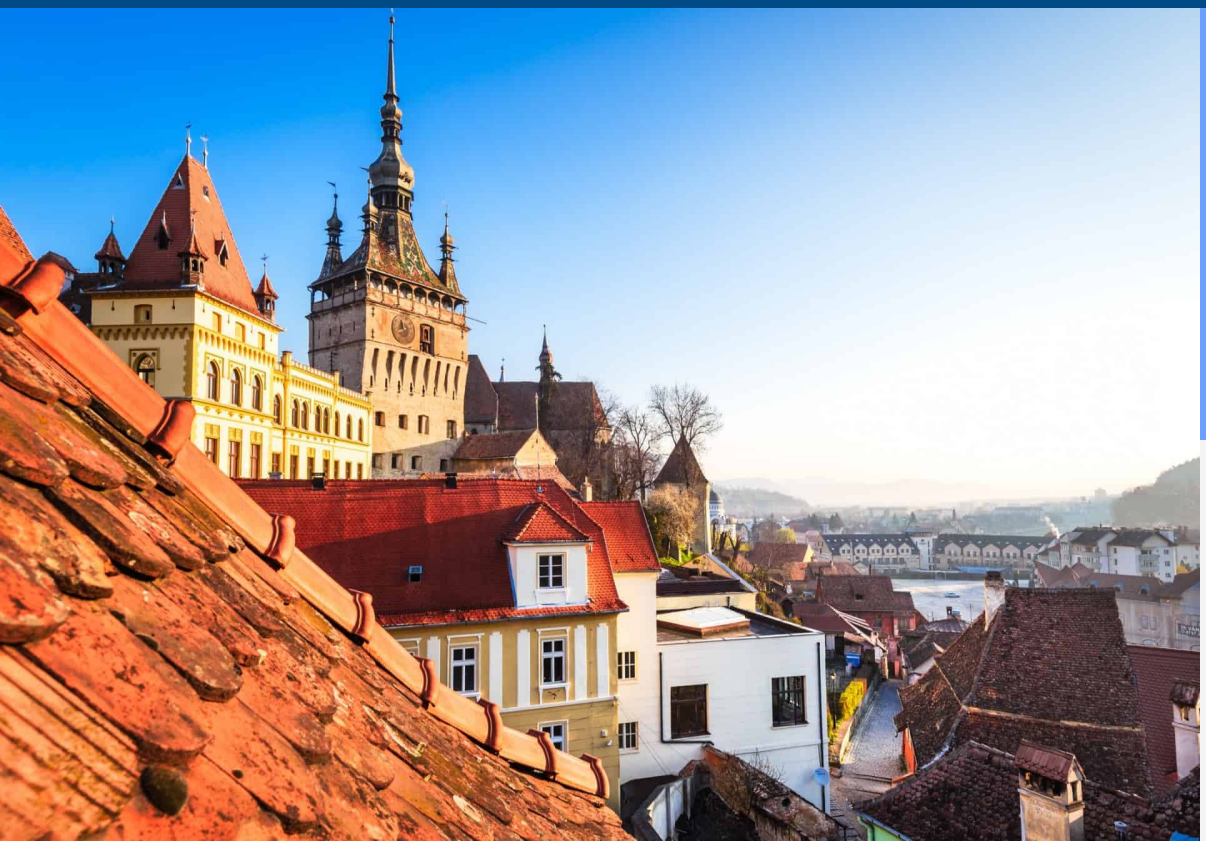
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From
$10,810 NZD

Single Room
$11,945 NZD

Twin Room
$10,810 NZD

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

17 days
Duration

Romania
Destination

Level 2 - Moderate
Activity

Discover Romania

Aug 12 2024 to Aug 28 2024



Discover Romania: a small group tour for seniors

Join Odyssey Traveller as we discover Romania and learn about the history and heritage of the country on this fully guided small group tour. This 17-day trip, especially designed for mature and senior travellers, offers a rich selection of Romania's fascinating sights. We will start in Bucharest, Romania's capital and largest city, and weave through this Eastern European nation to visit the dramatic "Dracula Castle" and other medieval strongholds, the fortified churches of Transylvania, the painted monasteries of Moldovia, an inhabited 12th century citadel (Sighisoara Citadel), a medieval torture room (Torture Room in Sighisoara), and a

subterranean amusement park that once served as a salt mine in antiquity (Turda Salt Mine).

