



Best of Romania and the Danube Delta

ROMANIA - TRIP CODE TD

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Enter a land of remote villages, ancient customs and myths of Dracula on this trip to discover walled medieval towns and painted monasteries. See the towering peaks of the Carpathian Mountains and cruise along the pristine waters of the Danube Delta.

- **Transylvania** - Visit legendary Bran Castle and walk in the Transylvanian Alps
- **Maramures** - Discover the painted monasteries and the poetry in the Merry Cemetery
- **Vasar Valley** - Ride on a historic steam train and walk through this forested valley



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 11
Lunch: 5
Dinner: 5



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Boat Crew
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Boat
Train



ACCOMMODATION
2 nights simple boat
1 nights
comfortable
guesthouse
8 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.

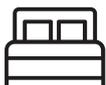
DAY 1 - Join trip in Bucharest

Our trip begins in Bucharest. It is Romania's largest city and became the capital in 1832. It has gone through a period of urban renewal and modernisation and it is now a bustling city, at the centre of Romanian culture, art and media.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. Due to a number of flights arriving into Bucharest later in the evening, our welcome meeting will take place on the morning of day two.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Bucharest at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Bucharest Henri Coanda International Airport (OTP), which is about 30 minutes' drive from the city centre.

If you have free time on arrival then 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, to name but a few.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Minerva (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



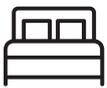
MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Visit to famous Bran Castle before arriving in Moieciu

After our Leader does an initial welcome meeting, we leave the city and head into the Transylvanian countryside, stopping firstly in Sinaia, known as the 'pearl of the Carpathians'. You will have the opportunity to visit Pelisor Palace to see this fine example of an Art Deco and Art Nouveau interior. After the visit we continue to nearby Moieciu village where time permitting we can do a short walk in the Bucegi Mountain forests that are protected as a nature reserve. This walk covers a distance of approximately six kilometres and takes around two to three hours. It includes uphill and downhill sections (300m ascent and descent). This walk is graded as easy. Alternatively, you can explore Moieciu at your own pace rather than taking this alpine walk.

Lastly, we will visit Bran Castle. The truth behind 'Dracula's castle' is even more fascinating than its myths! It was once home to the remarkable British born Queen Marie of Romania, granddaughter of Queen Victoria. Vlad the Impaler, the infamous 15th century ruler of Wallachia never lived here and there is no connection with the excellent novel by Bram Stoker - who never even travelled to Transylvania. Perched on a crag in a valley between two high mountain ranges, it controlled an international trade route, but is now a rural backwater.

This evening we will stay in a quaint local guesthouse in Moieciu where you have the opportunity to have a delicious home cooked meal this evening. Romanian cuisine is hearty and their red wine is surprisingly good. 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

DAY 3 - Explore Brasov and the colourful town of Sighisoara

We'll drive to the city of Brasov. Its old town still has its medieval walls, a town hall and several churches dating from the 14th - 18th centuries. There are also the ruins of an old citadel. Brasov is one of the most historic cities of Transylvania with its old buildings, cobbled streets and local atmosphere, all clustered within the medieval fortifications and overlooked by a magnificent 15th century Gothic cathedral. You have the option to visit the Gothic Black Church, which is considered by many to be the most important

church in Romania.

We then continue our drive for approximately two and a half hours to the medieval town on hilltop, Sighisoara, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where we spend about an hour. This is the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler. The town's colourful buildings encircle a central square where you can have a cup of coffee in a local café and watch the world go by. Alternatively you can climb up to the church and get a good view back over the town below.

Our final drive of the day is to Bistrita, which takes us about three hours and we will arrive at our hotel in the evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Bistrita (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - See Sapanta and the UNESCO-listed Merry Cemetery en route to Borsa

Leaving Bistrita this morning, we drive pass high forested hills and fertile valleys dotted with orchards and meadows. We reach the village of Sapanta about two and a half hours later and here we go to see the Merry Cemetery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Each gravestone includes a humorous caricature and short poem about the deceased. We also visit the Monastery of Barsana, which is one of the most photographed landmarks in the Maramures. The beautiful tall wooden church is 57 metres high and is a great example of the clever construction techniques used on these traditional wooden structures.

