

adventurewomen

THE DESTINATION IS JUST THE BEGINNING

# ROMANIA

Wild Bears, the Roma People, and the Counts of Transylvania



May 27 - June 5, 2018

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### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Hike through rural countryside and go bear watching on an amazing estate in the vast and dense forests covering the Carpathian Mountains
- ▶ Explore the Saxon villages in Transylvania on foot or by bicycle
- ▶ Join a local Romanian chef specializing in medicinal plants and spices on a walk to identify wild flowers, and enjoy a hands-on cooking experience
- ▶ Ride through the lush Transylvanian hills on horseback
- ▶ Learn photography tips for photographers of all levels at a workshop with a renowned Romanian photographer

### QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1: Arrive in Bucharest, explore on foot, welcome dinner, stop at a wine bar
- Day 2: Walking tour of Bucharest, experience Brasov, drive to Zabola
- Day 3: Hike in Carpathian forests, picnic on a terrace, evening bear watching
- Day 4: Cooking experience, visit Peles castle, have a traditional Saxon dinner in Viscri
- Day 5: Walk from Viscri to Crit, meet the beekeeper who makes honey for the royal family
- Day 6: Discover Sighisoara, spend the afternoon in a Roma community
- Day 7: Horseback ride, visit the fortified church of Biertan, afternoon walk to Copsa Mare
- Day 8: Experience the cultural center of Sibiu, meet with women at a local nonprofit
- Day 9: Explore Sibiu, learn about local plants, visit Bran Castle, Dracula's fictional house
- Day 10: Photography workshop in Bucharest, lunch, depart for the US

### TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$6,790

Optional Single Accommodations: \$700

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is this trip  
right for me?

We rate this trip as moderate. You should be able to hike for ten miles on rolling terrain. We have a partnership with FitForTrips, a company that will design an individualized fitness plan for you to ensure that you are prepared for the trip. Visit <https://fitfortrips.com/partners/adventure-women/> for more information.

the important  
stuff

You should come with a flexible, adventurous, and enthusiastic spirit, and a wonderful sense of humor that adventure travel requires.

how do I get  
there?

pack your  
bags!

the fine print

your adventure  
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### Forms and Final Payment:

Once you book, you will need to fill out and return to AdventureWomen:

- Information Form
- Booking Conditions Form
- Copy of Flight Information
- Copy of Issuing Page of Passport (photo page)

Final payment is due to AdventureWomen in a cash form (check, money order, or wire transfer) on or before February 27, 2018.

### Passports and Visas:

Citizens of the United States must have a passport valid for six months beyond your travel dates with at least two blank facing pages. If you do not have a passport, please apply now!

### Money:

Romania's currency is Leu (plural: Lei). As of May, 2017, \$1 = RON 4.16. Foreign currencies may be exchanged at banks or authorized exchange offices (called: "casa de schimb" or "birou de schimb valutar"). International airports and larger hotels also offer currency exchange services but the exchange rates are always better at the exchange offices. Credit cards are generally accepted in large cities, but not in rural areas. Visa and MasterCard are more widely accepted than American Express. ATMs are in larger cities only.

**Suggested Gratuities:** Gratuity suggestions are based on the group size. We will advise on suggested tips closer to departure, but it will be approximately \$15-\$20 per person per day.

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**Arrive:** Arrive at Otopeni Airport, Bucharest, Romania (OTP) on May 27, 2018 before noon.

**Depart:** Depart Otopeni Airport, Bucharest, Romania (OTP) on June 5, 2018 after 2:00pm.

the important  
stuff

We are happy to help you make your flight and travel arrangements. Please contact us at:

**(800) 804-8686 or (617) 544-9393**  
**email: [info@adventurewomen.com](mailto:info@adventurewomen.com)**

how do I get  
there?

If you'd like to do anything prior to or following the AdventureWomen trip, we'd be delighted to help you arrange any trip extensions you're interested in.

pack your  
bags!

