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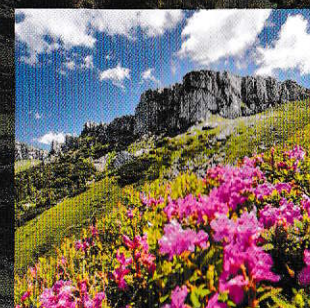
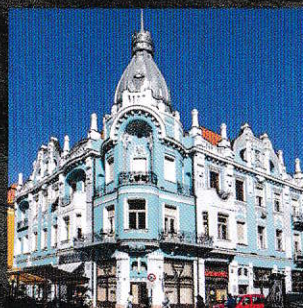
Romania

10 Top tourist attractions

- Palace of Parliament, Bucharest
- Sighișoara
- Bran Castle
- The Danube Delta
- Brașov
- Villages with Fortified Churches in Transylvania
- The Painted Churches of Northern Moldavia (Bukowina)
- Peleș Castle
- UNESCO World Heritage Wooden Churches of Maramuresch
- Sibiu

10 Unique experiences

- Enjoy Bucharest's lively culture and incredible nightlife
- Spend a summer holiday in the countryside
- Admire the architectural treasures of Oradea
- Explore the Buzău region
- Discover the most beautiful trails in the Carpathians
- Try local dishes
- Ride a steam train or travel south-eastern Europe's oldest railway line
- Feel the adrenaline of the Trans-Făgăraș Pass
- Discover the Danube Cauldrons
- Spend Christmas in Maramuresch or Bukowina



UNESCO World Heritage in Romania

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The **fortified village churches of Transylvania** preserve a unique cultural landscape. The thick-walled citadel churches built by the Saxons illustrate the evolution of European ecclesiastical and military architecture over a period of seven centuries and influenced the architecture of the villages surrounding them.

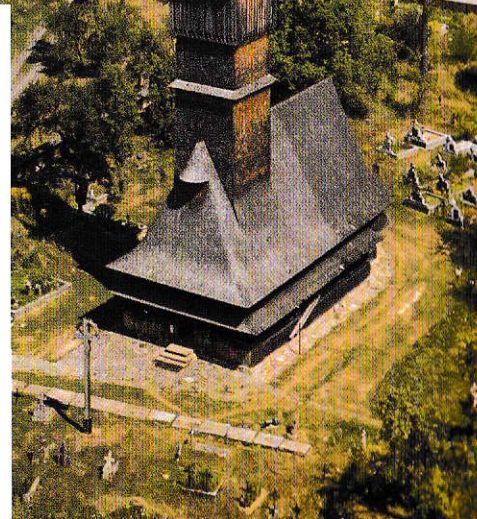
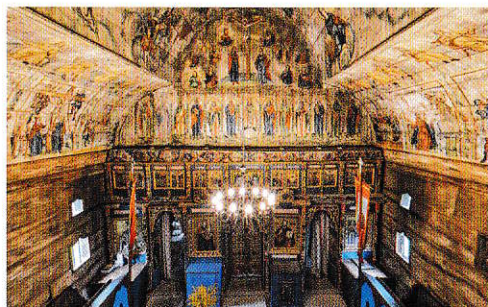
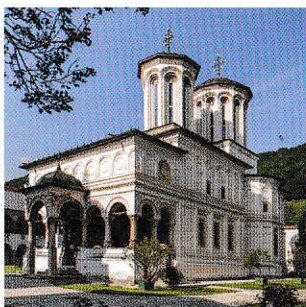
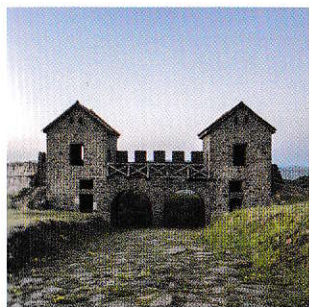
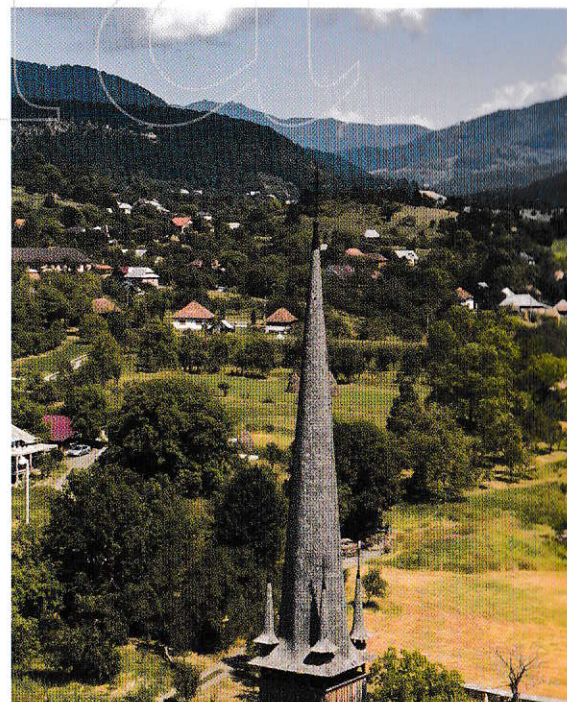
The **churches of northern Moldavia (Bukowina)**, built in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, are striking for the harmony of their proportions, but above all for their refined interior and exterior frescoes that are today regarded as masterpieces of Romanian mediaeval art.

