



# Romania

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Central Park (p322)
- ➔ Casa Bunicii (p329)
- ➔ Caru' cu Bere (p316)
- ➔ Crama Sibiu Vechi (p323)
- ➔ Bistro de l'Arte (p320)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Casa Georgius Krauss (p322)
- ➔ Casa Reims (p319)
- ➔ The Guest House (p922)
- ➔ Hotel Central (p325)
- ➔ Hostel Costel (p328)

## Why Go?

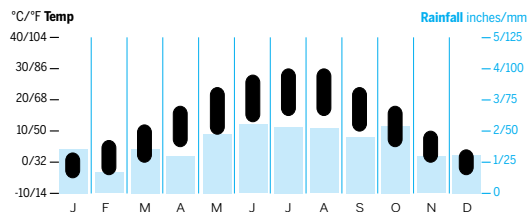
Beautiful and beguiling, Romania's rural landscape remains relatively untouched by the country's urban evolution. It's a land of aesthetically stirring hand-ploughed fields, sheep-instigated traffic jams, and lots of homemade plum brandy.

Most visitors focus their attention on Transylvania, with its legacy of fortified Saxon towns like Braşov and Sighişoara, plus tons of stirring natural beauty. Similar in character but even more remote, the region of Maramureş offers authentic folkways and villages marked by memorable wooden churches. Across the Carpathians, the Unesco-listed painted monasteries dot southern Bucovina. The Danube Delta has more than 300 species of birds, including many rare varieties, and is an ideal spot for birdwatching.

Energetic cities such as Timişoara, Cluj-Napoca and, especially, Bucharest offer culture – both high- and low-brow – and showcase Romania as a rapidly evolving modern European country.

## When to Go

### Bucharest



**May** Good for festivals, including the ever-popular Sibiu Jazz Festival.

**Jun** Mountain hiking starts in mid-June, while birding season gets rolling in the Danube Delta.

**Sep** The summer heat is gone, but sunny days are perfect for exploring big cities.



## Romania Highlights

- 1 Ascend castles and mountains (and castles on top of mountains), using **Braşov** (p318) as a base.
- 2 Follow the Unesco World Heritage line of painted monasteries in **southern Bucovina** (p327).
- 3 Soak in **Sibiu** (p323), a beautifully restored Saxon town.
- 4 Explore the medieval citadel of **Sighişoara** (p321), Dracula's birthplace.
- 5 Row through the tributaries and the riot of nature in the **Danube Delta** (p930).
- 6 Enjoy the museums and cacophonous nightlife of the capital **Bucharest**.

## BUCHAREST

021 / POP 1.9 MILLION

Romania's capital gets a bad rap, but in fact it's dynamic, energetic and more than a little bit funky. It's where unreconstructed communism meets unbridled capitalism; where the soporific forces of the EU meet the passions of the Balkans and Middle East. Many travellers give the city just a night or two before heading off to Transylvania but, frankly, that's not enough. Budget at least a

few days to take in the museums, stroll the parks and hang out at trendy cafes.

### Sights

#### South of the Centre

##### Palace of Parliament

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Palatul Parlamentului/Casa Poporului; 2 tour bookings 021-311 3611; [www.cdep.ro](http://www.cdep.ro); B-dul Naţiunii Unite; complete tour adults/students 45/23 lei,