Last Updated: September 3, 2013

Trekking in Transylvania - EATC

8 days: Brasov to Brasov

What's Included

All accompanied day hikes as indicated in the itinerary. Entrance and tour of Bran (Dracula's) castle, guided walk in Brasov.

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary

Day 1 Brasov

Welcome to Romania. There are no activities planned for today until 6pm when you will meet your CEO for an important welcome meeting. Please look for a note at reception informing you of the location of the meeting and please bring along your passport, travel insurance documents and a pen. After this, you may like to join your CEO and fellow travellers for dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 2 Carpathian Mountains/Brasov (1B)

In the morning we transfer to the Piatra Mare Circuit. We then begin our first day walking in the Piatra Craiului Mountains, also known as the Bran-Rucar Corridor. The route passes some of the country's richest pastoral areas, dotted by shepherds' huts, altitude single tracks and a wonderful view over two of the most spectacular massifs in the Southern Carpathians – Bucegi and Piatra Craiului. Our hike today takes us to the Seven Stairs Canyon, formed from the Sipoaia River, and 160m in length. The hike ascends 1000 metres along the route up to the Piatra Mare cabin, through forested woodland along the route.

Today we have approximately 5 hours walking with a 1000 m climb

Day 3 Bucegi Mountains/Bran (1B,1D)

This morning we make our way to Bran village, before we continue our hiking in the Bucegi Mountains. These mountains are considered a spiritual place, special to the ancestors of the Romanian people. We start walking through fields filled with mountain flowers and woodland before we arrive at open plateaux. As we get higher up into the mountains, there is likely to be some scree slopes and some ridge walking. However, we are rewarded by spectacular views. Be sure to look out for the strange rock formations here, including the Sphinx, which resembles it's Egyptian counterpart. At the end of our hike we return to Bran where we spend the night.

Today we have approximately 7 hours walking with a 1200 m climb.

Approximate travel time Moieciu de Jos to Bran, 10 minutes.

Day 4 Piatra Craiului National Park/Bran (1B,1D)

Today is dedicated to trekking in Piatra Craiului (The King's Rock) National Park - one of the most beautiful mountains in Romania. The park is very rocky, consisting of a thin high limestone strip, 22 km long, which is so unusual that it is considered to be a geographical accident of the Southern Carpathians. t is also home of The Carpathian Large Carnivore Project, as, although the Romanian Carpathians cover less than 1.5% of the European surface west of Russia, they are home to almost one third of all European large carnivores: The authorities estimate that the number of bears is over 6,000, that there are about 3,000 wolves, and some 2,000 lynx.

Today's walking is approximately 6-7 hours trekking, 1000-1400m climb.

Day 5 Fagaras Mountains/Valea Sambetei Refuge (1B)

We have a change of pace this morning, as we head off to visit the infamous Bran Castle. Also known as Dracula's Castle this beautiful 14th century castle was, renovated in the 19th century by the royal family of Romania.

After leaving the castle, we transfer first to Sambata Monastery, where you can stop for a visit if you are interested. Built in the 17th century as a wooden church, a monastery has stood on the site ever since. The name comes from 'Apa Sambetei', the ocean that once encompassed the whole earth. From here we continue our hike up into the Fagaras Mountains to Valea Sambetei Refuge where we spend the night.

The refuge is a very basic trekking hostel. You will be in shared dormitory accommodation and may share with members of the opposite sex. Bedding is basic, and you may wish to use your sleep sheet here. There are common shared bathrooms, but expect the hot water to be intermittent.

Although basic, this is a great chance to wake up deep in the Romanian mountains and enjoy the company of other international hikers.

Approximately 3 hours walking with a 650 m climb.

Day 6 Moldoveanu Peak/Valea Sambetei Refuge (1B)

Starting at Valea Sambetei Refuge this morning, we follow the Moldoveanu Peak Circuit, completing our trek to the summit of the highest peak in Romania. This is a full day climb and with changeable weather conditions it can be treacherous underfoot. From the top of Romania, views stretch out across the Fagaras mountain range and beyond, a great end to today's trek. We return to the refuge where we spend the night.

