



Explore Travel Romania
19 bis Calistrat Hogaş street, Piatra-Neamt, Romania
tel: +4 0748 155 400 / tel/fax: +4 021 210 96 62

www.exploरोromania.org
office@exploरोtravel.net
VAT number: RO15727857

Explore Romania

GOING TO THE HEART OF IT

TREKKING THE CARPATHIANS

Day 1: – Bucharest – Sinaia – approx. 2h transfer

Arrival at Bucharest airport. Transfer to the royal resort of Sinaia. Dinner and accommodation in a 3* hotel/guesthouse.

Day 2: – Sinaia – Bucegi Plateau - Pestera (1000m/1200m climb, 400/600 m descent, approx. 6h walking)

Day in Bucegi Natural Park. Bucegi is believed to be the Dacians' (ancestors of Romanians) holy mountain Kogainon, on which their God – Zalmoxis resided in a cave. On the plateau, the wind and rain have turned the rocks into spectacular figures known as the “Sphinx” and “Babele” (the old ladies), whose existence supported the mystical role of the mountains.

We climb up to 2000m/2200m altitude on the mountain plateau. Here, depending on the weather and your shape, we can either just head towards your accommodation, or we can spend a few hours walking on the plateau and discover some strange rock formations that made these mountains famous: the mushrooms, the old ladies, the Sphinx.

We start descending through vast open spaces shaped by glaciers till we reach Ialomita river valley and find our accommodation at 1600 m altitude at Hotel Pestera.



Day 3: Pestera –Bran (600m - 900 m climb, 1300 - 1600 m descent – 6-7h walking)

After breakfast we climb the western ridge of Bucegi massif till we reach Batrana Peak at 2200m. This is an ancient passage for shepherds and their flocks, villagers from Valachia to Transylvania and also, during the time of the Austrian – Hungarian Empire, smugglers of all kind. In front of you lies Bran Country, with a landscape shaped by centuries of pastoral life and traditional habitation, made of houses, summer lodges and haystacks dotting the green hills. We start descending along the big limestone and granite walls, then into the woods, heading to Simon village. Overnight stay in a comfortable 3***guesthouse in this mountain village.



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Day 4: Bran – Magura (750 m ascent, 4 hours walking)

Easy day today – hiking towards the altitude village of Magura, located between two parks: Bucegi and Piatra Craiului. We start by crossing near Bran Castle, linked with Bram Stoker's Dracula novel. This beautiful 14th century castle was renovated in the 20th century by the royal family of Romania. From the castle, a steep slope brings us to a series of beautiful view points, ascending towards the limestone crags dominating Magura village. A quick descent brings us to this dispersed typical mountain village where we find our accommodation for the night. Dinner and accommodation in 3* guesthouse.



Day 5: Magura – Piatra Craiului Mountains - Magura (600m – 1000 climb, 4-7h walking)

Round trip in Piatra Craiului National Park - The King's Rock – one of the most beautiful mountains in Romania, very rocky, a thin high limestone strip, 22 km long, considered a geographical accident of the Southern Carpathians, due to their gentle peculiar profile in contrast with the massiveness of the surrounding relief forms. This massif was also home of The Carpathian Large Carnivore Project, as, although the Romanian Carpathians cover less than 1.5% of the European surface west of Russia, they are home to almost one third of all European large carnivores: the estimated number of bears is over 6,000, there are about 3,000 wolves, and some 2,000 lynx. Our walk starts with a short descent and then a section of Zarnesti Gorges, narrow limestone passage leading up to the wooded slopes of Piatra Craiului Mountains. We then cross a patch of virgin forest



