



ROMANIA

TRANSYLVANIA HIKING TRAVERSE

BY FOOT

10-DAYS

Romania conjures up iconic images of Count Dracula, Transylvania, the Carpathian Mountains and old-world Eastern European culture. It's a country where Western and Byzantine influences meet, shepherds still tend their flocks, horse drawn carriages are more numerous than cars, and medieval villages retain their traditional character. On BikeHike's Transylvania Traverse, we'll show you ethnic diversity from Romanians, Hungarians and Saxons to Gypsies, Ukrainians and Poles, and we'll learn about their traditions and beliefs. We'll sample the region's local cuisine and wines, and hike in the legendary Carpathian Mountains, the backbone of Eastern Europe. This Romania adventure tour is an artful blend of outdoor activity, traditional culture, exquisite scenery and ancient history.

Day 1

BUCHAREST

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival into the Bucharest Airport, you'll be met by your BikeHike Adventures guide and transferred to your central hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: none



Day 2

CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS

HIKING

After breakfast, we will transfer to the Carpathian Mountains. On our way, we'll visit Peles Castle, a royal palace built as a summer residence for the first king of Romania (between 1875 and 1883) and built in a German Renaissance style. We'll then take a cable car high up into the mountains. This will be the starting point for our hike in the surrounding mountains. We'll eventually reach our vehicle again and be transferred north into the southern Carpathian Mountains, the foothills of Piatra Craiului Mountain in Magura. There, we'll check into our cozy guesthouse that boasts incredible panoramic views. We'll be staying here for two nights. After some time to settle in, we'll enjoy a traditional family style Romanian dinner together, cooked by our hosts.

Hiking Duration: 4 hours

Hiking Distance: 9 km / 5 mi

Descent: - 1200 m (3937 ft)

Accommodation: B & B

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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Day 3

CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS - BRAN CASTLE

HIKING

This morning we set off on foot from the guesthouse, hiking to Bran Castle (otherwise known as Dracula's Castle). Bran Castle was built in the 13th century and is one of the oldest medieval castles in Romania. Since the 1900s, it has been the summer residence of Queen Marie of Romania, the grand-daughter of Queen Victoria of England. Our hike today lasts about five hours, with a steady climb and an area of somewhat steep descent. We'll pass through a village and over a mountain offering spectacular views. Along the way, we'll stop for a delicious picnic lunch of simple yet traditional dishes. After lunch, we'll walk a bit further and meet our driver again to transfer back to the village. For dinner, we'll once again enjoy a traditional family style dinner cooked by our hosts.

Hiking Duration: 5 hours

Hiking Distance: 15 km / 9 mi

Ascent: + 500 m (1640 ft)

Descent: - 800 m (2625 ft)

Accommodation: B & B

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

ZARNESTI GORGE

HIKING

After breakfast we'll set out on foot, right from our guesthouse again. Our destination today is the Zarnesti Gorge, where the movie Cold Mountain was filmed. The route to the gorge passes through a local village, along a narrow forest road and up and down lush valleys. We'll be hiking for about 5 hours. On the other side of the hike, we'll reconnect with our driver and drive two hours to our next accommodation, located in a small Saxon village. Our hosts are a delightful family, and the hostess loves to provide home-cooked meals for her guests. At dusk, we'll watch for the cow and goat parade. This is when all of the cattle, horses and goats are set free from the fields and return home, waiting for their gates to open. It is certainly a spectacle to witness and often a highlight of the trip. We will stay in this lovely guesthouse for two nights.

Hiking Duration: 5 hours

Hiking Distance: 16 km / 10 mi

Ascent: + 600 m (1967 ft)

Descent: - 880 m (2887 ft)

Accommodation: B & B

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

PRINCE OF WALES WALK

HIKING

This morning we'll drive to Viscri, a remote and beautifully preserved traditional Transylvanian village with a UNESCO recognized white fortified church. The English-Romanian Foundation here has worked diligently to restore parts of this church as well as many of the facades, barns, walls and buildings throughout the town. Viscri has also attracted international attention because Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, owns a house here. We'll first visit the church before beginning our hike from Viscri to Mesendorf, through fertile meadows and a beautiful forest. This is the same route that Prince Charles hiked on his first visit to Romania 20 years ago. He still returns every year to experience the Romanian wild flower meadows and the organic food. After our hike, we'll return to our same guesthouse and enjoy another family-style meal. We'll have the remainder of the evening after dinner to relax and relish the rural surroundings.

Hiking Duration: 4 hours

Hiking Distance: 17 km / 11 mi

Ascent: + 100 m (328 ft)

Descent: - 250 m (820 ft)

Accommodation: B & B

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

SIGHISOARA

HIKING

After breakfast, we will start hiking again in the picturesque area around our guesthouse, heading over the hills and through two traditional villages. We'll stop for a rest at Saschiz, where we'll enjoy a farm to table lunch in a family home. After lunch, we'll walk to catch a train from a remote village station. The train will take us to Sighisoara, considered to be one of most beautiful inhabited citadels in Europe while also being Romania's most iconic medieval structures. The medieval citadel is perched on a hilltop and is fortified with a 14th century wall and towers. For avid readers, Sighisoara is also the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler, from Bram Stoker's Count Dracula novel. Tonight's hotel is an extra special one due to its location right in the centre of the fortress. After getting settled in, the evening is free to enjoy the town at our own leisure.

Hiking Duration: 3 hours

Hiking Distance: 11 km / 7 mi

Ascent: + 300 m (985 ft) / - 300 m (985 ft)

Descent: - 300 m (985 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7

MALANCRAV - SIBIU

HIKING

Today, we'll start with a transfer to Malancrav, a picturesque 14th century village with the region's largest Saxon population. After a visit to its fortified church, we'll visit a local woman who makes Romanian carpets on a loom. We'll then have a bit of leisure time to explore the village before we begin hiking again to another Saxon village. The hike crosses over a hill and down a long valley, ending at a sheepfold. Here, we'll experience the delights of a traditional shepherd's lunch. After lunch, we'll be met by our driver and transferred to Sibiu. After checking into our comfortable hotel, the evening will be at leisure to explore this beautiful town. Sibiu is a typical Eastern European town where you'll discover plenty of narrow cobbled streets and large squares filled with outside cafes and restaurants. Throughout the town, you'll also discover a multitude of churches and museums.

Hiking Duration: 2 hours

Hiking Distance: 7 km / 4 mi

Ascent: + 300 m (985 ft)

Descent: - 150 m (492 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 8

SIBIU

HIKING AND WINE TASTING

This morning, we'll drive beyond Sibiu for a light hike to a vineyard. Once there, we'll enjoy a leisurely picnic of local dishes typical to the area. We'll also have the opportunity for a wine tasting in the vineyard. Afterwards, we'll return to Sibiu. The evening is at leisure to enjoy the town.

Hiking Duration: 2 hours

Hiking Distance: 6 - 8 km / 4 - 5 mi

Ascent: + 100 m (328 ft)

Descent: - 100 m (328 ft)

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



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Day 9

BUCHAREST

TRANSFER AND CITY STROLL

Today is the conclusion of our Transylvanian exploration as this morning we will head into Romania's bustling capital, Bucharest. The city is laden with history, and is known for its wide, tree-lined streets, neoclassical buildings and fashionable parks. Upon arrival into Bucharest, we'll check into our cozy hotel in the centre of town. The remainder of the day will be at leisure to explore the wonders of Bucharest.

Driving Duration: 5 hours

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast

Day 10

BUCHAREST

DEPARTURE

This morning you can explore Bucharest, if time allows, and at an appropriate time, we will then transfer you to the airport for your flight back home or onward within Europe.

Meals: Breakfast

TRIP INCLUSIONS

Trip Includes

All accommodation, meals as indicated, land transportation, equipment, airport transfers and English-speaking veteran guides.

Not Included

International, airport departure taxes, gratuities, meals not indicated and items of a personal nature.

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