



# Romania

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Lacrimi şi Sfinţi (p929)
- ➔ Bistro de l'Arte (p932)
- ➔ Crama Sibiul Vechi (p936)
- ➔ Roata (p939)
- ➔ Caruso (p942)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Little Bucharest Old Town Hostel (p928)
- ➔ Rembrandt Hotel (p929)
- ➔ Casa Georgius Krauss (p935)
- ➔ Youthink Hostel (p938)

## Why Go?

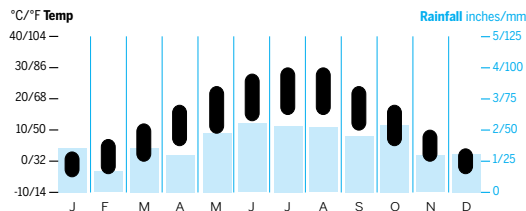
Beautiful and beguiling, Romania's rural landscape remains relatively untouched by the country's urban evolution. It's a land of aesthetically stirring hand-ploughed fields, sheep-instigated traffic jams and lots of homemade plum brandy.

Most visitors focus their attention on Transylvania, with its legacy of fortified Saxon towns like Braşov and Sighişoara, plus tons of eye-catching 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 like Timişoara, Sibiu, Cluj-Napoca and, especially, Bucharest offer culture – both high- and low-brow – and showcase Romania as a rapidly evolving European country.

## When to Go

### Bucharest



**May** Trees in full blossom; bird-watching in the Danube Delta at its best.

**Jun** Mountain hiking starts in mid-June; castles and museums are open and in high gear.

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



## Romania Highlights

- 1 Braşov** (p931) Basing yourself here to ascend castles and mountains (and castles on top of mountains).
- 2 Southern Bucovina** (p940) Following the Unesco World Heritage line of painted monasteries.
- 3 Sibiu** (p935) Soaking in this beautifully restored Saxon town.
- 4 Sighişoara** (p934) Exploring this medieval citadel and birthplace of Dracula.
- 5 Danube Delta** (p938) Rowing through the tributaries and the riot of nature.
- 6 Bucharest** (p925) Enjoying the museums and cacophonous nightlife of the capital.

## BUCHAREST

☎ 021 / POP 1,900,000

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

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

### 👁 Sights

#### 📍 South of the Centre

##### ★ Palace of Parliament

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Palatul Parlamentului, Casa Poporului; ☎ tour bookings 0733-558 102; <http://cic.cdep.ro>; B-dul Naţiunii Unite; adult/student complete tours 55/28 lei,