Once a province of the Roman Empire, Romania has three historic principalities–Transylvania, Moldavia, and Wallachia–which were briefly reunited in the 16th century before splintering again when Transylvania was recaptured by the Austrian Habsburgs, and Moldavia and Wallachia fell under Ottoman rule. Romania took its current name when Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza was proclaimed prince of both Moldavia and Wallachia in 1862; Romania would regain a part of Transylvania after World War II under a peace treaty, losing some territory to the Soviet Union. A communist regime ended the Romanian monarchy in 1947 and ruled Romania until 1989 when a national uprising ushered in a democratic style of governance. Romania, along with Bulgaria, became part of the European Union in 2007.

We will visit museums and stroll through old towns to learn more about Romania's roots, and see the traces of its monarchic past and the years of foreign rule.

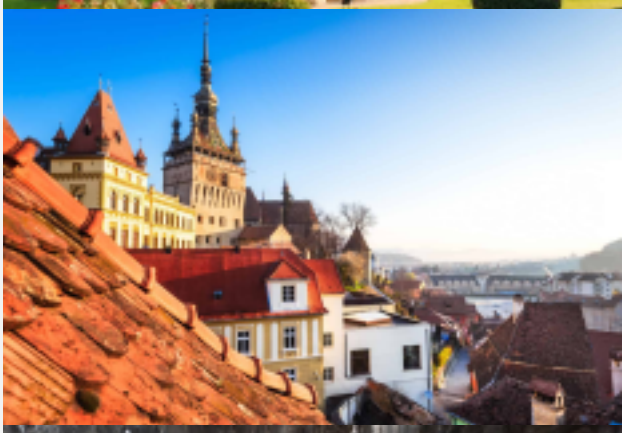
For more details, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right-hand side of this page.

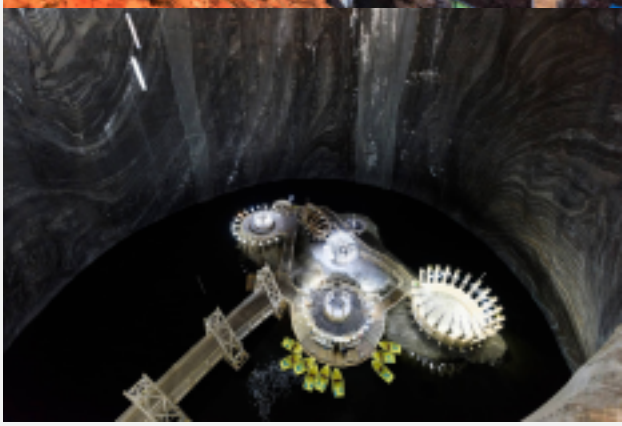
Odyssey Traveller regularly offers tours designed for the active mature or senior traveller to enjoy in a small group holiday and learning environment. The following related tours may be of interest:

- Sofia, Bucharest, and Budapest tour
- George Enescu International Festival
- Romania small group walking tour

Odyssey has more information about Romania. We also regularly publish articles to provide more information to both loyal and prospective participants. You may read this two–part post filled with travelling tips for seniors, an article providing some advice for the over-50s with respect to life, exercise & travel, and an important article about practising responsible travel







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Highlights

1. Visit the dramatic "Dracula Castle" (Bran Castle), believed to be the site of imprisonment of Vlad the Impaler.
2. View the Biserica Neagra or Black Church, the largest Lutheran place of worship in Romania.
3. Explore the Sighisoara Citadel, a stronghold built in the 12th century and still inhabited to this day.
4. See the Sucevita Monastery, built in 1585, which houses an incredible collection of books and illuminated manuscripts.
5. Visit the Turda Salt Mine, which dates back to antiquity and is now a brightly lit subterranean amusement park and museum.

