

Guided cycle - Transylvania

8 days / 7 nights

With this guided cycling tour of Transylvania, you will find out the reasons why Transylvania is famous across the world. You will discover its mysterious legends and hear all about its bloodthirsty count who's said to have been ruling these wild lands from his hilltop castle for centuries. Although these are only legends, Transylvania is indeed a most spectacular place, where tradition, the breath-taking natural scenery and the wide variety of animals and plants which inhabit it, still co-exist harmoniously today, not caring of the fast-paced advancements of the modern world we're surrounded with. Guarded by the glorious Eastern Alps, also known as the Carpathian Mountains, this fairy tale land was always fiercely fought for. First, the Saxons settled here, early in the 11th century and they bravely kept the passes between Transylvania and Wallachia safe from the powerful Tatars and the Ottomans. This bloody and fascinating history is waiting for you to discover it. You will experience not only brilliant castles, fortified churches and medieval towns but also small environmental reserves, untouched still by the heavy hand of modern advancements, and absolutely sublime in their natural simplicity.

YOUR PROGRAM

Day 1 - Arrival in Bucharest

We're starting in Brasov, at the train station, where you will be welcomed by your guide at 5PM. From here you will be transferred to a small and peaceful town named Vulcan on the outskirts of Transylvania, in Brasov's County. This transfer is roughly three hours long but we will manage it just fine with the help of a few breaks on the way. Night in the village's cozy Parochial Home. (Dinner)

Day 2 - First day of cycling to Fagaras

After breakfast we're all ready and set up to begin our ride on an easy and flat stretch of road, overseeing the spectacular panorama with snowy summits of the Bucegi Mountains, as we cross through the little mountain town of Zarnesti. At lunch, we stop for visit at the still working oldest flour mill in Transylvania, powered by the clear river which runs just next to it. Also, here is where we will learn the tumultuous story of the owner's life and his mill's hardships during the rough communist time. After a well-deserved refreshing lemonade and a tasty piece of cake, we continue our adventure, heading to a lovely little village where we'll spend the night, just at the foot of the grand Fagaras mountain range. If we're lucky and the weather is on our side, we will lengthen our journey by just a little bit, enough to allow us to discover an ancient and mystical worshipping cave, home to Zalmoxis, the supreme deity of the Dacian people who have ruled these lands 2000 years ago. Night in a charming family guesthouse.
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner ~55 km, +250, -400m

Day 3 - Cycling through the Transylvanian plateau

Today the Fagaras mountain's ridges will follow and charm us all day long as if to prove its grandeur, these being the highest Romanian Mountains. In the morning after we had our copious breakfast, we begin today's adventure by heading to the quaint small village of Lisa, where an over 100-year-old, still functional machine which tailors woollen blankets, covers and clothes is waiting for us to hear its turbulent story. So we will stop here and listen to the owner's tales and see for ourselves the old and intricate ways of producing perfect woollen produce. When we're done, we retake our ride through the once successful

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industrial town, nowadays laying barely asleep, surrounded by the ruins of its old communist machinery and majestic mountaintops. We then head our home for tonight just next door to a stunning ruined Cistercian Monastery where we can still sense the spirits of its old monks working and praying. Here we'll have the opportunity to meet the nowadays pastor who's a natural storyteller, and who's going to enchants us with the place's rich history and funny legends. Possible detour to the spiritual Sambata de Sus (Higher Saturday) Monastery, + 10km. Night in a comfortable guest house, on the grounds of Carta's watermill.
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner ~65 km, +300m, -450m
Please note that depending on the seasonal period accommodation on this day is possible in either Carta or Cartisoara. As a consequence, on some departures, our groups may visit the Monastery in Carta on day 4.

