

2010 BUDAPEST & TRANSYLVANIA EXPLORER

AN EIGHT DAY DISCOVERY AND ADVENTURE TOUR

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Day 1: Budapest, Hungary

Afternoon arrival to Ferihegy International Airport in Budapest. Meet and greet by your English speaking tour guide. Transfer to your hotel downtown the Hungarian capital. Check in. Vicinity walk. Time at leisure. In the evening enjoy a hearty Hungarian dinner and a folklore show.

T D Accommodation in Budapest at Ambra Hotel (centrally located)***

Day 2: Budapest

Hot and cold buffet breakfast at hotel. This morning you'll start exploring this stunning city. A comprehensive city tour will take you on the tree lined Andrassy Avenue to the magnificent Heroes' Square. The area around it is worth a stroll. Continue to the hustling and bustling Central Market (an Eiffel Company project), a show in itself and a great place for buying quality Hungarian souvenirs. Later,



passing by the Parliament, cross the Danube into Buda and admire the former Royal Palace (time permitting; attend the change of guard at 12 noon). The tour of the Castle Hill includes the colorful Gothic Matthias Church (the church of royal weddings), the Fishermen's Bastion panorama walk, Middle Ages small streets and houses, Vienna gate and the northern bastions walk, St. Magdalena Church ruins and ending up to the Gellert Hill where there is the best view of Budapest. Return to your hotel. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. Suggested are visits to either one of: the Parliament, the Fine Arts Museum, the Hungarian National Museum, the House of Terror or stroll along Vaci Street - the main pedestrian drag and get into the atmosphere of the Hungarian capital. Enjoy a cake and coffee at Gerbeaud coffee shop or try one of the goulash specialties on Vaci Street. Dinner on your own.

B Accommodation in Budapest at Ambra Hotel***

Day 3: Budapest / Aquincum Roman Ruins / Szentendre / Visegrad Citadel

Hot buffet breakfast at hotel. The so called Danube Bend is one of the most picturesque areas of the country and it also concentrates a number of attractions. Start your day with a visit to **Aquincum Roman ruins** located in the northern part of the city. Continue to Szentendre - the most picturesque small town along the Hungarian stretch of the Danube and home to sculptors and painters. The town is a charming monument to the 18th century with its cobbled streets and unexpected alleyways and has a unique atmosphere. Stroll around, visit various workshops. Lunch is included in one of the typical restaurants there. Afterwards drive north

along the Danube to Central Europe's largest medieval castle keep which is **Visegrad**. With its two parts, such as the 13th century citadel perched on the hill and the 14th century royal palace at the bottom, Visegrad lived its golden age during the Renaissance King, Matthias who extended the entire structure. Visegrad is also the place where the famous Vlad the Impaler - Dracula was held prisoner by the same King Matthias in the second half of the 15th century. Return to Budapest in the afternoon. Transfer to the Keleti Railway Station for your comfortable overnight train ride to Transylvania. Train leaves at 6:10 pm.

B First class sleeping car (two bed compartment)



Day 4: Sinaia / Bran Castle / Brasov

Arrive to Sinaia, Romania at 7:40 am. Meet and greet by the Romanian tour guide. Enjoy breakfast in a four star hotel downtown Sinaia - one of the famous Carpathian Mountains resorts. Named after St. Catherine Monastery on Mount Sinai, **Sinaia** became the unofficial capital of the Kingdom of Romania towards the end of the 19th century. Once the famous Orient Express used to regularly call here and it still does once a year on its way from Paris to Constantinople. After breakfast take an orientation tour including a view of the Casino inspired by the one in Monte Carlo and a stop to Sinaia Orthodox Monastery. Next visit one of the most important tourist attractions of the country: **Peles Castle**, the former royal residence of King Charles I of Romania and

known as one of the most beautiful summer royal residences in Europe. Journey north to the village of Bran. The attraction is the well known **Bran Castle** also known as Dracula Castle. The castle was built in 1377 to safeguard the trading route between Transylvania and Wallachia, enlarged and restored a few times since then. The connections between this place and Vlad the Impaler Dracula is still under debate, but the castle is definitely worth a visit. Drive to the nearby Brasov, in time to see the Black Church with its precious collection of Muslim prayer rugs. Brasov has one of the best preserved medieval quarter and fortifications. Continue to the old Romanian district and the narrowest street in South - Central Europe. Hotel check. The rest of the day is at leisure. Dinner on your own.

B Accommodation at Casa Wagner Hotel downtown Brasov***

Day 5: Brasov / Harman / Sighisoara

Hot and cold buffet breakfast at hotel. Morning visit of Brasov bustling fruit and vegetable market. Then leave town for an exclusive visit to one of the typical Transylvanian fortified churches: **Harman**. Its uniqueness consists in the fact that it is the only structure with dwellings attached to the church. Later drive through the picturesque Transylvanian Plateau with its quaint villages and fortifications. Arrive to Sighisoara, a World Heritage Site and the only still inhabited medieval citadel in Europe. It was developed by the German settlers as of late 12 C. It stands on a network of tunnels and catacombs and, according to one version of the myth; this is where the Pied Piper brought the children of Hamelin after their ungrateful parents

refused to pay him his due. Walking tour includes the two squares of the Citadel (Upper Town), the Scholars' Staircase, the Ducklings' Square, the Tinsmiths' Tower, the House with Antler, the Tower with Clock (climb up for a great view), the Torture Chamber and the Weapon Museum. Sighisoara is the place where the famous Vlad the Impaler Dracula was born in 1431. The Birthplace is today a restaurant and one of the main tourist attractions. Hotel check in. Evening at leisure.