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Bucharest

Overview:

We will make our way individually to the hotel and sit down as a group for a welcome dinner.

Accommodation:

NH Bucharest or similar

Day 2

Locations: Bucharest

Overview:

Bucharest (Romanian: Bucure?ti) is the capital and largest city of Romania. Bucharest's first appearance in historical records was in a signed document in 1459 by Wallachian ruler Vlad the Impaler (also known as Vlad III or Vlad Dracula), who built the first fortress in Bucharest to hold back the invading Turks. Vlad is believed to be Bram Stoker's inspiration for his fictional vampire, Dracula. *Dracula* means "son of the Dragon"; Vlad was called as such as his father was known as Vlad Dracul ("Vlad the Dragon").

After centuries of foreign control, Bucharest is now the country's centre for education, culture, and commerce.

Today we will have a full day of guided sightseeing in Bucharest including visits to the colossal Palace of Parliament, the National Museum of Romanian History, Apostles' Church, and the Museum of the Romanian Peasant, offering an insight into traditional Romanian rural life and culture.

We will then have dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

NH Bucharest or similar



Day 3

Locations: Brasov

Overview:

Today we will head north to Brasov, stopping en route at the Pele? Castle in Sinaia and the "Dracula Castle" in Bran, with guided tours at both.

Pele? Castle is nestled at the foot of the Bucegi Mountains in Sinaia and is considered a stunning masterpiece of German Neo-Renaissance architecture. We will have an opportunity to tour the royal palace that was originally built for Carol I, the first ruler of the dynasty



(Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen) that would rule Romania until 1947.

The dramatic Bran Castle, situated on a mountain pass between Transylvania and Wallachia, is commonly known as Dracula Castle and is believed to be the site of imprisonment of Vlad the Impaler.

In Brasov, we will have dinner in a local restaurant and retire in our hotel.

Accommodation:

Hotel Bella Muzica or similar

Day 4

Locations: Sighisoara

Overview:

Today we will enjoy a half-day city tour of Brasov itself. The town has a very attractive central old-town area and is a great introduction to the Transylvanian region. We will view the Biserica Neagra or Black Church, originally a Roman Catholic structure that is now the largest Lutheran place of worship in the region. It was set ablaze during the Great Turkish War of the 1680s and its soot-covered walls earned it its name. We will see the First Romanian School Museum, built in 1495 and which served for centuries as a centre for Romanian teaching and book publishing, and ascend to Mt Tampa via cable car to enjoy a beautiful view of Brasov.

Following this morning's tour and visits, we will head to nearby Prejmer to see the Prejmer Fortified Church, one of the many fortified churches in Transylvania collectively inscribed on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. It was originally founded in the 13th century by the Teutonic Knights, a German Roman Catholic religious and military order, before it was taken over by the local Saxon community, a Germanic people who settled in the region. Its 15th century Gothic triptych altarpiece is one of the most valuable and oldest in Romania.

We will then transfer to Sighisoara in the historic region of Transylvania, which will be our base for the next two nights.

Accommodation:

Casa Wagner Hotel or similar



Day 5

Locations: Sighisoara

Overview:

We will have a half-day city tour of Sighi?oara to explore the charming medieval stronghold and visit some key museums.

The UNESCO-protected Sighisoara Citadel (listed as “the Historic Centre of Sighisoara”) was built in the 12th century by Saxon settlers and is still inhabited to this day. This fortification allowed the survival of medieval German architecture within its walls. We will visit the History Museum of Sighisoara and gain access to the 65-metre-tall Clock Tower, an important observation point in the city. At the foot of the Clock Tower is the Torture Room, used in the Middle Ages to extract confessions from hapless prisoners.

We will also view the collections inside the Medieval Weapons Museum, located on the first floor of the house where Vlad the Impaler was said to have been born.

