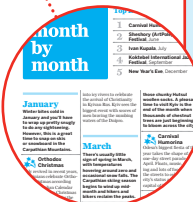
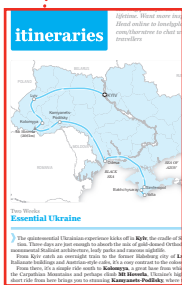


PLAN YOUR TRIP

YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions to help you put together your perfect trip

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Ukraine



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Ukraine's best open-air museum of folk architecture (p48)

Ploshcha Rynok
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Carpathian Landscapes
Bike and hike Ukraine's relaxing uplands (p119)

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Wander this town atop a rock island (p79)

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An engaging base for Carpathian exploration (p124)

Odesa's Nightlife
Beach parties by the Black Sea (p150)

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve
Bird spotting and watery vistas (p156)

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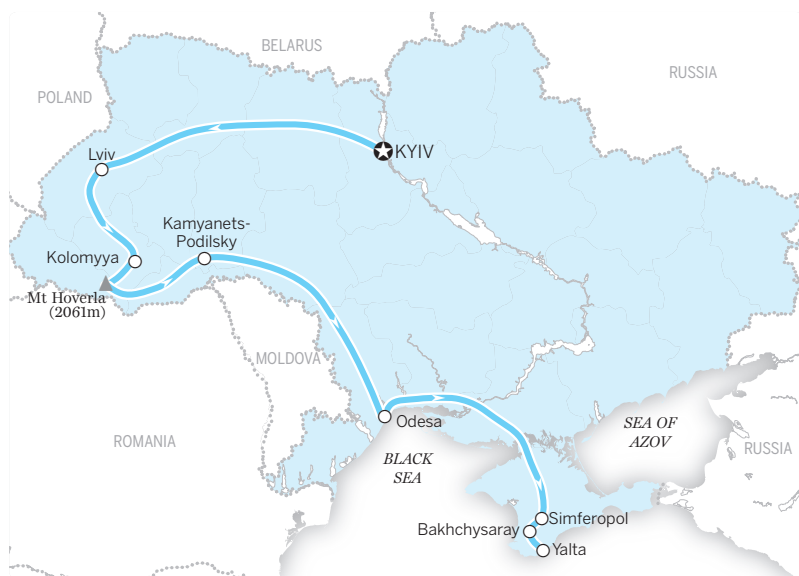


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itineraries

Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travellers



Two Weeks

Essential Ukraine

The quintessential Ukrainian experience kicks off in **Kyiv**, the cradle of Slavic civilisation. Three days are just enough to absorb the mix of gold-domed Orthodox churches, monumental Stalinist architecture, leafy parks and raucous nightlife.

From Kyiv catch an overnight train to the former Habsburg city of **Lviv**. With its Italianate buildings and Austrian-style cafes, it's a cosy contrast to the colossal capital.

From there, it's a simple ride south to **Kolomyya**, a great base from which to explore the Carpathian Mountains and perhaps climb **Mt Hoverla**, Ukraine's highest peak. A short ride from here brings you to stunning **Kamyanets-Podilsky**, where the medieval Old Town perches atop a tall rock in the middle of a river loop.

Next stop, **Odesa**, famous for the Potemkin Steps and weekend clubbing at Arkadia Beach. Then take an overnight train to **Simferopol**, before heading to the Crimean Tatar capital of **Bakhchysaray**, with its captivating Khans' Palace and cave city of Chufut Kale.

Then head south to kitschy **Yalta**, a handy base for exploring Crimea's southern coast.



Two Weeks

Best of the West

Launch your loop around Ukraine's far west in **Lviv**, an eastern outpost of central Europe with a strong cafe culture and some gobsmacking architecture that make it one of Ukraine's top stops for any visitor. Outside the city centre the Lychakivske Cemetery is a must-see. The city also has some of the country's wackiest restaurants, with the Masonic Restaurant and Dim Lehend topping a zany list.

If you can tear yourself away from Lviv's European charms, hop on board a slow train south to low-key **Mukacheve**, where one of Ukraine's most dramatic hilltop castles awaits. From here it's into soothingly forested mountain country, the **Carpathians** to be exact. Ukraine's section of the Carpathian arc is etched with long broad valleys, and a great place to start your exploration is **Rakhiv**. Here you can have your first brush with Hutsul culture and head off into the hills for some exhilarating hiking and biking, before picking your way north along the A265 road linking resort villages, ski centres and hiking bases en route. Call a halt at quaint **Kolomyya**, a superb launch pad for more hikes. The town also has two intriguing museums including the famous Pysanky Museum housed in a giant Easter egg. It also boasts one of the best places to stay in all Ukraine in the shape of the On the Corner B&B.