Today's trekking time is approximately 9h, (1200 m climb)

Day 7 Viscri (1B,1D)

From Valea Sambetei Refuge decend to the Sambata Monastery and transfer to Viscri village. Viscri is a German village, like most of the saxon settlements nestled between the dense oak forests that cover these hills. It is included in the UNESCO heritage list and it can be considered an enormous open air museum. It is also one of the villages in Romania where Prince Charles of Wales bought a traditional house and the only place in Romania with an organic water waste plant.

Tonight we are accommodated in a village guesthouse and are treated to a traditional meal.

Approximately 2 hours walking with a 650m descent.

Day 8 Brasov (1B,1L)

In the morning we visit the fortified church in the village and then we take a horse pulled carriage ride around the village. We will meet a family of wood burners before exploring the surrounding meadows and forests and returning to Viscri for lunch.
In the afternoon transfer to Brasov where the tour finishes on arrival. Please do not book any international flights until after 3pm in the afternoon today.

What's Included

All accompanied day hikes as indicated in the itinerary. Entrance and tour of Bran (Dracula's) castle, guided walk in Brasov.

Highlights

Visiting 'Dracula's Castle' in Bran, hiking the undiscovered Romanian countryside, marvelling at magnificent Carpathian views, savouring Romanian culture and history.

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Group Leader Description

This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our CEOs (Chief Experience Officer). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

Group Size Notes

Max 14, Avg 10

Meals Included

7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners.

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip.

Meal Budget

Allow EUR120-140 for meals not included

Transport

Walking, minivan

About our Transportation

Transport on this trip will mostly be by local bus.

Between transport and hotels you may be required to carry your luggage short distances (up to 15mins walk).

Local Flights

If required all local flights are included in the cost of your tours unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Guesthouses (5 nts), simple mountain refuge (2 nts)

My Own Room

Not available on this trip.

About Accommodation

The guesthouses used on this trip are bed and breakfast type accommodation in local family homes.
Rooms are comfortable twin/double accommodation, with shared bathrooms. This is a great chance to interact with typical Romanian families.

The refuge is a very basic trekking hostel. You will be in shared dormitory accommodation and may share with members of the opposite sex. Bedding is basic, and you may wish to use your sleep sheet here. There are common shared bathrooms, but expect the hot water to be intermittent. Although basic, this is a great chance to wake up deep in the Romanian mountains and enjoy the company of other international hikers.

Joining Hotel

Hotel Coroana
Republicii St, No. 62
Brasov, Romania
Tel: +40 268 477 448

Joining Instructions

How to get to Brasov:

1. From Bucharest
Brasov is 160 kilometres from Bucharest.
Henri Coanda International Airport (http://www.bucharestairports.ro/otp/index.php)is located in Otopeni, at 15 km from Bucharest.

By Car:
You can rent a car from the airport and drive directly to the hotel in Brasov. This is a 2 and a half hours drive.
You can book a car in advance from http://www.autonom.com/ or from any other preferred company.

By Train:
Trains leave roughly every two hours from Bucharest train station (Gara de Nord) and the journey takes just under three hours.
The full timetable can be found at http://www.mersultrenurilorcfr.ro/
The ticket costs around 65 RON.

2. From Sibiu
Sibiu is 145 km to Brasov. Sibiu International Airport (http://www.sibiuairport.ro/) is located at 3 km to Sibiu.

By Taxi:

Taxis are cheap in Sibiu and perhaps better than buses for longer distances. Just make sure you take a taxi belonging to a trusted taxi company, with the numbers 942 or 953 on the side. To call a taxi, dial (+40269) 942 or (+40269) 953.
The price is between 1.5 and 1.8 RON /km.

By Train:
The journey by train from Brasov to Sibiu takes almost three hours. The full timetable can be found at http://www.mersultrenurilorcfr.ro/
The ticket costs about 60 RON.