At lunchtime today we'll have an authentic and hearty meal in a villager's home. Romanian cuisine is delicious and often includes things such pearl barley or polenta, fresh root vegetables and cabbage, stewed beef or pork, sour cream and home baked bread. This afternoon we continue our drive to Borsa, a small ski resort nestled in the Rodna Mountains.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Cerbul (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



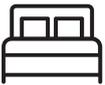
MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 5 - Train through the Vasar Valley and scenic alpine hike to Moisei

There are few settlements in Europe that remain so untouched that bears still roam freely in the forests. Today we enter such a region, as we take the narrow gauge railway from Viseu de Sus up the Vasar Valley to Novat. We chug slowly through the valley passing huge expanses of beech and spruce forest that echo with the sound of mountain rivers rushing through them. We then walk up a forested valley along lonely trails, enjoying the stillness and freshness of the forest. After a stiff climb of over 600m, we reach a ridge where there are spectacular views across the Viseu Valley. We descend through hay meadows and scattered copses to Moisei, where we meet our bus.

This ridge hike takes approximately five to six hours, covers 16kms and reaches a maximum altitude of 1,400m (with a 500m ascent and descent). This is the most difficult walk on the trip and is graded as Moderate. About one hour of this walk is a fairly steep uphill section along a tractor track and depending on the weather it can be muddy and rocky underfoot. An easier alternative self-guided route is possible whereby you walk alongside the railway tracks (covering around 10kms, takes two and a half hours and is mostly flat with only a slight downhill section). If you don't wish to walk at all then you can explore the town of Viseu de Sus at your own pace or you can take a longer journey on the train. Rather than getting off at Novat you can pay an additional supplement to take the train to its final stop in Paltin. The train normally stops in Paltin for one to two hours. There's a cafe here and it's possible to take a short walk in the forest. You will then need to board the train back to Viseu de Sus to meet the bus.

Please note that if the railway is closed then we will take an alternative route to walk in this beautiful area.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Cerbul (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

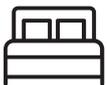
DAY 6 - Hike in the Rodna Mountains; drive to Sucevita via Moldovita Monastery

Leaving Borsa by chairlift, we walk up onto the mountain ridge. We walk along the ridge top and if

possible (depending on whether the shepherds are on this mountain at the time) we will stop at a shepherd's hut where we may be invited to sample some fresh sheep's cheese, washed down with tuica, the fiery local plum brandy.

This hike in the Rodna Mountains is graded as Easy and takes around two to three hours covering five to six kilometres and reaching a maximum altitude of 1,416m. There is a short steep unhill climb at the beginning of the walk followed by a long mild descent. If you don't wish to take part in the walk then you can remain on the bus and meet up with the group at the end point of the walk.

After the walk we meet our bus and drive east across the Carpathians to Moldavia and the northern region of Bucovina. Here we discover the remarkable medieval monasteries, founded during the reign of Prince Stephen the Great (1457-1504) and his successors. Whilst most Romanian churches have frescoes inside, what makes these so astonishing are the fantastic frescoes on the exterior walls. These vivid Biblical images were used to educate the medieval population in an exciting graphic fashion. Painted during the 16th century, the frescoes are a fusion of formal Byzantine style, with colourful folk art. The monasteries are now UNESCO World Heritage sites, but also house thriving religious communities of nuns and monks. We stop at Moldovita, which is nestled beneath the forests of the Obcina Mare Ridge. Among the most interesting scenes pictured here are the Seige of Constantinople and the Last Judgement. After spending about an hour at the monastery we drive up to the Ciumirna Pass and continue through the forest to our accommodation near Sucevita.



ACCOMMODATION:

Popas Turistic Bucovina (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 7 - Visit to Sucevita and Putna monasteries before driving to Bacau

We include a visit to Sucevita Monastery, the largest of the monasteries in the Bucovina region, with massive towers and stone walls protecting the inner buildings, which are decorated with portraits of historical legends and biblical scenes. There is an excellent small museum showing some of the treasures of the monastery, the most valuable items being 17th century embroideries, icons and gold work. We spend around one hour here discovering the monastery and museum.