**Note:** The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last-minute registrants, we must release hotel rooms two to three months prior to departure! Please keep this in mind when making your travel plans.

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**Packing Considerations:** May is one of the nicest times of year to visit Romania. The days are warm and sunny (but not too hot!) and the nights are cooler. The average temperature will be in the mid-70s during the day and can get down to the high 40s at night.

It is spring, so be prepared for a few showers!

### Clothing and Gear:

- Duffel bag or small suitcase
- Daypack
- Rain cover for daypack
- Medium-weight, waterproof hiking boots (make sure they are broken in!)
- Comfortable walking shoes
- 4-5 pairs hiking socks
- 2-3 short sleeve shirts (quick dry recommended) -
- 2-3 long sleeve shirts (quick dry recommended)
- 1 medium weight fleece sweater/jacket for cool evenings
- 1-2 pairs of pants
- 1-2 pairs of shorts
- 1-2 sets of nicer clothes for dinner
- 1 bathing suit
- Gore-Tex jacket
- Gore-Tex pants
- Hat for sun protection
- 5-7 pairs underwear
- 2-4 sports bras
- Sleepwear

### AdventureWomen Essentials:

- Travel documents (passport, airline tickets, money)
- 2-3 spare passport photos (in case of lost passport)
- Write down/print out travel insurance number
- Locks for your suitcase/duffel bag
- Travel alarm clock with spare batteries
- Headlamp or small flashlight with spare batteries
- Binoculars (8x40/42 models are excellent choices; center focus models are easiest)
- Digital camera, memory cards, battery charger
- Power adapters
- Sunglasses, case, and strap
- Spare glasses, contact lenses, cleaner, saline, etc.
- Money belt or neck pouch
- Your AdventureWomen insulated bottle (good for hot or cold drinks!)
- Sunscreen and lip balm with SPF
- Mosquito repellent
- Hand wipes/hand sanitizer
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Soap, shampoo, and conditioner

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### Essentials Continued:

- Small packet of tissues
- Tampons and panty liners (avoid plastic applicators)
- Earplugs: We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs. Available at most drugstores or at [www.earplugstore.com](http://www.earplugstore.com)
- Assortment of stuff sacks and Ziploc bags
- 1-2 bandanas/Buff
- Reading material/journal and pens

### Personal First Aid Kit:

- Prescription medicine you usually take (in original containers)
- Personal epi pen (if you need one, don't forget to pack it!)
- Bandages, Gauze, Ace bandage, blister prevention
- Antiseptic wipes/spray
- Antibiotic ointment
- Cotton-tipped applicators
- Oral rehydration tablets/packets
- Antidiarrheal medication
- Mild laxative
- Antacid
- Cold remedies
- Ibuprofen/acetaminophen
- Eye drops
- Tweezers, scissors (travel size), safety pins

If you prefer to buy a complete kit, we recommend the Smart Travel first aid kit.

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### Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

### Switching Trips

If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you.

### No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

### Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

### Adventure Travel Today

At AdventureWomen, we want everyone to understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one **actively participates**, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to **experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends**. Most of all, we want our trips to be **fun!**

**good-natured realist and have a sense of humor!** Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. **Being on time** is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a

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### your adventure in depth

#### DAY 1

Sunday  
5/27/18

### Arrive in Bucharest

Bucharest is the capital and largest city, as well as the cultural, industrial, and financial centre of Romania. Its architecture is a mix of historical (neo-classical), interbellum (Bauhaus and Art Deco), communist-era, and modern styles.

#### Pick-up and Transfer

You will be picked up at Otopeni Airport in Bucharest by your guide and transferred to your hotel.

#### Walking Tour of Bucharest

To get a glimpse of the beauty of Bucharest, walk through the city, visiting the Telephone Palace, the CEC Palace, and the Old Town.

#### Welcome Dinner

Enjoy dinner at Caru cu Bere, one of the oldest and most iconic restaurants with a lively atmosphere in the Old Town of Bucharest, just a ten minute walk from your hotel.

