discover its winding alleys and pretty pastel buildings as well as the old town fortifications and the Church on the Hill. Vlad the Impaler was born in Sighisoara and we'll pass the house he grew up in.

This afternoon is left free to explore this pretty town further.

Tonight is a chance to sample the regions tasty cuisine such as beef goulash with dumplings, tarragon chicken or warming spicy soups washed down with craft beer. For dessert you could try one of the delicious cakes, which the town is known for.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Villa Franka (or similar)



## Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### DAY 5 - Explore the traditional towns of Viscri and Brasov. Discover the myths of Bran Castle

Our day begins with a visit to Viscri, one of the many Saxon villages found in Transylvania. This well preserved village and fortified church is UNESCO-listed. We'll take a walk through the village or take the option of a horse and cart ride to visit the church, the local baker, and the blacksmith that still ply their trade as they have for generations.

A visit to the bakers means we can sample the delicious freshly made bread, along with a coffee before leaving the village and making our way to Brasov.

Brasov is a treasure trove of centuries-old buildings and churches, cobbled streets, all clustered within medieval city walls and overlooked by a magnificent 15th century Gothic cathedral. We will stroll through the City Square and down the extremely narrow Rope Street before visiting the Black Church. We'll have free time here as there is plenty to explore, and then in the later afternoon we'll make our way to Bran Castle, the apparent haunt of Count Dracula. Perched on a crag in a valley between two high mountain ranges, it dominates the surrounding scenery. We'll learn that the truth behind 'Dracula's castle' is even more fascinating than the myths. It was the home of the remarkable British born Queen Marie of Romania, grand daughter of Queen Victoria, whereas Vlad the Impaler, the heroic 15th century ruler of Wallachia who Dracula is based on, never lived here. In fact, the author of the much-loved Dracula novel, Bram Stoker never even came to Transylvania.

This evening we will stay in a quaint local guesthouse in the Transylvanian village of Moieciu, where we have a delicious home cooked meal this evening. Romanian cuisine is hearty and usually served with locally produced red wine. A typical meal is rich beef stew, freshly baked bread, pearl barley, cabbage and roasted root vegetables all served with sour cream. Before a meal the locals tend to sip the aperitif, tzuica, a strong plum brandy.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Zada Guest House (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Guesthouse



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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## DAY 6 - Visit the fairytale castle at Peles. Travel to Bucharest

Leaving Moieciu we take a short drive to Sinaia, which was once used as a summer resort for the country's royal family. We head straight for the beautiful Peles castle. Built in the 17th century for a for the reigning monarch, it resembles a Bavarian chateau and is richly decorated with stained glass, Persian carpets, Renaissance weapons, ebony and mother of pearl.

We'll leave the fairytale castle behind us and have some time in Sinaia town to explore and have lunch before travelling to Bucharest. The city has gone through a period of urban renewal and modernisation, and it is now the centre of Romanian culture, art and media.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Minerva (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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### DAY 7 - Discover the highlights of Bucharest. Free time to explore the city's lakes and gardens

Today we'll explore Romania's capital. Bucharest is situated on the Danube Plain and set amid a series of lakes and spacious gardens and here we will see a remarkable blend of turn of the century elegance and communist excess. We'll discover the architecture that earned it the reputation as the 'Paris of Eastern Europe' including the beautiful columned facade of the Romanian Atheneum concert hall and the Royal Palace of Bucharest. We also make a visit to the fascinating Village Museum where we can see a collection of old wooden churches, windmills and peasant dwellings from different regions of the country.

This afternoon is free for you to relax and explore the city at your own pace. There's plenty to discover in the city's Old Town or there's a multitude of museums available to choose from including the National Museum of Romanian History, the Military Museum and the Folk Art Museum.

Alternatively visit the Palace of Parliament, which is an incredible construction, the second largest building in the world and one of Bucharest's most photographed sights. Inside you'll find marble columns, grand halls and glittering crystal chandeliers. Many homes were destroyed to make way for this massive structure and it took 13 years to build at an alleged cost of over three billion Euros, so it's of little surprise that it was and still is a very controversial building.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Minerva (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## DAY 8 - Trip ends in Bucharest

The trip ends after breakfast in Bucharest. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day, luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Bucharest Henri Coanda International Airport (OTP), which is about 30 minutes' drive from the city centre.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## Trip information

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### Climate and country information

#### Romania

##### 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	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	2 Pin Round	Eastern Orthodox	Romanian

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### Budgeting and packing

#### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Many of the castles charge a photography fee. You should allow approximately £15.00 for this.

Bucharest:

The Palace of Parliament entrance is 40-45 RON (Romanian Leu). Please note you must take your passport with you to be permitted entry. It is still an active government building so it might not always be

open to visitors and maybe closed at short notice.

#### Viscri:

It is possible to take a horse and cart ride around the village visiting the local baker, blacksmith and fortified church approximately 50 RON.

#### Apuseni Natural Park:

There are a variety of different options available:

Trekking - self guided route information provided locally.

Rowing - (available in June to September) easy grade on a lake. Self guided route information and equipment provided locally. Hire rates for a 1 person for 4 hours is 70 RON or 1 hour is 30 RON or a 2 person for 4 hours is 100 RON or 1 hour is 40 RON.

Horse and cart ride - for 30 minutes for 1-2 people is 50 RON or 3-4 people is 70 RON.

Football or volleyball courts - to hire a court during the day per hour is 100 RON or in the evening it's 150 RON per hour.

Tennis court - to hire the court is 50 RON per hour and racket hire is an additional 10 RON per hour.

## Clothing

July and August are the hottest months and lightweight cotton clothing is best. During spring and autumn temperatures are lower or drop during the evenings, and there is also a stronger possibility of rain, although light rainwear may be needed at any time of year. Layered clothing and a warm fleece are recommended for cooler evenings and in the mountains along with a windproof/waterproof jacket.

## Footwear

We recommend taking comfortable walking shoes for exploring and trainers or sandals for relaxing.

## Luggage

20Kg

### Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a day pack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

## Equipment

We advise taking a water bottle for our included walks as well as sun glasses, sunscreen and a sun hat. In case of emergency we also recommend that you carry a torch and a first aid kit. For the time spent in the countryside you may find mosquito repellent handy.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.



## Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised 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. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £20 of local currency for tipping.

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.

## Romania

### 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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£8	£10	£1	£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.

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## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus

### Accommodation notes

Some of the hotels and guesthouses used on this trip have bedrooms on multiple floors with narrow staircases and no lifts, so we recommend packing light, as you will need to carry your own bags up and down the stairs.

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## Essential Information

### Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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.

### Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

Romania: Visas are not required by UK, EU, 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 be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

### 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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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

## 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. Please check the 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 Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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## Additional Information



## Why book this trip

In just one week see all of Romania's most famous sights as well as spending time in the countryside and sampling delicious food and wine. Romania is a very affordable destination, it's easy to get to and it has so much to offer. It's a country full of mystery and folklore that captures the imagination.

# Reviews

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AWARD WINNING  
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE  
PROMISE



AIRPORT  
TRANSFERS