We then hike through the countryside along the forestry roads in a valley to the north of Sucevita. First we take a trail through the beech woods to emerge in a grassy valley dotted with the houses that form the rambling village of Putna, close to the Ukrainian border.

The walk is graded as Easy with some Moderate sections and we have plenty of time to complete it. It covers approximately 16kms and takes about five hours. There's a short steep uphill climb for about 20 minutes in the middle section and then another short descent. If you do not wish to do the walk, then the

bus will drive to Putna via Marginea where you may like to visit a pottery maker. At Putna you will meet up with the rest of the group to visit the monastery.

We spend about one hour visiting the Putna Monastery Museum. It was founded in 1466 and is the oldest remaining in Moldavia. Inside is the tomb of Stephen the Great. Following our visit we meet our bus and drive for around four hours to Bacau where we spend the night.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Karo (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



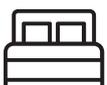
SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 8 - Drive to and cruise in the Danube Delta on a pontoon boat

This morning we drive for about four hours to the ancient port of Tulcea, the so-called 'gateway to the delta'. Here we board our pontoon - a barge style vessel resembling a large house boat - that will serve as both our transport and our floating accommodation while in the Danube Delta. Though simple, it has a sun-deck and twin berth cabins on the lower deck. It provides us with an innovative and flexible way of seeing the abundant birdlife of the delta and visiting the tranquil and beautiful lakes hidden in the backwaters. From our pontoon we can also use smaller boats to reach the more narrow waterways and reedy channels. After all the exploring we've done by road and on foot so far during this trip, this is now the perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy the slower pace of life in this peaceful wildlife reserve. We will have dinner on board our pontoon this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Floating Hotel Anda (or similar)

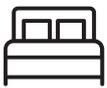


Grade: Simple Boat



DAY 9 - Exploring and bird watching on our cruise in the Danube Delta

The Danube Delta - over 4,000 square kilometres in all - is one of the great glories of Europe. It is a premier wildlife sanctuary and paradise for birdwatchers and photographers alike. We spend the day aboard the pontoon and smaller boats to give us the opportunity of viewing some of the many species which inhabit the delta. Apart from its rich wildlife, the Delta is simply a beautiful place to relax aboard our vessel. We make our way through a maze of channels fringed by vast reed beds and ancient willow trees. Whilst different birds are seen depending on the month of visiting, most people will see the spectacular White Pelican. Vast quantities of birds congregate here, including grebes, falcons, egrets, swans and cormorants. The marshy conditions make life difficult for the birds' terrestrial predators, making the delta an even more attractive haven and breeding ground for them. Much of this can be enjoyed from the sun deck of our pontoon. We will also take time to visit a village in the Delta. These are some of the most remote settlements in Europe and are far away from any roads. We will have all our meals onboard our pontoon today.



ACCOMMODATION:
Floating Hotel Anda (or similar)



Grade: Simple Boat



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 10 - Our cruise ends and we drive back to Bucharest

We spend the morning cruising back to Tulcea, and after our last lunch on board we will drive back to Bucharest, which takes us about four and a half hours and we'll arrive in the early evening. You're then free to have dinner and spend your final evening in the capital.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Minerva (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 11 - City tour of Bucharest; free afternoon

This morning our Leader will take us to explore Romania's capital, which a remarkable blend of turn of the century elegance and communist excess. Situated on the Danube Plain and set amid a series of lakes and spacious gardens, remnants of more gracious days still exist to charm the visitor.

We visit many of the older parts of the city to see some of the buildings that have earned it the reputation as the 'Paris of Eastern Europe'. We also make a visit to the fascinating Village Museum, which has assembled wooden churches, windmills and peasant dwellings from different regions of the country.

This afternoon is free for you to discover more at your own pace and enjoy your final evening in the city. It may be possible for you to join a tour of the Palace of Parliament this afternoon. If this is something you are interested in, then please speak to your Leader at the start of the trip and they can help you to check availability and book onto a tour.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Minerva (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 12 - Trip ends in Bucharest

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Bucharest.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Bucharest 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).



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

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

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.

Sinaia:

Pelisor Palace can be visited on day two; entrance is 25 Romanian Leu (RON) per person. To take photos inside there is an additional fee of 35 RON per person or 60 RON per person for using a video camera.