#### Stop at a Wine Bar

Stop in at one of Bucharest's wine bars where you can taste both local and international wines.

#### Accommodations

Epoque Hotel

#### Meals Included

dinner

your adventure  
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DAY 2

Monday  
5/28/18

Accommodations

Zabola Castle Park

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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### Bucharest to Zabola

Start your journey into Transylvania, home to some of Europe's best preserved medieval towns. The culture of Transylvania is complex; it has been historically linked to both Central Europe and Southeastern Europe. It has significant Hungarian and German influences.

#### Morning Options in Bucharest

This morning, you can tour Bucharest by car or on foot. Stroll down Victory Avenue to see Art Deco buildings like the Telephone Palace or buildings with an eclectic architecture like the CEC Palace. Stop for a coffee somewhere on the way. Visit the terrace of the Palace of Parliament, the second largest administrative building in the world after the Pentagon.

Alternatively, you can discover Bucharest on one of a few thematic tours: the Communism tour allows you to learn about life under communism, the Beautiful Decay tour explores the historical buildings of Bucharest, the Alternative tour takes you to see street art and learn about urban culture, and the Roma Craftsmen tour introduces you to Roma artisans who still do traditional metalwork.

#### Lunch

Enjoy lunch on your own in Bucharest.

#### Visit Brasov

Drive to Brasov and visit the medieval centre to explore the incredibly narrow Rope Street, the Black Church (the main Gothic style building in Romania), or just stroll around the quiet streets. If there is time, walk up to the medieval walls of the city for a wonderful view down the valley of Brasov.

#### Drive to Zabola

Continue on to Zabola, arriving in the early evening.

#### Dinner

Enjoy a typical Transylvanian fireside candlelight dinner in a memorable atmosphere on the Estate and then spend the night on the property.

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#### DAY 3

Tuesday  
5/29/18

### Zabola

Zabola means “bridle.” In the course of various battles with the Tatars, the villages surrounding Zabola were destroyed by the Tatars. However, the inhabitants of Zabola held the Tatars in check, as if they had put bridles around the Tatars horses in order to control them.

#### Walking and Wildlife Viewing

Walk in the forests that surround the castle park this morning and get to know the gamekeeper. Vast and dense forests cover the Carpathian Mountains and its valleys are the basis of existence for the rich wildlife found in the area. The estate is home to deer, wild boar, stags, bears, wolf, lynx, owls, frogs, and many other smaller animals.

#### Lunch

Enjoy a picnic on the Hanging Terrace in the Carpathians, offering an exceptional view of the estate.

#### Bear Watching

Head to a hut in the forest this evening to watch bears in their natural habitat. The Carpathians in Romania are home to over 45 percent of Europe’s brown bear population.

#### Accommodations

Zabola Castle Park

#### Meals Included

breakfast, lunch, dinner

your adventure  
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DAY 4

Wednesday  
5/30/18

Accommodations  
Viscri 125

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch, dinner

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### Zabola to Viscri

Viscri is known for the Viscri fortified church, originally built around 1100, which has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The church was originally built with a single hall and semicircular apse. Saxon colonists took over the church around 1185, and in 1525, the first fortifications with towers were added. In the 18th century the church was surrounded by a second defense wall.

#### Cooking Workshop

Prepare lunch in a typical Romanian house today with Marcela Cosnean, an excellent host and cook. After eating the lunch you created, relax in Marcela's courtyard with a cup of coffee or herbal tea. Learn more about traditional Romanian cooking this afternoon.

#### Peles Castle

After lunch, drive to Sinaia to spend some time at Peles Castle, the summer residence of the Romanian Royal family. The castle was built at the end of the 19th century in a beautiful valley shielded by the Carpathians.

#### Afternoon in Viscri

Explore the village of Viscri, including the fortified church, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit local craftsmen and learn how they work with clay and iron.

#### Dinner

Enjoy dinner in a local woman's garden (weather permitting). She will cook traditional Saxon dishes using fresh ingredients picked from her garden.