Consider short stops at energetic **Chernivtsi**, to visit the psychedelic university building, and the spectacular **Khotyn** fortress on the banks of the wide River Dniester, before you next unpack your bags in the show-stopping island town of **Kamyanets-Podilsky**. One of Ukraine's must-see attractions, the town is as historically fascinating as it is dramatically situated in a loop of the river Smotrych.

A long haul by bus across giant fields of sunflowers and sugar beet via off-the-beaten-track Ternopil delivers you to picturesque **Kremenets**, another town boasting a superb fortress as well as an eerie Cossack cemetery. From here it's a short *marshrutka* (fixed-price minibus) hop to the polished golden domes of **Pochayiv**, Ukraine's second most important monastery after Kyiv's Pecherska Lavra. Lviv is a four-hour bus ride away.



Ten Days

Best of the East

This venture into the less frequented east begins with a quick jump north from Kyiv to atmospheric **Chernihiv**, with its amazing Unesco-listed collection of monasteries and cathedrals. Most make this a day-trip from the capital but staying the night gives more time to appreciate the wonderful collection of ancient church buildings.

Unless you're up for some slow and complicated train journeys, backtrack to the capital and jump aboard an express train heading east – first stop the spa town of **Myrhorod**. Gogol was born nearby, and the town and surrounding area feature in many of his tales. Get off the beaten track in these parts by spending a couple of days on the Gogol Circuit, which visits many sites associated with the author. Local guesthouses can put you up for a few hryvnya.

Reboard the express for the short trip to **Poltava**, a pleasant, park-dotted place and the scene of a key battle in Ukrainian history. Designed as a kind of mini-St Petersburg, this grand city contrasts with the surrounding bucolic scenery and is well worth half a day's exploration. The final stop of the express is **Kharkiv**, a huge student city of 1.5 million. Essential viewing here is the world's second-largest city square, which is dominated by the mammoth, Stalinist-era Derzhprom building.

From Kharkiv it's a smooth roll south to another of Ukraine's eastern megacities – **Dnipropetrovsk** – still a major centre for Ukraine's rocket and aviation industries (so be careful what you aim your camera at!). Take a stroll by the Dnipro River before continuing south to **Zaporizhzhya**, an ugly industrial city but also the location of Khortytsya Island, where the Ukrainian Cossacks once gathered at the *sich* (fort). This is the best place in the country to learn about the Cossacks, their way of life and their influence on the country's history. From the banks of the Dnipro, catch a bus or train to **Donetsk**, the powerbase of the east. The main industry is still coalmining, but among the slag heaps you'll also glimpse Eastern Europe's most cutting-edge football stadium, a Euro 2012 venue. Donetsk is an overnight bus or train journey back to Kyiv.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Marc Di Duca

Coordinating Author, Central Ukraine, Lviv & Western Ukraine, The Carpathians, Odesa & Southern Ukraine Driven by an urge to discover Eastern Europe's wilder side, Marc first hit Kyiv one dark, snow-flecked night in early 1998. Several prolonged stints, countless near misses with Kyiv's metro doors and many bottles of *horilka* later, he still never misses a chance to fine-tune his Russian while exploring far-flung corners of this immense land. Overheated buses and *salo* aside, he has an enthusiasm for everything Ukrainian, in particular his favourite region, Go-gol's native Poltavshchina. An established travel author, Marc has written guides to Moscow and Lake Baikal, and has worked on Lonely Planet's *Trans-Siberian Railway* and *Russia* books.

Read more about Marc at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/madidu



Leonid Ragozin

Kyiv, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine Leonid Ragozin devoted himself to beach dynamics when he studied geology at Moscow State University. But for want of really nice beaches in Russia, he helped Australian gold prospectors in Siberia and sold InterRail tickets and Lonely Planet books to Russian backpackers before embarking on a journalistic career. After eight years with the BBC, he was poached by the Russian *Newsweek* and became their foreign correspondent.

In this capacity, he coerced his superiors into sending him as far as Bhutan, Ecuador and dozens of similarly unlikely destinations, and got away with it. While doing this guide, he returned to the BBC, where he is now discovering the wild and dangerous world of television.

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