

Post seminar tours

Option 1

Piatra Craiului Mountains

For centuries the people living within the elbow of the Romanian Carpathians have existed in harmony with a rich variety of birds and animals, including Europe's highest concentration of bears, wolves and lynx in the present. The preservation of ancient agricultural traditions is the main reason for an amazing flora, and the beauty of the landscapes creates the perfect scenery for an unforgettable holiday.

We spend most of the time walking through spectacular landscapes and trekking wildlife. With all this beauty around us, we can't ignore the people displaying the same activities like hundreds of years ago, nor the numerous signs left by history on the face of the area. We have the chance to visit Bran Castle ('Dracula's Castle'), the fortified church in Prejmer and the medieval town of Brasov.

We stay most of the nights in a guesthouse owned by a local family, providing a good standard of accommodation, delicious home-made cooking based on organic products and "inspiring" home-made beverages.

Itinerary

Day 1 - September, 22nd

Arrival to the guesthouse

Upon arrival we will be welcomed by our host, Mimi, a local entrepreneur that decided to transform her old 4 room house into a spacious guesthouse with 19 double rooms, all with en-suite facilities. We will have dinner consisting in home-made food based on organic products, most of them grown by local people.

Day 2 - September, 23rd

Zarnesti Gorges-Piatra Mica peak (1860 m)-Curmatura cabin

In the morning we pack enough for two days up in the mountain. We will be taken by horse drawn cart to the entrance into the spectacular Zarnesti Gorges, an impressive limestone canyon. With 40 - 80 m high walls, it gives us the chance to look for rare birds like Wallcreepers and Alpine swifts, and also to admire impressive Jurassic geological



formations used during the filming of many movies, including the more recent “Cold Mountain”.

We will hike up to Piatra Mica peak (1860 m high), stopping on the way at Curmatura cabin to leave some of our luggage. From the peak we will enjoy the panorama over Birsa Country and Zarnesti town. If you have good binoculars you can try to locate the guesthouse where you slept the night before. On the way, we can see signs of wildlife, rare or endemic species of flora and insects, and shepherd camps. If the weather allows us, we can see the entire limestone ridge (22 km long) which was declared scientific reserve due to the presence of rare and endemic species of flora and insects. We will descend back to Curmatura cabin, where we will have dinner and a camp fire in the evening. Curmatura cabin is situated at 1470m altitude in an amazing location both as scenery and point of departure for numerous hiking trails in Piatra Craiului Massif. The accommodation is not luxurious, but it provides good sleeping conditions for the mountaineers.

Day 3 - September, 24th

Piatra Craiului ridge

Today is the most challenging day from the physical point of view. We will start in the morning with a sustained hike recommended only for experienced hikers due to its difficulty. We will climb alongside narrow cliffs in amazing landscapes that gave this mountain its name: King’s Rock. You can hold on to fixed steel cables while climbing to Turnul peak (1923m). From here there will be 4.5 h of hiking on or alongside



the ridge, including the highest peak of Piatra Craiului Massif, La Om peak (2238m). We will descend on a steep trail down to Birsa Valley and stop at Plaiul Foi cabinet, from where we can admire the impressive limestone mountain. From here we will be transported back to Mosorel guesthouse for a well deserved shower and dinner.

Day 4 - September, 25th

Bran Castle-Prejmer fortified church-Brasov medieval town

Today we can relax after all the physical effort of the previous days and meet some of the history of the area. We will drive to Bran Castle (better known for Bram Stoker’s Dracula story) and find out a bit of its real history. After that, we will drive to Prejmer (a small town not far from Brasov) and visit an impressive fortified church built by the Teutonic knights in the 13th century, then head to Brasov for a late

lunch. We will visit the Black Church (the most Eastern Gothic Church in Europe) and the medieval centre of Brasov, including one of the narrowest streets in Europe- 80 m long and between 111cm and 135 cm (3.64 feet to 4.42 feet) wide. We will take some time for walking and shopping, then drive to Poiana Brasov, the most famous mountain resort in Romania, for dinner. We will have dinner at the touristic shepherd camp, where we will serve traditional food used by the Romanian shepherds and listen to Romanian folk music. In the evening we will drive back to our guesthouse in Zarnesti.