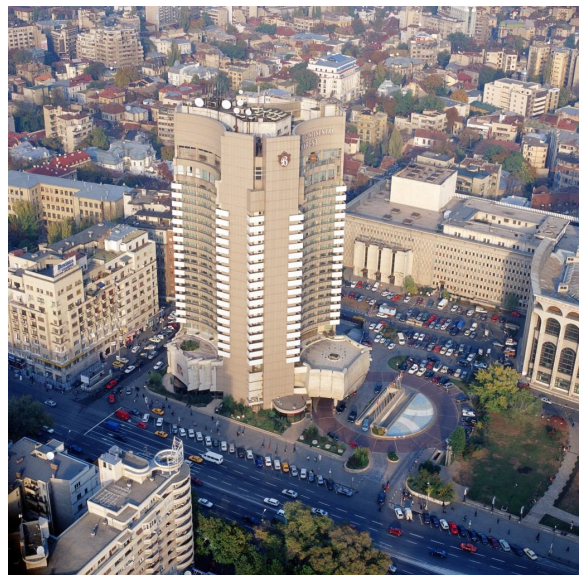
B Accommodation in Sighisoara at Hotel Sighisoara/ Casa Wagner******

Day 6: Sighisoara / Biertan / Sibiu

Hot and cold buffet breakfast at hotel. Depart Sighisoara on the way to **Biertan** UNESCO World Heritage. As the former Seat of the Lutheran Bishops between 1516 and 1867, this place is proof of the important Heritage of the Transylvanian Saxons. Arrive to Sibiu in time for lunch. Sibiu is the European Capital of Culture in 2007. Later, enjoy a leisurely walking tour of old town Sibiu: the old surrounding defense walls and the remaining towers each belonging to a certain guild. One of the landmarks of Sibiu is the Bruckenthal Museum assembled by Baron Bruckenthal, governor of Transylvania at the beginning of the 19th century. The Evangelical Cathedral was completed in its actual shape in 1520, but inside, there is an exquisite fresco of the Crucifixion on the north wall of the choir dating from 1445. View the Passage of Stairs linking the Upper town to the Lower town, the 1859 Liar's Bridge and the Byzantine style Orthodox Cathedral, a replica of St. Sophia in Constantinople. Hotel check in. Dinner on your own. (Suggested is Crama Sibiul Vechi, one of the best traditional restaurants in town)

B Accommodation at Imparatul Romanilor Hotel***

Hotel Imparatul Romanilor is located in the old part of Sibiu near the Great Square, in a 16th century building built in traditional Transylvanian Renaissance style, a former merchant's hall transformed into hotel in the 18th century. Famous guests: Emperor Franz Joseph II, composers Franz Liszt and Johann Strauss Jr. as well as Prince Charles and many others.



Day 7: Sibiu / Cozia / Bucharest

Hot buffet breakfast at hotel. Early morning departure. Leaving Transylvania, you'll drive on the scenic **Olt River Valley and Gorge**, one of the most beautiful in Romania. Brief stop at Cozia Monastery featuring on the best late 17th century Last Judgment fresco on the Western façade. Arrive to **Bucharest** in time for a panoramic city tour. With a population of approximately 2.2 million, Bucharest is the largest city between Berlin and Athens.

Known as "Little Paris" this city has an incredibly mixed architecture. Your tour will be including the Arch of Triumph, the great avenues, the Revolution Square, a view of the former private residence of the Ceausescus and a visit to the *Palace of Parliament* - the second largest building in the world. Hotel check in with the rest of the afternoon at leisure. Farewell Dinner with a folklore show on the shore of Herastrau Lake in Bucharest.

B D Accommodation in Bucharest at Hotel Berthelot* (centrally located)***

Day 8: Bucharest - Departure

Hot buffet breakfast at hotel (or boxed breakfast if your flight is very early in the morning). Transfer to Coanda International Airport in Bucharest for your flight

OR SEE OUR EXTENSIONS

Tour price for throughout 2010:

1,249 Euro per person for a group of two to three people and 1,129 Euro for a party of four to six people. Price based on double occupancy. Single supplement is 280 Euro (sleeping car single cabin will be charged extra). No extra charge for private tours.

Your price includes:

- 6 nights at three and four star hotels (all centrally located)
- 1 night first class sleeping car berth
- fully insured sedan/minivan with climate control, for the entire distance
- fuel & parking fees included
- all sightseeing tours & cultural connections
- three independent lectures on important topics
- meals: 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners
- Tours Of Romania® professional English speaking guides (driving)

- guide's expenses
- all transfers
- admissions to museums, sites, churches as per itinerary
- portorage (except for customs areas)
- VAT and local tax
- detailed map of Romania

You'll visit 3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- the town of Szentendre, Hungary
- Historic Center of Sighisoara, Romania
- Biertan Fortified Church

Not included:

- Other meals than stated
- Alcoholic beverages
- Photo/video fees at sites, museums and museums
- Gratuities of any kind.

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