Day 4 - Pastoral landscape

Soon after we filled our breakfast appetite we begin with a thrilling bridge crossing of the river Olt. We then continue our journey onto picturesque country roads where we might see locals at work, either carrying fresh produce by horse carts, ploughing the fields in the old-fashioned ways or simply working their home garden and being thrilled to see and meet new visitors. But we must resist the temptation and continue advancing through these pristine pastoral landscapes and past the 15th century fortified church of Richis as we reach to enter a once thriving town. As we enter it we will be able to see its enormous fortified church piercing the ski with its spiking towers and marking the grounds with its grand ring-walls. Free time for those who wish to discover its fascinating interiors. Since 1993, this church has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage site and for good reason, since this is undoubtedly a magical site to experience. Night in a lovely guesthouse by the Fortified Church.
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner ~68 km, +600m, -650m

Day 5 - Sighisoara

In store for today, we have a most beautiful ride through authentic Transylvanian villages, we will then catch up with the Tarnava Mare river and we will also pass by the nearby hop fields. Our evening is one of the best of Romanian cities, Sighisoara. This is one of the last remaining and still inhabited European medieval citadels and also part of UNESCO's Heritage sites. Once we got there, we will have the rest of the afternoon entirely for ourselves! We will have plenty of visit choices, from the colourful and quirky medieval streets to the most famous Romanian clock tower, and the house of Vlad the Impaler's father. Night in a 3* lovely hotel in the heart of Sighisoara's Citadel.
Breakfast, Lunch, ~40 km, +380m, -400m

Day 6 - Bucolic Transylvania

The journey we've prepared for today will take us on a peaceful country road which crosses through the curvy Transylvanian hills and takes us into the little quiet village of Apold. We stop for a little while to throw a look around before getting back on our saddles. We resume cycling through small farming villages, past local Shepherds looking after their sheep. For lunch we will stop at yet another impressing fortified church and here we will uncover some more interesting Saxon particularities and traditions. We will finish today's ride in a small and traditional town where we will sleep in actual traditional Romanian homes. This will give you the opportunity to truly feel like a Romanian and better interact with your hosts. Today's dinner will be organized at the largest guesthouse and it will consist of proper Romanian family dishes. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner ~48 km, +600m, -500m

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Day 7 - Viscri

Today begins with a quick uphill through a refreshing forest before we reach a nice and easy stretch of road through several small towns before arriving in Viscri. Once we get here we will start exploring this striking old village and see in-depth how it was living as a Saxon back hundreds of years ago. We will also have the option to visit Viscri's beautiful fortified church. This church was brought back to life with the help of the Prince Charles foundation in 1991 and nowadays it is considered amongst the best examples of fortified churches across the world. To fully immerge you into the local spirit, we've also prepared two special meetings for you, one with the village's brick maker and the second with its blacksmith. These are two special members of this society as they are the only ones allowed to tackle with the villages restored buildings. For the rest of the day you'll be free to explore at your own pace since we will be located straight in Viscri's heart.
Breakfast, ~35 km, +300m, -250m

Day 8 - End of the trip

After serving our final rustic breakfast we will embark in our bus and head to Dracula's Bran Castle, situated right on the border between Transylvania and Wallachia. Since you are probably all very curious to see it, we will have a photo stop in front of it and hear its intriguing story. After this, if we have time, we will make another stop at the romantic castle of Peles which was the Royal Family's summer residence. Since this is a really beautiful place we will have a short walk around its spectacular gardens before we retake our trip to reach Bucharest. Once we got to Bucharest you are free to explore it as you wish with the help of the self-guided written instructions that we'll give you. End of the trip.
Breakfast
Accommodation in Bucharest available upon request.
Please note. Bran Castle is an extremely popular tourist destination and can be very busy. That's why we consider more convenient to have 2 shorter stops (Bran and Peles) and also have the time to have a short stroll in Bucharest.

Additional information

TARIFFS

1475 euros per person.
Rental Trek Hybrid Bikes with front suspensions, disc brakes and bottle holder (21-speed trigger, Shimano equipped, double rims, aluminium frame, 1 rear bag, repair kit, antitheft lock) Not included: gloves, counter, helmets. We can provide you with helmets, but we advise you to bring your personal helmets. : 95 euros per person.
Rental of E-Bike during the trip : 290 euros per person.
Single supplement (price per person for minimum 2 participants) : 220 euros per person.
Private transfer Brasov - Vulcan, price / service (1-3 persons). : 40 euros per person.
Private transfer Bucharest Airport OTP - Bucharest city centre / railway station, price / service (1-3 persons). : 40 euros per person.
Extra night, Bucharest, 4* hotel, price per DBL BB. : 95 euros per person.