Day 5 - September, 26th

Wildlife watching and trekking

Today we will drive to one of the valleys remarkable for its wildlife. Together with the game warden we will walk slowly in the area looking for tracks of bears, red deer, roe deer, foxes, wild cats, owls, buzzards, woodpeckers etc.



On the way back, we will stop at the foresters' lodge for lunch (picnic) and relaxation on the lakeshore. In the evening we'll have an early dinner at the foresters' lodge, then go to the bear hide (a feeding place frequented by bears). Late in the evening we will drive back to our guesthouse in Zarnesti.

Day 6 - September, 27th

Departure

Today we say good bye, but hope to see you again.

Group & staff

Min. 4, max. 12 plus leader.

Price: 700 Euro/group+

250 Euro/person

Good level of fitness required for walks.

The price includes: 4 nights accommodation in local guesthouse in a double room with en-suite facilities; 1 night at mountain cabin in a 14-bed room; meal basis: half board plus packed lunch, restaurant, picnic or barbeque as mentioned in the itinerary; English-speaking guide; horse-drawn-cart or bus transportation as mentioned in the itinerary; entrance fees to places of interest; wildlife game warden guidance.

Option 2

Apuseni Mountains

Day 1 - September, 22nd

From Retezat to Apuseni Mountains

This 12 hour day will begin around 9:00am, and will involve a transfer by minibus from Retezat to the Apuseni Mountains, passing through some of Romania's idyllic rural landscape. Enter the Apuseni Mountains via the towns of Brad and Stei. Picnic lunch in a hay meadow, followed by a short hike to the Rusty Pit, a nature reserve of the Apuseni Nature Park. From Garda, we will continue for approximately one hour by 4WD car to Scarisoara, a traditional village in the heart of the Apuseni Mountains. Dinner and overnight at nearby Scarisoara Guesthouse (double room with shared bathroom).



Day 2 - September, 23rd

Discovering nature and rural culture in the Country of the Motzi, part of the Apuseni Mountains



The day will begin with an introduction to centuries-old traditional hay meadow management in the Apuseni Mountains, including an easy 1-2 hour meadow walk. We will then learn about the WWF Arnica Montana Project, which involves education and support provided to local community in sustainable *Arnica* harvesting practices. Picnic lunch by the

Arnica Centre, then we will visit the tourism information centre in Scarisoara village which also hosts a local museum. The famous Scarisoara Ice Cave (containing the second largest cave glacier in Europe) will be our next stop. Back at Scarisoara Guesthouse there will be multimedia presentations of Apuseni Natural Park, followed by a traditional dinner. Overnight at Scarisoara Guesthouse.

Day 3 - September, 24th

Caves, glades and traditional settlements

A full day hike of 7 hours towards Padis area, in the central part of Apuseni Mountains, through one of Apuseni's scenic wilderness areas. On the way we will pass Calineasa Glade, a picturesque non-permanent settlement used by local people for animal raising and forestry. Once in Padis area, we will learn about a mass tourism development initiative in the area for a ski resort and the night will be spent in one of the mountain cabins in the area (rooms with 4-6 beds, shared bathroom).



Day 4 - September, 25th

Ponorului Citadel and the Alive Fire Ice cave



Considered by many people as the most impressive karst phenomena in Eastern Europe, Ponorului Citadel is worth to visit not just because of the 3 gorgeous dolinas and the surrounding wild forest but also because here there is one of the biodiversity hotspot of the Apuseni Nature Park. After Ponorului Citadel we will hike towards the Alive Fire Ice Cave, the second largest underground glacier in Romania, after Scarisoara Ice Cave. In the evening we'll be accommodated at the same mountain cabin.