Brasov:

The Black Church can be visited on day three; entrance is 9 RON per person.

Vaser Valley steam railway for anyone not doing the walk there is an additional cost of approximately 40 RON per person to take the railway through to Paltin and to return to Viseu de Sus.

Bucharest:

On day 11 the entrance fee to the Palace of Parliament is 40 RON per person. Please note you must take your passport with you to be permitted entry. Please let your trip leader know at the beginning of your trip if you're interested in visiting this and they can help you to check availability and book onto a tour. Please note that since the Palace of Parliament in Bucharest is still an active government building that it might not always be open to visitors.

Clothing

Pack summer clothing, although medium weights are needed for autumn and spring when it can be cold. Temperatures are cooler in the mountains so a fleece is essential plus a windproof/waterproof jacket. We recommend taking spare walking socks for the included walks in case of rain.

Footwear

Comfortable walking boots with good tread and ankle support are essential for the countryside walks as paths can be uneven and muddy. Trainers or sandals for general travel are also recommended.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

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

Equipment

Bring a water bottle, insect repellent, sunscreen, a sunhat, a personal first aid kit and a torch (in case of emergency and it can also be useful for on board the pontoon boat).

Binoculars are recommended for bird watching in the Danube Delta and walking poles for the countryside walks.

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.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Train

Accommodation notes

On days eight and nine of our trip we will be staying aboard a pontoon, which is a barge style vessel resembling a large houseboat. It will serve as both our transport and our floating accommodation while in the Danube Delta. Though simple, it has a sun deck, dining room and twin berth en suite cabins on the lower deck. There is no Wi-Fi access or bar on board. The plug sockets within the cabins are only available to use when the boat's generator is on (usually between 06.00-10.00, 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-23.00). Our meals on board will be a set menu with drinks included and vegetarians can be catered for as long as we know in advance. It provides an innovative and flexible way of seeing the abundant birdlife of the delta, and allows us to reach the smaller waterways, reedy channels and tranquil lakes hidden in the backwaters.

All the accommodation used on this trip (except in Bucharest) are on multiple levels with narrow staircases and no lifts, so we recommend packing as light as possible, as you will need to carry your own bags up and down the stairs.

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 citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

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 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 be able to apply 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.

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.

Included activities

On all our trips to Romania, we use minibuses to get around. Many of the roads in the Romanian countryside are twisty and narrow and the road surfaces can be poor in places, so by using these smaller buses it means that we're able to access areas that the larger coaches can't get into. The minibuses usually have around 20 seats with two next to one another and then a single seat on the opposite side of the aisle and four along the back row. The seats are comfortable and equipped with armrests and seat belts. There's normally a rack for day bags and coats above the seats and the main luggage is stored in the rear boot. Legroom is however less plentiful than on a full size coach. There are a few photographs of the type of minibuses used within the image gallery tab for this trip.

We walk on four days of this 12-day trip and these are mountain walks that are graded as Easy to Moderate. The walks do involve hilly sections and can be muddy and uneven under foot, so we therefore recommend taking comfortable walking boots with good grip and ankle support, spare walking socks, a water bottle and snacks, sun screen, insect repellent, sun hat, layered clothing (including waterproofs), a backpack and walking poles with you.

On day two, there is the opportunity to walk in Bucegi Mountains covering a distance of approximately six kilometres and taking around two to three hours. This walk includes uphill and downhill sections along a path (300m ascent and descent). This walk is graded as Easy. Alternatively, you can explore Moieciu at your own pace rather than taking this alpine walk.

On day five, we take a ridge hike through the alpine meadows which takes approximately five to six hours, covers 16kms and reaches a maximum altitude of 1,400m (with a 500m ascent and descent). This is the most difficult walk on the trip and is graded as Moderate. About one hour of this walk is a fairly steep uphill section along a tractor track and depending on the weather it can be muddy and rocky underfoot. An easier alternative self-guided route is possible whereby you walk alongside the railway tracks (covering around 10kms, takes two and a half hours and is mostly flat with only a slight downhill section). If you don't wish to walk at all then you can explore the town of Viseu de Sus at your own pace or take an extended journey on the steam railway to Paltin before returning to Viseu de Sus to board our bus and go to meet the rest of the group at the walk end point.