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Extra night, Brasov, 3* hotel, price per DBL BB. : 97 euros per person.
Extra night, Bucharest, 4* hotel, price per SGL BB. : 90 euros per person.
Extra night, Brasov, 3* hotel, price per SGL BB. : 95 euros per person.
Supplement for 4 persons group/ per person : 250 euros per person.
Supplement for 5 persons group/ per person : 150 euros per person.

INCLUDED
English speaking Romanian guide OR driver-guide from day 1 to day 8, with a first aid kit
Meals (7 breakfasts, 6 picnics and 6 dinners)
Accommodations
The transfers
Day 1 - Private transfer OR by train Bucharest / Vulcan: approx. 3:30
Day 8 - Private transfer Viscri / Bucharest: approx. 4:30
Luggage transfer

NOT INCLUDED
Bike Rental
Entrances fees
Drinks other than water
Personal expenses
Personal insurances
Air transport

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY
8 days of which 6 of cycling. Medium level (from 35 to 68 Km / day, with some climbs).

CARRYING
Daily Baggage Transfer service.

ACCOMMODATION
Double occupancy:
- 6 nights in guesthouses, exceptionally shared facilities.
- 1 night in a charming central hotel on Day 5.

SIZE OF GROUP
Minimum of 6 people.

DEPARTURES
From April to the end of October.

STARTING POINT
Bucharest train station / city centre.

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END OF THE TRIP

Bucharest train station / city centre.

HOW TO GET THERE

HOW to get from the AIRPORT to the North train station:

BUS

- To go to the North train station, exit the Arrivals terminal (from the ground level – if you see a flower shop to your right, you are on the first floor) and walk towards the bus stop “Otopeni Plecari” (Otopeni departures).
- Take bus 100 and get off at the Piata Victoriei stop. From here, you can get the metro to GARA DE NORD stop.

TAXI

- You can order a taxi from the machines found near the exits of the terminals. A taxi costs maximum 80 lei, don’t accept to pay more or don’t take a taxi with another cost than 2,59lei/km!

PRIVATE TRANSFER

- We can arrange a private transfer for a total cost of 35 Euro, ~ 45 min – 1h (depending on the traffic).

UBER/BOLT

- The UBER and BOLT apps work very well, so you can order a car that will take you to the hotel. The price depends on how many cars are available and on the traffic. The cost is of maximum 20 Euro.

HOW to get from the North train station to the AIRPORT:

BUS

- To reach the airport, at the end of the train platform, take the corridor between McDonald's and the information office.
- Just in front of the exit, there is an entrance at the metro-train.
- Take the yellow line for 1 stop, until Piata Victoriei.
- The bus station is right in front of the metro exit on "Lascar Catargiu Bulevard". Take the 100 bus that will take you straight to the airport.
- Get off at the AEROPORTUL INTERNATIONAL HENRI COANDA TERMINAL PLECARI (DEPARTURES).

TAXI

- You can order a taxi from the machines found near the exits of the train station. A taxi costs maximum 100 lei, don’t accept to pay more or don’t take a taxi with another cost than 2,59lei/km! Independent taxi drivers have different prices.

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- The UBER and BOLT apps work very well so you can order a car that will take you to the airport. Just exit the train station and walk around 200 m near the station so the GPS can locate you better. The price depends on how many cars are available and on the traffic. The cost is of maximum 10 Euro.

EQUIPMENT TO TAKE

WHAT TO BRING?

- Sunglasses
- Gloves
- Bottle/bottles to fill with water (the plastic bottle on the spot can always be an option)
- Cereal or energizing bars for the day
- Solar cream
- Anti-mosquito cream
- Card, but also a little money in cash
- Binoculars
- Light fleece top
- Light windproof/waterproof jacket
- Headlamp (some guesthouses may not have bed-side lamps, if you want to read in the evening)
- Sun hat
- Personal clothing for mild to hot weather
- Sturdy shoes

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The exits and entrances of the biggest cities can have busy traffic for a few kilometres.

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