Day 5 - September, 26th

Altitudes' Peatbogs Day

We will hike for about 4 hours from Padis area to Ic Ponor and visit on the way a nature reserve consisting of an altitude peatbog with endemic species. In the afternoon we will visit Onceasa cave, well known for its deposit of *Ursus spaeleus* bones and we'll learn about

cave protection and cave management .We will be accommodated in a local mountain center for sustainable development (shared bedrooms and outdoor toilet).

Day 6 - September, 27th

Humpleu cave

This day is dedicated to caving in one of the largest underground system in Romania (almost 40 km and still under exploration). The visit will consist in a trip of about 7 hours in which we'll have the chance to discover some of the largest halls in the entire Romanian karst and some of the finest speleothems. Accommodation in the mountain center.



Day 7 - September, 28th

Departure day

Time to say good bye! Transfer by car to Deva in order to catch the overnight trains to Budapest.

Price: 398 Euro/person, for a group of minimum 5 persons

345 Euro/person, for a group of minimum 7 persons

Option 3

Danube Delta

Day 1 - September, 22nd

Arrival in the evening in Tulcea, accommodation in a small hotel, (dinner at your charge).

Day 2 - September, 23rd

After breakfast a short walk in the town, the visit of DDBRA (Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration). Departure around 14.00 hours to the middle of the Delta, accommodation in one or two home stays in Crisan village, dinner.



Day 3 - September, 24th



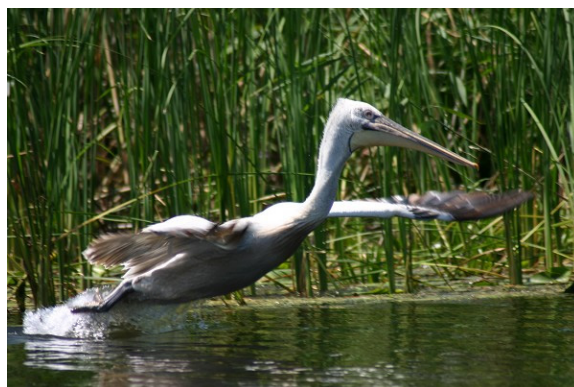
Departure in the morning for a day visit by boat into the wildness of the Delta passing on lakes, channels, swamps, reed beds, etc. The first approach to the bird species which already started the migration. As everyday a picnic is provided. You are accompanied by your English guide.

Day 4 - September, 25th

Another day by boat in the Delta to visit other sites and other different landscapes. Many other species of birds could be observed on our way.

Day 5 - September, 26th

Your guide will propose you to go to one of the most isolated village in the Delta, a village formed by the Ukrainians. Not far away from this village there is an amazing oak forest settled on sand dunes,



the lianas and the other plants composing it give a tropical aspect to the forest. This is the forest of « Letea ».

Day 6 - September, 27th



For the last day our destination is Sulina, which was a very important port and the place where the middle arm of the Danube River joins the Black Sea. Return in the evening to Crisan as we do every day.

Day 7 - September, 28th

After breakfast, transfer by ferryboat to Tulcea, end of the program.

The program includes:

- a bed and breakfast in Tulcea
- a picnic on the 23rd September
- a half board and 4 full boards in Crisan in a private home stay
- 4 days visit (bird watching included) by boat inside the delta, guide service included.
- 2 boat transfers Tulcea- Crisan-Tulcea.
- the permit for the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve.
- the permit for the reserve of Letea
- the tour to the forest twill be done with a funny vehicle –the cost of it is included

Price: 315 Euro/person

All the prices don't include the transportation from Hunedoara to the starting points of the tours. If will be requirements we could provide small buses for transportation. The costs will be calculate when will be able to know the exact number of people.

Sign up for options required until 15th June 2007.

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