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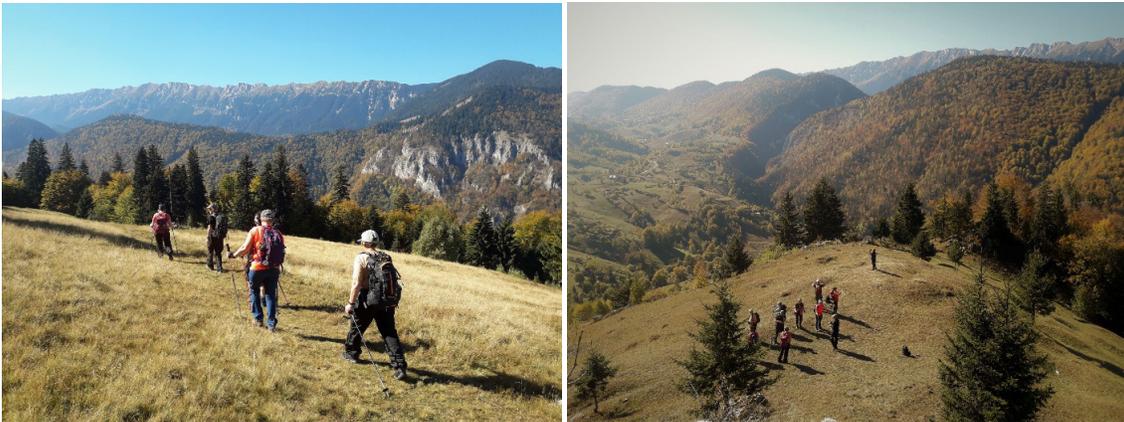
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opening into the meadows at the feet of the craggy eastern side of the Northern Ridge. The last climb is through green meadows ascending smoothly to Curmatura Hut.

From here, depending on the shape of the group and the weather we can choose to climb Piatra Mica peak at 1750 m altitude - 300 m above Curmatura Hut, our original destination – involving some limestone scrambling, 3 passages on fixed chains, some narrow ridge walking and a technical 400 m descent on a tricky path through the forest. The descent takes us to Zanoaga Meadow and its old sheepfold, then a steep descent through the woods brings us back at the start of the gorges. In the afternoon we get back to Magura for dinner and accommodation.



Day 6: Magura – Lacu Rosu (4h transfer and approx. 3h hike)

Today we quit Magura and head north into Transylvania. We cross the volcanic mountains of Harghita and stop for lunch in a typical inn. Another mountain pass and we arrive at Lacu Rosu, in the middle of the Eastern Carpathians. We drop our luggage at the hotel and go for a walk towards one of the surrounding limestone outcrops.

Dinner and accommodation in a 3*** hotel.

Day 7: Lacu Rosu – hike in Bicajel Canyon and Hasmas National Park (700 climb, 14km, 5-6h hiking)

After breakfast we start with a 30 minutes transfer through Bicaz Gorges. Then we start walking through Bicajel canyon and onto the hay meadows on the ridges of Hasmas foothills. After picnic we continue our walk with a long descent to Bicajel valley, slowly making our way from the isolated summer lodges on the heights, down to the typical mountain village. We return to the Red Lake for another dinner and overnight stay.



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Day 8: Lacu Rosu – Hasmasu Mare Peak – Balan – Brasov (6-7h walk, 700m climb, 900 m descent, approx. 2h transfer to Brasov)

In the morning we start our trek in Hasmas National Park, mountains with a special charm due to the pastoral life and the ancient rituals surviving here. We climb a steep hill then, through dark woods, we get to the White Meadow, and then, through vast open spaces, to the top, where we reach an altitude of 1797m. We have an excellent view over Eastern Transylvania and the Moldavian Carpathians: white limestone crags, green flat meadows, dotted by little lakes and bordered by dark spruce forests surround us. Numerous sheepfolds shelter at night the semi wild horses and flocks of sheep which roam this land by daylight.

In the afternoon we descend to Balan and we transfer by car for two and a half hours to Brasov.

The German colonists arrived on the territory of Romania 800-900 years ago when invited by the new master of Transylvania, the Hungarian king. They occupied the fertile valleys, bringing the feudal organization, laying foundations for villages, towns and cities. The mountains however, the higher grounds, as well as the lands close to the borders of Transylvania remained Romanian, or as they called them at the time, Wallachian. Nowadays, following the Red Army invasion in 1944 and the communist era, most of the Saxon population is gone, but we have the privilege to submerge in an enormous open air museum, the huge patrimony they left behind consisting of naturally preserved architecture, especially the medieval fortified churches. Accommodation in the main square of the old center in a nice 3* hotel. Dinner in a restaurant.





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Day 9: Brasov – Henri Coanda airport – 3h transfer

Today we quit Brasov and make our way back across the mountains towards Bucharest and its airport for the flight back home.

~ End of our services ~