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#### DAY 5

Thursday  
5/31/18

### Viscri

Take in Viscri's hills and meadows, as well as the authentic hand-tiled roofs of the houses and barns. Many traditional buildings have been salvaged and restored in the past few decades.

#### Walk or Bike to Crit

Walk or bike towards Crit this morning, the next Saxon village. There is a bike path through the forest, which can be easily followed to reach the next village.

#### Visit the Beekeeper in Crit

Visit a provider of honey for the royal family. Learn how he takes care of his bees and taste the delicious honey. After spending time learning about local beekeeping, explore the village of Crit.

#### Return to Viscri

Return to Viscri for the night and enjoy a traditional dinner.

### Accommodations

Viscri 125

### Meals Included

breakfast, lunch, dinner

your adventure  
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DAY 6

Friday  
6/1/18

Accommodations

Viscri 125

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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### Viscri

Sighisoara has preserved the features of a small medieval fortified city, and has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. In Eastern Europe, it is one of the few fortified towns that is still inhabited.

#### Explore Sighisoara

Spend the first part of the day visiting the fortified church, the Clock Tower, and Dracula's house. Stroll through the narrow streets, shop, and enjoy the medieval fortress. Walk up to the famous wooden staircase to the upper part of the city, which students still climb to get to school. Spend time with the famous Spoonman; walk through his shop and gallery and learn how these beautifully crafted spoons and other wooden crafts come to life. Enjoy a short lecture about Romanian traditional wood carving, the motifs used, their meaning, and their presence in other forms of traditional art.

#### Lunch

Enjoy lunch on your own.

#### Visit a Roma Community

Spend the afternoon with the Roma community. Choose to visit a community of musicians, basket-makers, or Gabors (traditional Rromas). Meet three generations of Gabor women over dinner and learn about their changing role in the traditional culture.

your adventure  
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DAY 7

Saturday  
6/2/18

Accommodations  
Copsa Mare Guesthouse

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch, dinner

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### Viscri to Copsa Mare

Copsa Mare is a unique unspoiled Saxon village, close to Biertan, a famous UNESCO World Heritage site. It is in the center of the Transylvania Triangle formed by the historic cities of Brasov, Sighisoara, and Sibiu. This part of Romania is famous for its fortified churches, its infinite and pristine landscapes, and for its culture rich with tradition.

#### Horseback Riding

This morning, experience one of the greatest activities offered in the Transylvanian countryside: horseback riding across a magnificent landscape. Complete beginners to advanced riders can join this ride around Viscri, or if you prefer, you can walk or bike.

#### Lunch in Viscri

Enjoy lunch in Viscri before departing for Biertan.

#### Visit Biertan

Explore Biertan and its medieval Saxon fortifications included on UNESCO World Heritage list. The village is said to have the most beautiful fortified church in Transylvania. You can also see the house where, in ancient times, couples who planned to divorce were locked for two weeks, sharing a bed and one set of cutlery. It is said that in 400 years, only one couple still decided to break up after this "vacation."

#### Afternoon Walk

This afternoon, walk towards Copsa Mare, one of the smallest Saxon villages in Transylvania, and enjoy the best part of spring in Romania. Spend the rest of the day in the village or walking in the surrounding meadows. You can also continue your walk towards Malancrav if you want to spend more time outside.

your adventure  
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DAY 8

Sunday  
6/3/18

Accommodations

Levoslav or Maison Elysee

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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### Copsa Mare to Sibiu

Sibiu was chosen as European Cultural Capital in 2007. The city still maintains many of the medieval fortifications that were used to protect the city.

**Explore Sibiu** Explore the beautiful Squares of the Upper Town. Start in the Great Square, the site of the Roman-Catholic church and the Brukenthal Palace, home to one of Romania's most important art collections. Continue to the Little Square, which is linked to the Great Square by a passage beneath the Council Tower. Stop in Huet Square, dominated by the Evangelical Cathedral. You may also want to cross the Bridge of Lies, the oldest cast iron bridge in Romania, and the Stairs Passage, connecting the Upper and Lower Town.

