



# Crișana & Banat

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## Best Places to Eat

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## Best Places to Sleep

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- ➔ Hotel Arad (p163)
- ➔ Casa Noastră (p163)

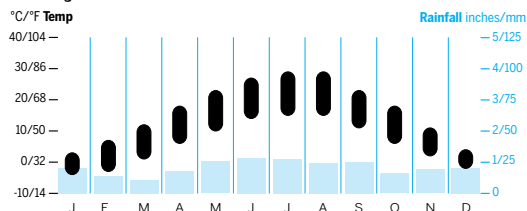
## Why Go?

Western Romania, with its geographic and cultural ties to neighbouring Hungary and Serbia and its historical links to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, enjoys an ethnic diversity that much of the rest of the country lacks. Timișoara, the regional hub, has a nationwide reputation as a beautiful and lively metropolis, and for a series of 'firsts'. It was the world's first city to adopt electric street lights (in 1884) and, more importantly, the first city to rise up against dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu in 1989.

The three major centres of Timișoara, Oradea and Arad all boast some wonderful examples of art nouveau (or Secession) architecture and many buildings are now getting a long-awaited facelift. Outside these metropolitan areas, there are spas at Băile Felix, while the remote and pristine western ranges of the Apuseni Mountains are criss-crossed with kilometres of isolated hiking trails and dozens of amazing caves that cry out for exploration.

## When to Go

### Timișoara



**Apr–May** Budding tree blossoms make a striking backdrop to a city break in Timișoara, Arad or Oradea.

**Jun–Aug** Summer brings warm, sunny days perfect for hiking in the western Apuseni Mountains.

**Sep–Oct** Timișoara's cultural scene awakens from its summer slumber.



## Crișana & Banat Highlights

**1 Museum of the 1989 Revolution** (p151) Getting a riveting lesson in Romanian history in Timișoara.

**2 Oradea** (p157) Exploring the city's stunning and increasingly renovated art nouveau monuments.

**3 Timișoara** (p151) Enjoying a night of opera, dinner at a fine restaurant and a nightcap on Piața Victoriei or Piața Unirii.

**4 Bears Cave** (p161) Looking at the ancient stalactites and stalagmites in this magnificent limestone underworld.

**5 Apuseni Mountains** (p161) Hiking around or simply gazing at the Apuseni's western ranges.

**6 Băile Felix** (p161) Taking to the thermal waters at this spa resort.