3. From Brasov Train Station to the Hotel
The hotel is located in the city centre.

By Bus:
The bus station is located in front of the train station. The bus number 4 takes you to the city center. You descend at the “Teatrul Dramatic” (Brasov Theatre) bus station. The fare price is 2 RON. Tickets can be purchased from the ticket kiosk at the bus station.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS
G Adventures UK office (manned UK 8am - 8pm)
+44 (0) 2072439878

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, from calls within North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from within UK: 0844 272 0000
Calls from within Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00
Calls from within Australia: 1 300 796 618
Calls from within New Zealand: 0800 333 307
Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

For absolute emergencies after office hours please contact +44 7817 262559
If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

What to Take

You will need a strong trekking backpack which can contain all of your belongings. You must be able and prepared to comfortably carry this on your back for at least 3 hours up and down hills (Days 5 and 7 to and from the refuge) All other days your large luggage will be transported between accommodations.

You will also need a smaller day pack for your daily hikes which fits everything you will need - ie water bottle, sun protection equipment, extra jacket, picnic lunches. Your larger trekking pack can be left at the accommodation during day treks.

Checklist

Suggested items:
•Rucksack/Backpack of max 40 lites capacity, containing suggested Items:
•Hiking boots (well worn in & waterproof)
•Strong trekking day pack (for use on daily treks)
•Sleep sheet (cotton or silk)
•Extra pair of shoes like flip-flops,very light sneakers or sport sandals;for wearing in the refuges
•Hiking poles (optional but recommended, especially for departures in June and early in the season)
•Wind and waterproof jacket
•1 or 2 lightweight shirts or T-shirts - wicking material rather than cotton is recommended for T-shirts
•Something to sleep in- suitable for multi sex dorm rooms
•Sun hat
•1 pair hiking pants/track pants (convertible pants/shorts are useful) and 1 pair trousers to wear in the evenings
•2-3 pairs socks and underwear
•1 thermal baselayer
•1 fleece/jacket
•Warm hat
•Gloves
•Small towel (pack towels are good)
•Sunblock
•Sunglasses
•Toiletries (just the essentials in small/light bottles)
•Flashlight/Headlamp
•Watch or alarm clock
•Water bottle - at least 2litres capacity
•First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, bandaids, anti-histamine, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
•Waterproof pants (optional but recommended in case of rain/snow)

Optional Items:
•Camera
•Gaiters (esp early or late season) may be useful if there is snow on higher ground

Documents:
•Passport (with photocopies)
•Travel insurance (with photocopies)
•Airline tickets (with photocopies)
•EUR cash
•Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
•G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier
•Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Please note it is ESSENTIAL you travel light as you will be carrying all your own gear on Days 5 and 7

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

All visitors to the EU (European Union) and EEC (European Economic Community) countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand passport holders do not need a visa to visit the Schengen area (see below), however they may not stay longer than three months in any 6-month period.

For other nationalities, travelling in Europe has been simplified with the introduction of the Schengen visa. As a visitor to the Schengen area (Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Finland, Italy, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland) you will enjoy the many advantages of this unified visa system. Generally speaking with a Schengen visa, you may enter one Schengen country and travel freely throughout the Schengen region during the validity of your visa. There are limited border controls at Schengen borders, if any at all.

Please note that the UK and Ireland are NOT part of the Schengen agreement.

A Schengen visa is applied for at the Embassy or Consulate of the Schengen country in which you will be spending the most nights on your trip to the Schengen space. If you are only visiting one country on your trip then you apply for your visa at the Consulate of this Schengen country.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances but you must remember to bring your PIN number (be aware that many ATM machines only accept 4-digit PINs). Both Cirrus and Plus system cards are the most widely accepted debit cards. Visa cards are the most widely accepted credit cards. While ATMs are commonly available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work - Check with your bank. You should be aware when purchasing products or services on a credit card, that a fee usually applies.

Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of Euros, traveller’s cheques and cards is best. Avoid relying on traveller's cheques alone as these are less and less readily cashed as clients use them very little.

Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds.

Please note that in Romania, you will need local currency, which is the new Romanian Lei (RON)

Approximate currency rates are 1 EUR = 4.2 RON

As currency exchange rates can fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD $200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Tipping

Although not compulsory, tipping is expected and is an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you throughout your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There will be several occasions during this trip where there is the opportunity to tip the local guides that we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping local guides range from 3-5 USD/EUR per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service. Ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also, at the end of your trip, if you felt that your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline 20-25 USD/EUR per person, per week can be used.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that quite often we

are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program
Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for Planeterra's monthly news to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by The Watering Hole, our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the Departure Lounge section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.