Situated in the heart of Transylvania, **Sighișoara** was comparable to the burgs of Western Europe during its heyday, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Built atop the 425-metre-high Citadel Hill, the old town remains today one of the world's best-preserved mediaeval urban fabrics.



Hidden in the heart of the forest, atop Grădiştea Hill, 1,200 metres above sea level, **Sarmizegetusa Regia**, the capital of the Dacians, was the political, economic and military hub of the Dacian state.

Cultural Heritages Sites



The **borders of Dacia**, which stretched for around 1,500 kilometres, were the longest and most complex land frontier of any of the Roman Empire's European provinces. They included 277 defensive structures, ranging from the castra of legionaries and auxiliaries to forts, watch-towers, vallums, and palisades.

In a glade surrounded by forested hills three kilometres from Horezu, a centre for traditional pottery, lies the **Hurezi Monastery** complex (1690-4), Romania's most outstanding example of Brîncoveanu-period architecture. In the eighteenth century, Hurezi Monastery was a major centre of culture.

Thanks to the perfection of their architectural volumes and the refinement of their decorative features, the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century **wooden churches of Maramuresch**, with their tall, elegantly proportioned soaring spires, are a consummate expression of the woodworker's craft. The most distinctive feature of the churches of Maramuresch is their Gothic spire, which can reach impressive heights of forty to fifty metres and lends them the grandeur of a West-European cathedral.

The Church of the Holy Archangels in Şurdeşti is thought to be one of the tallest historic wooden edifices in Romania, with a tower of fifty-four metres.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Transhumance, the name for the seasonal migration of the flocks of sheep from the villages to grazing land great distances away, is a millennial custom, which has shaped the landscape and communities, creating its own economy, crafts, customs, and rituals.



The art of the embroidered blouse entails painstaking labour, but also creativity, originality, and refinement.



Traditional Wall Rugs Craftsmanship

Using natural materials and refined patterns with unique colour combinations, traditional wall rugs were an indispensable decorative feature of the 'good' room of the traditional dwelling, a principal part of a girl's dowry, and also an important item in burial rituals.



Mărțișor

The *mărțișor*, a band woven of a red and a white thread with tassels at the ends, was regarded as a lucky charm, a symbol of hope and renewal. In time, the *mărțișor* has shed its magical function, but has been preserved as a bond of the community.



Craftsmanship of Horezu Ceramics

The emblem of Horezu pottery is the cockerel, the guardian of the sun, a symbol of light's triumph over darkness, as well as of the resurrection and immortality of the soul. Horezu ceramics are traditionally enamelled and carefully baked twice.



The **Calus** is a ritual practised in the south of the country in summer, at Whitsuntide (Pentecost). Bands of young men dance the *Calușar*—an ancient ritual with magical functions.



The **Christmas Caroling Ritual** is practised in most Romanian villages by bands of male carollers, who go from house to house singing traditional carols, which venerate man's labour, his union with nature, and love.



The Dance of the Swains

A demonstration of strength and virtuosity, and proof of intercultural communication in a multiethnic region such as Transylvania, the dance of the swains marks certain traditional holidays. It strengthens social cohesion and enhances young men's social standing within traditional communities, particularly in the eyes of young women and their families.



The Doină

The *Doină* is the solemn lyrical confession of profound, overwhelming feelings. The poetic text takes a free acoustic form and is richly ornamented, spontaneous, improvised, alternating recitative passages with cantabile elements. It is sung either solo or accompanied by a whistle, flute, or improvised instrument such as a rolled leaf employed as a whistle.



Lipizzan horse breeding

Lipizzan horse breeding was introduced to Romania in the eighteenth century. Knowledge and practices related to this, along with the cultural and social practices of breeding communities, have been passed down orally from generation to generation.

Traditional Festivals



Ducking the Johns is a century-old tradition of Tâlmăcel, in Sibiu County.



Epiphany traditions in Șercaia, Făgăraș County. On 6 January, the villagers set off in a procession headed by the priest. At the river, the priest blesses the water, casting a cross into it. It is said that he who recovers the cross will have health and good fortune for the rest of the year.



Every year, on the first Sunday after Easter, the Brașov **Juni parade** takes place. Seven groups in traditional costume ride on horseback from St Nicholas Church in Unirii Square, in Șcheii Brașovului, pass through the historic centre, and head to Solomon Rocks, where the event ends with a festive picnic.



The fortified church of Biertan was built between 1490 and 1520 in the Late Gothic style and has been preserved close to its original form over the centuries. In September, the village hosts the **Meeting of the Transylvanian Saxons**, a traditional gathering that highlights the community's cultural heritage.



On the first day of Lent, in Brănești near Bucharest, the **Day of the Cuckoos** is celebrated—a carnival where young men costumed as gaffers parade with cowbells and lightly strike passersby to ward off illness and evil. The ritual blends traditions of driving away winter, purification, and fertility.



Despite the changes that have overwhelmed the region in the last few decades, traditional festivals have been preserved intact. On **Easter** morning, the folk of Maramuresch gather in the churchyard so that the priest can bless their baskets of traditional food (paska, kozunak and red eggs) and a bowl of salt, which will be used at important meals during the coming year. After the blessing of the food, people hurry home to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord with their families.



The tradition of **Christmas Eve** carolling has been preserved in most of the villages of Bukowina. Bands of children and adults wearing traditional costume go from house to house bearing the news of Christ's Nativity. Young men roam the lanes all through the night and at each house they find a joyful welcome, with their hosts giving them gifts of apples, pears, walnuts, bagels, and ring loaves, the last of these possibly being connected to ancient pagan sun worship.

BRIS | We know Bucharest

Bucharest is a dynamic and versatile conurbation, each of whose districts and streets presents a different facet of the city. Today, it is home to the country's largest museums and a host of prestigious cultural events, as well as the coolest nightlife venues.



The Palace of Parliament, or 'House of the People', Bucharest, built at the orders of Nicolae Ceaușescu, has a combined surface area of more than 365,000 square metres.

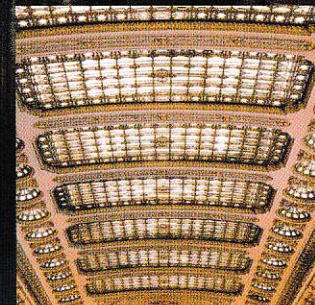


First recorded in 1459, Bucharest gradually developed around two nuclei: the Princely Court, in the fourteenth century, and the residences of boyar Dinicu Golescu, where the Royal Palace was to be built in the nineteenth century. The shift towards French cultural influence in the nineteenth century led to a significant change in the capital's urban fabric and architecture, as well as in the lifestyle of the upper crust. Ambitious city planning projects marked the first half of the twentieth century, a period when culture flourished and society became cosmopolitan.

During the communist period, within the space of a few decades Bucharest saw major urban development, but also lost a large part of its

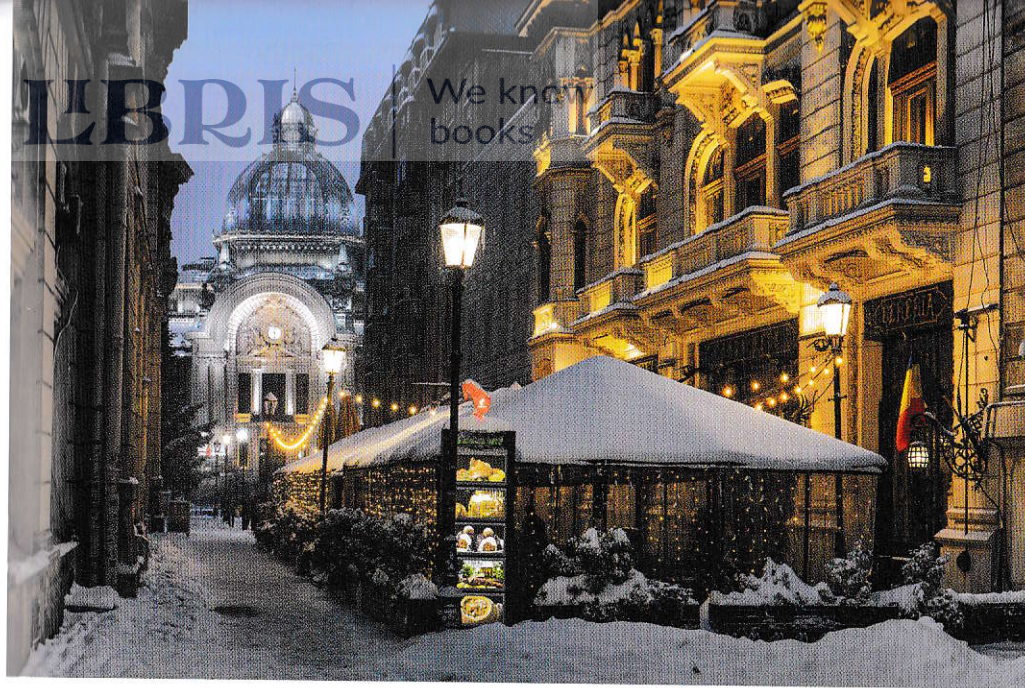
cultural heritage. The city was industrialised and expanded, with vast districts of workers' housing being constructed. The 1977 earthquake was seized on as an excuse to demolish swathes of the city, even where unnecessary. Traditional buildings were replaced with multi-storey blocks of flats, and historical monuments, churches in particular, were razed.

Since 1989, Bucharest has become a bustling, modern city in step with the rest of the world. Countless historical buildings have been renovated, and the workers' dormitory districts have become gentrified. The capital is now a regional economic and cultural powerhouse. But even so, chronic problems to do with infrastructure and traffic persist.



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The Beer Dray (Caru' cu Bere) was built in 1898-9, to designs by architects Siegfried Kofsinki and Alois Pesch, and extended by Kofsinki in 1924. The architecture is typical of the German romantic school, and the richly decorated interior features paintings, stained-glass windows, ironwork, and splendid chandeliers.

The names of a number of streets in the Old Town still bear witness to the guildsmen who once lived here: Lipscani (the main street, where merchants who brought goods from Leipzig, or 'Lipsca', lived), Șelari (saddlers). Under the influence of Constantinople, a number of caravanseries were built in the area.



The Palace of the National Bank of Romania was designed by French architects Marie-Joseph Cassien Bernard and Albert Galeron and built between 1883 and 1889 in an area of Bucharest that since mediaeval times has been the commercial heart of the city, known today as the Lipscani quarter or Old Centre.