On day six, we hike in the Rodna Mountains. This walk is graded as Easy and takes around two to three hours covering five to six kilometres and reaching a maximum altitude of 1,416m. There is a short climb at the beginning of the walk followed by a long mild descent. If you don't wish to take part in the walk then you can remain on the bus and meet up with the group at the end point of the walk.

On day seven, we walk to Putna, which covers approximately 16kms and takes about five to six hours.

This walk is graded as Easy with some Moderate sections. The walk is along forestry roads with a short steep uphill climb for about 20 minutes in the middle section and then another short descent. If you do not wish to do the walk, then the bus will drive to Putna via Marginea where you may like to visit a pottery maker. At Putna you will meet up with the rest of the group to visit the monastery.

As well as the above walks the exploration of the towns and cities visited on this trip will mostly be done on foot, so that you can get a proper feel for all the fascinating places that are visited.

We spend a couple of nights on board a houseboat and exploring the Danube Delta by smaller boat, so in case of emergency it is necessary for you to be able to swim at least 25 metres.

At some of the museums visited on this trip, where we have a guided tour, this may be with other non-Explore customers, as the museums don't all provide private guided tours.

Ability to swim

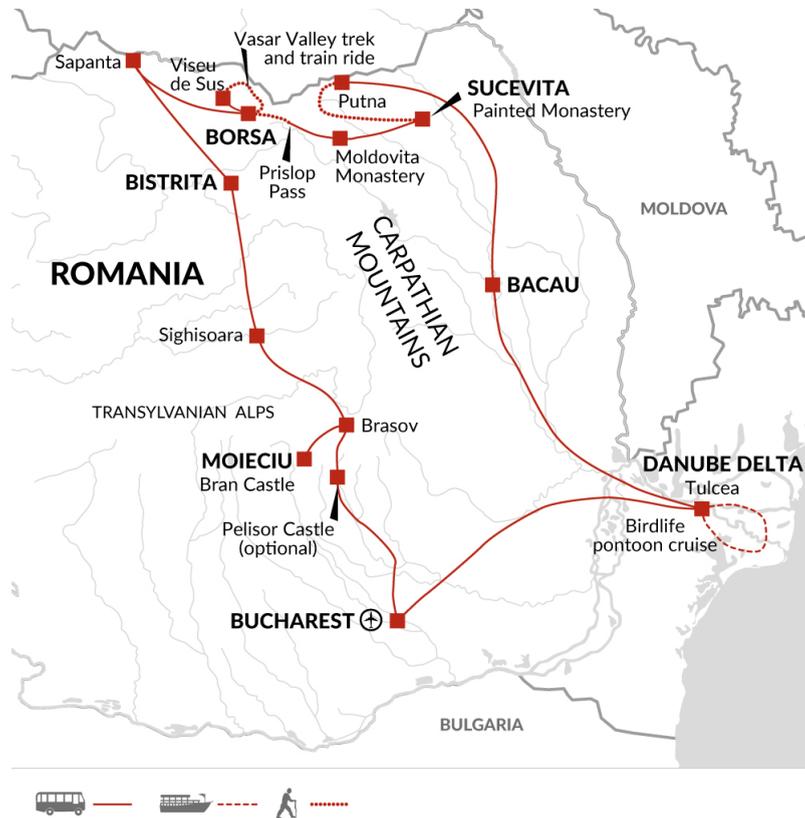
Need to be able to swim 25 metres.

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.

Wildlife in the Danube Delta



The Danube Delta is a bird-lovers paradise. The diverse habitats in and around the wetlands of the delta attract a huge and diverse selection of birds. During our spring and autumn trips, thousands of migrating birds make a stop here on their long journeys. Breeding season is generally in May, so there are higher numbers of birds in and around the delta at this time of year.

The species of birds that we could see will vary depending on the time of year, but the white pelican is seen on most trips. We may also spot the pigmy cormorant; 80% of the world population make the delta their home. Egrets, herons, grebes, red footed falcons and white tail eagles are also possible to see.

The delta is home to a number of mammals, such as wild boar, deer, wild cats and jackal, although spotting these four-legged creatures is harder and sightings are rare

Reviews



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