We will then head to nearby Biertan to view the Biertan Fortified Church, and transfer to Media?, where we will meet with a local artist who uses spiders webs in their art *(subject to their availability upon confirmation of exact tour dates).*

We will return to Sighi?oara and have dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation:

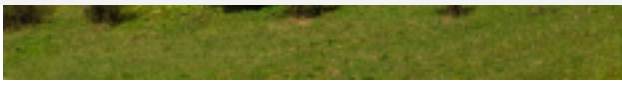
Casa Wagner Hotel or similar

Day 6

Locations: Sucevita

Overview:

Today we will be going on a long ride on the tour coach as we head north from Sighisoara to Sucevita. We will stop en route at Bicaz to view the stunning Bicaz Gorge, a geological marvel which serves as a passageway between the Romanian provinces of Transylvania and



Moldova.

Tonight will be the first of two nights in Sucevi?a.

Accommodation:

Popas Turistic Bocovina or similar

Day 7

Locations: Sucevita

Overview:

We will start the day with a visit to one of the finest of the famed painted monasteries of the Bucovina region, the Sucevita Monastery, a World Heritage Site listed along with the other painted churches of the region. We will head to the monastery by horse-drawn carriage. Sucevita Monastery, built in 1585, served as a manuscript workshop and a printing centre, and its walls house an incredible collection of books and illuminated manuscripts, as well as historical art objects.

This will be followed by a visit to another medieval monastery in Voronet, but first we will stop in Marginea to visit the Black Ceramics Centre, a workshop and retail outlet dedicated to this Lithuanian art.

The Voronet Monastery is covered in beautiful frescoes that feature a shade of blue (“Voronet blue”) that managed to maintain its intense colour even after several centuries.

After a full day of sightseeing, we will return to Sucevita and have dinner at our hotel.

Accommodation:

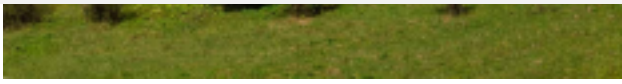
Popas Turistic Bocovina or similar

Day 8

Locations: Sighetu Marmatiei

Overview:

We will head to Moldovita to visit the painted Moldovita Monastery, whose well-preserved yellow-and-blue frescoes depict religious scenes and the Siege of Constantinople. Our next stop is the Wood Art Museum in Campulung Moldovenesc to view products of the traditional handicraft



of this forested region.

The afternoon will be spent travelling west towards Sighetu Marmatiei, via the scenic Prislop Pass, cutting through the heart of the Marmures region. If time allows, we can make a photo stop at the 60-metre-high Cascada Cailor Waterfall. We will have dinner at a local restaurant, and spend the night in Sighetu Marmatiei.

Accommodation:

Pension Casa Lurca or similar

Day 9

Locations: Botiza

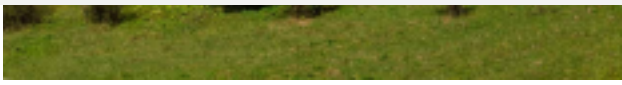
Overview:

Sighetu Marmatiei, also known as Sighet, lies in the Tisza Valley on the border with Ukraine and was once under the rule of the Hungarian throne. Its Jewish population, a sizeable minority, were deported and later sent to Auschwitz during World War II. Among the deportees was Sighet native Elie Wiesel (1928-2016), author of *La Nuit* (*Night)*, who would survive the Holocaust and become a Nobel Peace Prize awardee.

During Romania's communist era, the government imprisoned its intellectual opponents in Sighet. This prison is now called the Museum of Arrested Thought, which we will visit today while learning more about this town's history.

After a solemn reminder of human cruelty, we will have a bit of levity with a visit to the colourful Cimitirul Vesel or "Merry Cemetery" in nearby Sapanta, famous for its brightly painted tombstones and humorous epitaphs narrating the life stories of the deceased. We will also see the Sapanta-Peri Monastery, built in 1391 and the tallest wooden structure in Romania.

Following this, we will transfer to an Agriturismo site in Botiza (for two nights), with the remainder of today free for us to relax. The Agriturismo in Botiza consists of two modern houses with suitable amenities; however the local area and surroundings are reminiscent of medieval



rural life, giving us a chance to unwind.

Accommodation:

Agriturismo in Botiza

Day 10

Locations: Botiza

Overview:

Today will be spent at a more leisurely pace than previous days, with visits to the local towns of Bogdan Voda and Rozavlea to see their wooden churches, and Barsana to visit the wooden monastery. The remainder of the day is free.

Accommodation:

Agriturismo in Botiza

Day 11

Locations: Cluj Napoca

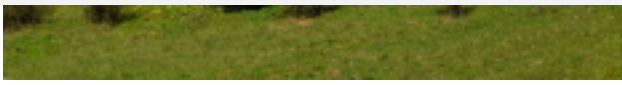
Overview:

We will head south from Botiza this morning to Cluj Napoca, once considered the capital of the historical province of Transylvania. We will be accompanied by a local guide to see the highlights of the city, including the beautiful St Michael's Church. Built in the Gothic style, it is the second highest church in Romania, after the Black Church in Bra?ov which we have viewed earlier on the tour.

After lunch (own arrangements) we will have an underground guided tour of the enormous Salt Mine at Turda, in use since antiquity and modernised and reopened to tourism as a subterranean salt therapy centre and amusement park in 2010.

Accommodation:

Overnight Hotel Meridian or similar



Day 12

Locations: Sibiu

Overview:

The first half of this day will be spent touring the charming city of Sibiu. We will see the Lutheran Cathedral of Saint Mary (Sibiu Lutheran Cathedral), the 13th century Council Tower of Sibiu, and the Brukenthal National Museum, housed in the palace of Samuel von Brukenthal, Habsburg governor of Transylvania.

The afternoon is free to be spent at our leisure. We will come together in the evening for dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

Overnight Astoria Grand Hotel or similar

Day 13

Locations: Timisoara

Overview:

In the morning transfer to Arad to visit this city and its fortress. After that, continue to Timisoara, stopping en route to a winery for a Romanian wine tasting.

Accommodation:

Overnight Hotel Continental or similar

Day 14

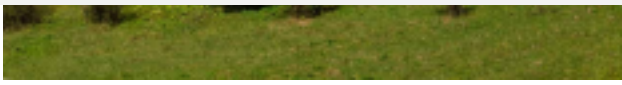
Locations: Timisoara

Overview:

Full day city tour of Timisoara with a local guide.

Accommodation:

Overnight Hotel Continental or similar



Day 15

Locations: Sibiu

Overview:

In the morning transfer to Sibiu for half day guided tour, viewing the main sights with visits to the Council Tower and Brukenthal National Museum. Afternoon at leisure.

Accommodation:

Overnight Hotel Imparatul Romanilor or similar

Day 16

Locations: Bucharest

Overview:

Today we will be heading back to Bucharest. Along the way, we will stop for a visit to the picturesque Cozia Monastery, the only Byzantine-styled monastery still preserved in Romania. We will also have free time to explore and have lunch (own arrangements) in the city of Curtea de Arge? (“The Court upon the [river] Arges”), one of the oldest towns in Wallachia.

In Bucharest, we will have our farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

NH Bucharest or similar

Day 17

Locations: Bucharest

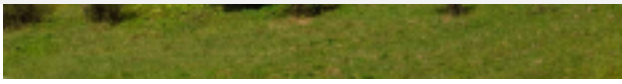
Overview:

Tour concludes after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What’s included in our Tour

- 16 nights of hotel accommodation



- 16 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 7 dinners.
- All excursions, entrance fees, and tipping as per itinerary
- Transport in comfortable coaches.
- Services of Tour Leader for the duration of tour.
- Details preparatory material.

What's not included in our Tour

- International airfares and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, laundry and meals not listed on the itinerary.

Level 2 - Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.