**Lunch** Enjoy lunch on your own in Sibiu.

**Visit a Local Nonprofit** Visit ALEG, a local nonprofit that promotes gender equality and fights against gender-based discrimination and violence.

**Dinner** Enjoy dinner at Max Restaurant, located in one of the oldest houses in Sibiu.

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DAY 9

Monday  
6/4/18

Accommodations  
Epoque Hotel

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch, dinner

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### Sibiu to Bucharest

Head back to Bucharest today, leaving the peace and tranquility of the Transylvanian countryside for the hustle and bustle of the city.

#### Visit a Local Market

Visit a local market in Sibiu this morning. Enjoy lunch in town.

#### Herbs and Spices Workshop

Drive to Sona, where you will meet another amazing cook and host who is passionate about traditional Romanian medicinal plants and spices. Walk with her to identify wildflowers that are commonly used in Romanian recipes, to make tea, or to use as spices. Enjoy a workshop on these plants with a short cooking class in the yard of her beautiful Saxon house in Sona.

#### Bran Castle

Complete your trip in Transylvania with a visit to Bran Castle. Because Dracula is what Romania is most known for abroad, you have to visit his Castle. Bram Stoker chose the castle as Dracula's house in his novel, but the real Dracula, Vlad the Impaler, was unlikely to have spent too much time of his life here, if any at all. Regardless, it is an astonishing place to visit with a fully equipped chamber of torture and a beautiful view of the internal courtyard and of the outside valley.

#### Farewell Dinner

Have a farewell dinner with your new AdventureWomen friends. Reminisce over all of the memories you have made and celebrate an incredible trip!

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#### DAY 10

Tuesday  
6/5/18

### Bucharest and Depart

Enjoy one last day in Bucharest before heading home.

#### Photography Workshop

Visit Espace Minoux, which is owned by the famous Romanian photographer Razvan Voiculescu. Take a photography workshop, learning from this master. While you are there, enjoy the stunning photography taken by Razvan during his years of travel around Romania. He will show you some of his techniques, and at the end of the workshop you will keep the photos you've taken and turn them into original postcards from Romania.

#### Transfer to the Airport

Say goodbye to your new AdventureWomen friends as you transfer to the airport for your flights home.

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

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### Accommodation Details

**Epoque Hotel** The Epoque Hotel is a contemporary architectural project developed with the deepest appreciation for “genius loci” – the history and spirit of the surroundings. The interiors are inspired by the Neo-Romanian architecture from 1900 until World War II, offering a fashionable interpretation of a historical style, with a strong hold on Romanian attributes.

**Zabola Castle Park** The Castle dates back to the 15th century. It is built on the remnants of an early fortified building which is suspected to have burned down in the liberation war of Transylvania. The entire property spreads over vast areas of Carpathian Mountains and forests. The Castle Park itself stretches over beautiful Transylvanian Countryside.

**Viscri 125** This house on Viscri’s main street features Wood-beamed rooms decorated in an elegantly spare style, with Saxon touches such as rugs and floral paintwork.

**Copsa Mare Guesthouse** This guesthouse offers a perfect haven for relaxation and discovery in the heart of Transylvania. The rooms have been restored in line with traditional architecture, decorated with local furniture, and provided with the comfort of modern lifestyle.

**Levoslav** This boutique hotel is in the former residence of the composer and conductor Jan Levoslav Bella. It is decorated with original works of art with musical themes. Renovated in 2008, it has a harmonious, sophisticated feel.

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### Included/Not Included

#### Included:

- ▶ All hotel accommodations throughout the trip
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ Fully-guided sightseeing as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ English-speaking guides throughout the trip
- ▶ One AdventureWomen Associate

#### Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare to and from Romania
- ▶ Optional activities as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages
- ▶ Fees for passports, visas, or immunizations
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities