

Foodies – Grand tour of Romania in 10 days

We like food too! Tasty food! We like it more when we experience other cultures.

Eat, drink and discover Romania!

While Romania is better known internationally for other attractions as Dracula, medieval towns, fortified churches, painting monasteries, and Nadia Comaneci or Ilie Nastase and recently Simona Halep, its lesser-known cuisine is something well worth exploring. Traditional Romanian recipes bring together a mix of ingredients and are heavily influenced by Balkan, Turkish, Serbian, German, and Hungarian cuisines. Due to this enriched experience, Romanian food is varied, filling, and very savory.

Coming to Romania is a must for any travel enthusiast and food lover because there is such richness in terms of traditional cuisine, that your senses will be absolutely spoiled with amazing and intense flavors.

Meantime our tour is based for tasting real food and drinks, we will combine very well with discovering the most important and attractive attractions.

Day 1: Bucharest - Old Lipscani with the oldest beer-house! (D)

Today we join Bucharest Tour. We will combine food with visits. We will discover another face of the city. The guide will pick you up from the hotel/airport/apartment on a specific time (agreed before).

We will not miss the important places.

First, we will visit the **Parliament Palace** (the second largest building in the world after the Pentagon) and then continue with the main attractions: the historical city center or the **Old Lipscani Town, Unirii Square**, then continue to the well-known Victoriei Avenue with the beautiful historical buildings as the former **Royal Palace** (nowadays the Art Museum), the **Athenaeum** - the country's most prestigious concert hall with an outstanding acoustics, the **Revolution Square**, with a short presentation of our revolution from 1989, then, the **University**, the **National Theatre** and the surroundings.

We will end the tour in the old town at Caru cu Bere restaurant – the most famous restaurant in downtown Bucharest and the oldest beerhouse, serving Romanian traditional dishes. Tasting “sarmale” and drinking the famous house beer made from a unique recipe, is the best way to start a tour in Romania and get to know each other. Cheers!

<https://www.carucubere.ro/en/bucharest-restaurant/>

Day 2: Bucharest – Azuga *wine and champagne tasting – Peles Castle – Brasov (B,L)

The tour will start in the morning. We will drive to Sinaia where we will visit the most valuable castle.

Peles Castle is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful castles in Europe. This castle was used as a summer residence by the kings of Romania.

Then, we will drive to **Azuga** where we will eat and drink right at the Rhein Cellars, the main wine and champagne supplier for the Royal Family!

Built in 1892, the Rhein Azuga Cellar was the former "Supplier of Romanian's Royal Court", and since April 2006 has been designated "**Supplier of His Majesty King Michael the First**". The cellar is considered the oldest at which sparkling wine is produced using the traditional method.

We will have a traditional, local menu, a cellar tour with the Rhein guide, a wine and champagne tasting. Leaving Azuga, we will head to Brasov, a wonderful mountain town.

Dinner in Brasov, discovering the local food with the guide recommendation.

Also, we will visit the **medieval part** of Brasov with: The Black Church, The Town Hall, The Black Tower, Ecaterina's Gate and the Rope Street – the narrowest street in Europe.

On the way: snacks as **Pufuleti** (taste like a popcorn but very soft and look like a fat stick☺) – better than popcorn, local pastry, Romanian pretzel.

Accommodation in Brasov.

Day 3: Brasov – Bran castle – Rasnov Fortress and * Palinca Distillery – Brasov. (B, L)

Today we will visit **Dracula's Castle** - as in Bram Stoker's legendary vampire story. Situated at 30 Km from Brasov, Bran Castle is an important national monument and landmark of the Romanian tourism, due not only to the beauty of the Castle and the landscape but also to the legend of Count Dracula.

Between 1920 and 1927, Bran Castle was restored and transformed into a beautiful summer residence, surrounded with a park, fountains, a lake, walking alleys, halt terraces and the "Tea House" of Queen Maria. Since 1956 the Castle was opened as a museum of history and feudal art.

Lunch in Bran: local food.

After a great lunch, taste some brandy! Local brandy tasting in Bran at the **Palinca Transylvania Distillery**.

A simple and impactful authentic experience is discovering the traditional drinks of the area. Whether you are connoisseur, passionate or just like to experiment with new tastes, you will definitely like to enjoy an authentic Romanian drink.

Dinner: free to choose as optional, but the local guide will help for best choice.

Day 4: Brasov – The Red Lake with the Hungarian Traditions - Bucovina (B, D)

Today we will leave behind Transylvania and we will head towards for lunch time and visits to "secuime" as locals say - the Szekler Land. (The south-west region of Romania, well known as The Hungarian Land).

Here we will taste a combination of Hungarian–Romanian food, also savory and very tasty, different, a culinary experience.

Snack: Local Donuts "Langosi" (big sliced donuts with cheese, or sour cream, or jam).

The Red Lake is the largest natural mountain lake in Romania, is one of the most picturesque and „wild” lakes of the country. The lake has a unique charm, because of the stumps that come out of the water. These are not the „relics” of some lacustrine civilization, but the remains of a flooded pine forest.

Dinner: Gura Humorului – accommodation to a very nice pension as casa Calin and try the local food – the well-recognized Moldavian food, as the tastiest food. Dinner included.

Day 5: Bucovina Region with the fabulous food and the Painted Monasteries - Sighetul Marmatiei (B, D)

Bucovina is the land of boletus (mushrooms), cream and fish. These three ingredients are often in the main dishes of the region. The food is plentifully and delicious, and if you eat at a local's house, make sure you finish everything because it is considered impolite to leave food on your plate. But that shouldn't be too hard to do with such appetizing cuisine.

One of the dishes specific to the region is the "Hârzob with smoked trout", which is trout smoked in fir branches and spiced with salt, pepper, garlic and "boia", a powder made from red peppers. Pork dishes are also popular, including the Tochitură Bucovineană, a pork stew served with polenta and a fried egg.

For something lighter, try the Ciorbă Rădăuțeană – chicken soup with vegetables and a broth thickened with eggs, cream and flour – or the Boletus stew, typical for the region.

As we will combine visits with food, after a delicious local breakfast that includes also local cheese and homemade jam and others very tasty, we will go on a visit.

Visit **VORONET Monastery** (1547, most known for the frescoes with predominant blue color - Voronet blue, surnamed "The Sixtin Chapel of the East", these frescoes depict a fairy-tale world, painted on a "piece of heaven". This "jewel of Bucovina" was built by Romanian great ruler Stefan the Great in 1488).

The "**Painted**" **Monasteries** is the major Moldavian destination, because of the vivid and animated frescoes on their church walls. These depict Biblical and other scenes, designed in sequences almost like strip cartoons to educate the local people in the Orthodox religion. Due to their singleness, the monasteries in Bucovina are now UNESCO protected cultural sites. The art historians compare their artistic value with the mural paintings of **San Marco church of Venice or the church of Orvieto**. The secret of the Moldavian painters who prepared the colors and the techniques that made the paintings incredibly resistant is still a mystery.

In the afternoon, we will cross the Carpathian Mountains to Maramures, the famous region in the north-west of Romania, **the countryside carved in wood!**

Dinner to Casa Iurca for amazing local dishes.

Placed at the border with Ukraine, Sighetu Marmatiei is a place where Communism meets the peasant life. While the city center displays beautifully colored houses, majestic buildings, Sighetu Marmatiei houses also one of the dreadful Communist prisons - a reconstruction of the Communist past, from the personality cult of Ceaușescu to the Romanians' daily life to the personalities.

Day 6: Sighetu Marmatiei – Sapanta – Cluj

In the north-west of Romania lays a region where centuries-old traditions and customs are part of everyday life, where there's nothing odd about seeing a horse-drawn cart filled with hay or people dressed in folk clothes or wearing bear and goat costumes while parading on the streets. That region is **Maramureș**, a place where technology hasn't yet replaced the ancestral practices, boasting a civilization that today proudly displays a bucolic countryside carved in wood. The local cuisine is mainly based on pork meat and cheese made from sheep-milk or cow-milk, typical for the pastoral way of life of the region. Some of the specialities are "*bulz*", polenta balls stuffed with "*brânză de burduf*", a sheep-milk cheese with a strong flavour, homemade pork sausages, made just after the "pig-slaughter" around Christmas by filling gut casings with ground pork meat.

Each meal starts with a glass of horincă and if you are invited to a local's house, remember that they consider it impolite to leave food on the plate. However, once they see that you have finished, you will start hearing 'Do you want some more? What can I serve you with?'

In the morning we will head to **Sapanta** where we will visit the **Merry Cemetery**. The wooden colorful crosses sculpted and painted by craftsman Stan Patras and his apprentice, Dumitru Pop, turned it into **an authentic open air museum**. The colors of the crosses and the humorous texts on them capture for eternity the essential episodes of life and show the strength of the Romanian people, who do not fear of death.

Then, we will visit the wooden churches of Maramures. Following Mara River, we admire the impressive landscapes and visit some of the oldest churches made of wood, special places within UNESCO's patrimony.

In the evening, we will arrive in **Cluj Napoca**, the treasure city of Transylvania and **European Youth Capital in 2015**.

Overnight in the city center.

Day 7: Cluj - Sibiu - 2019 European Region of Gastronomy !! (B, D)

Cluj Napoca city, named by the Saxon merchants in the 18th century as the "treasure city".

Starting our walking tour with the ruins of the old Roman camp, we'll discover the old Benedictine monastery, the square of the history museum and we will meet one of the city's famous sons, Matei Corvin. The Catholic Church "St. Michael", a milestone in Cluj (the second largest Gothic church in Transylvania) is an absolute must. Bannfy Palace, "old

Town Hall” and the “mirror street” complete the city’s urban architecture. The headquarters of the «Babes Bolyai» University is proof of the cities student tradition, Cluj being the host of more than one hundred thousand students every year.

The, we drive to Sibiu medieval town – walking tour.

Dinner in Sibiel – a small village situated close to Sibiu town, where you will discover local gastronomy. Sibiu Region was 2019 European Region of Gastronomy and today we will taste local food.

Sibiu is a charming city, a meeting place between Romanian, German and Hungarian cultures. With picturesque squares and fascinating Baroque buildings, the city is one of the cultural centers of Romania. The dining scene offers flavorful dishes, from traditional cuisine to Mediterranean recipes.

Day 8: Sibiu - Sighisoara Day trip - taste Dracula's favorite plate and drink his vampire wine! (B, L)

Sighisoara, Europe’s best preserved medieval town.

Highlights include: Guild Tower, Venetian House (built in the 13th Century), Vlad the Impaler (Dracula) House, Antler House, Wood Covered Staircase, Hill Church, Hermann Oberth Square.

Sighisoara is one of the most beautiful towns in the heart of Transylvania. The whole medieval citadel is a part of UNESCO World Heritage. German architectural influences are visible throughout the entire city. Sighisoara was for several centuries a military and political stronghold. One of its most famous attractions is the Clock Tower (Council Tower), built in the 14th Century. The tower has seven foot thick walls and was used to store ammunition, food reserves, archives and the city's treasures.

We will have a day trip to Sighisoara and we will have a special Lunch in the House where Vlad Tepes was born, today a cozy restaurant. We will eat his favorite plate and drink his vampire wine. In the evening we will return to Sibiu town. Explore the city. Overnight in Sibiu.

Day 9: Sibiu – Transfagarasan Road or Olt Valley to Bucharest. (B, L)

Visits: the highest and the most spectacular road in Romania, Transfagarasan Road, Curtea de Arges Monastery * or Cozia when we will take the way on Olt Valley, a spectacular landscape.

Curtea de Arges Cathedral is one of the most famous buildings in Romania. Built in the 16th century by Prince Neagoe Basarab of Wallachia, the cathedral is the burial place of many kings, queens and princesses of Romania. Its legends have inspired many Romanian poets.

**Between 1st of July and 15th October, the Transfagarasan Road is usually open and we can visit Curtea de Arges Monastery; when the weather conditions do not permit it and the road is closed, we will visit the Cozia Monastery, which is located on the beautiful Olt river Valley.

Arrive in Bucharest in the evening.

Day 10: Bucharest - departure with beautiful memories and maybe palinka, wine or a smoked cheese in the bag. (B)

Depends on your flight, transfer to the airport together with beautiful memories and maybe palinka, wine or a smoked cheese in the bag.

We Recommend

- Do not eat with 1 week before.
- If you have food restrictions of any kind, please inform us, as we will adapt the menus for you.
- Do NOT use any perfume, only the food, and wine smell will join us on this tour.
- Do NOT bring any food with you, we have plenty.
- Minimum booking numbers apply (6 pax).
- The minimum age allowed: 18 years old. It is possible to be younger but it will be your loss because we have also wine tasting.
- Not wheelchair accessible.
- Near public transportation.
- Most travelers can participate but better the foodies one.
- This experience does not require good weather, but a good stomach.
- This tour/activity will have a maximum of 12 travelers.

Price: 1020 euro /person

Included in the cost:

- 9 nights' accommodation to centrally located hotels
- half board: 2 meals per day (breakfast and lunch or dinner)
- snacks on the way
- winetasting to Azuga Rhein cellar
- Palinca Distillery –visit and brandy tasting – see how “palinca” is made.
- transport for the entire tour by car, minivan, minibus,
- English speaking guide for the entire trip
- transfers and city tours as per program.

Not included;

- entrance tickets to the attractions
- photo tax
- souvenirs or other personal expenses