



BRAVA TOUR  
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Tel/Fax: (004) 0311 023 723 (Reteaua Astral)

### **Day 1 Travel by minibus from Bucharest to Bran (around 200 km); Peasant Fortress Rasnov and Moieciu village area**

Set off from Bucharest at 8:00 a.m., heading for Bran along Prahova Valley. **In Rasnov we will visit the Peasant Fortress, one of the most interesting medieval civil edifices in Transylvania.** Built up to protect inhabitants against Turkish and Tatar's attacks, the interior of the fortress was planned like a settlement and today it displays more than 30 houses, including a school and a chapel. The fortress has a 146 meter-deep well which supplied water to the population sheltered here in case of danger.

After the lunch break at a restaurant we will go to Moieciu village where we will see a **traditional sheep breeder household**. Next we'll go to a **shepherd camp ("stana")**, where we will meet the shepherds and we will surely be invited to taste fresh milk and local cheese specialties "caş" and "urda".

The accommodation and meals throughout the travel will be at a 3\* guest house in the area. **(Meals included: D)**

### **Day 2 The Natural Botanical Reservation "Poiana Narciselor" (Daffodils' Clearing) and the Paleo-Christian Cave Sanctuary at Sinca Veche (approx. 90 km driving)**

After breakfast at the guesthouse enjoy a morning drive toward the renowned **Botanical Reservation "Daffodils Clearing"** at the foot of Fagaras Mountains, inside a 100-acre (40 ha) oak forest more than 100 years old. In the large clearings, the soil condition and the faint shadow favor the blossoming of white and yellow daffodils which cover the clearings at the end of May but also other flowers like irises. The place is the habitat of a large number of birds and butterflies but also boars and bears.

After exploring the forest we will go to the **enigmatic cave monastery** of Sinca Veche settled on the place of an ancient sanctuary. The mystery of the five rooms cut in stone with two altars and the pyramidal chimney through which one can see the sky still needs to be cleared up.

Free time available in the afternoon. **(Meals included: B, D)**

### **Day 3 Trekking in Piatra Craiului National Park**

After breakfast an experienced licensed guide will lead us into one of the valleys full of wildlife. We will walk slowly looking for the footprints and other signs animals have left behind: brown bears, wolves, foxes, chamois, boars, owls, woodpeckers etc. (5-6 hours walking time)



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In the afternoon it will be the time for relaxation in the garden at the guest house in front of a glass with liqueur, unless you will prefer roaming around or biking. Also there is the opportunity today for an **optional trip** at one of the history places of high cultural interest, like **Bran Castle, the old medieval town of Brasov, Peles Castle in Sinaia or the Peasant Fortress and UNESCO heritage Prejmer**. Another interesting possibility is a two-three hours- horse ride on the hills around the village, accompanied by a guide from the ranch. **(Meals included: B, D)**

#### **Day 4 Zarnesti Gorge and Magura village**

After breakfast we will go to the impressive **Zarnesti Gorge**, the spectacular canyon used as a setting in the movie "Cold Mountain", with stone walls up to 260-foot (80 meters ) high. Chances are to spot rare species of birds living here (like *tichodroma muraria*- "fluturasul de stanca"). Then an easy hike through the forest will lead us to the traditional **Magura Village**, a typical mountain village with wooden houses scattered on the ridges and sides of the hills. Alongside the superb views in this village with more horse-drawn carts than cars we will observe local lifestyle and rural activities (people scything the hay). Old houses have both the roofs and walls covered with wood tiles (shingles). In the afternoon we will enjoy a barbeque at one of the locals' house. **(Meals included: B, D)**

#### **Day 5 Traditions, peasant technical installations and ethnography in Fagaras County (approx. 300 km driving)**

Our minibus will take us today to the **Fagaras County**, a region situated at the north side of the most imposing Carpathian mountain range having an exceptional natural, historical and cultural heritage. A visit at the **Museum of Fagaras County** will be a good opportunity to get an insight of the history, popular art and traditions of the region. The museum is hosted by 650 year-old Fagaras Castle, the symbol of the whole county, a strong medieval fortress. During the day we will see the **oldest watermill** in Fagaras County (1873), which grinds wheat and maize for the neighborhood villages-locals use to say that their flour is "the best in the world". We will meet a **handicraftsmen family** and look at a **peasant installation** for processing woven tissues of wool. We won't miss the **monastery Sambata**. We'll have a lunch break during the day at a restaurant on our itinerary. **(Meals included: B, D)**

#### **Day 6 "Coltul Chiliilor" and Plaiul Foi**

After breakfast, the car will take us to the entrance in Barsei Valley from where we will begin an easy hike to "Coltul Chiliilor", a **sanctuary** hidden in a cave in the wood.



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Today a pilgrimage place, it was use as a retreat by villagers when they were threatened by the Turks.

The track passes mountain meadows and springs, and along our way we will see the lofty limestone ridge of Piatra Craiului Mountains soaring into the sky (total walking time 3 hours). **Picnic and resting time** on the bank of the river. Return to our host by horse-drawn carts. **Special surprise in the evening. (Meals included: B, D)**

### **Day 7 Return to Bucharest following the route "Bran- Rucar" (approx. 170 km)**

Pack up and leave our guesthouse after breakfast (around 10:00). This time we cross the Carpathians on the breathtaking route Bran-Rucar, one of the most beautiful in Romania. Consider making some food supply for home, as people sell on the roadside the famous fir-bark wrapped cheese, blackberry and raspberry syrup and smoke-dried salt meat, to name a few. Arrival at Bucharest will be around 15:00 o'clock. **(Meals included: B)**

**Available:** May until mid September

**Groups:** 12- 16 persons (for environmental reasons the size of the group is restricted)

**Payment:** has to be made by bank transfer or cash, in either Lei, USD or EUR.

#### **Services included:**

- All accommodation in shared rooms (for single rooms an extra charge will be retain- please ask for a single room at the time of booking)
- Half board: breakfast and dinner at the accommodation, plus 1 barbeque and 1 picnic.
- All travel as mentioned in the itinerary
- Services of the tour leader and local guides
- Info materials: maps and route description

#### **Not included:**

- Bikes, horses
- Entrance fee to places of interest (museums) not included in the itinerary
- Alcohol and other private costs
- Lunch available at a restaurant on our itinerary or at our guesthouse

**Optional:** biking, riding, visit of historical places of interest like the medieval town of Brasov, Bran Castle, Prejmer Citadel

#### **Exclusive services (optional)**

- Single room supplement (5 EUR/day)
- Flight/ bus/ train tickets



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- Travel cancellation insurance

**Tour and Trip Alteration** Changes in program may occur due to bad weather conditions and guests are requested to be flexible when safety factors prevail. If major changes are necessary while the tour is in progress, the additional costs, if any, are the responsibility of the traveler.

Sometimes guests may be invited to join interesting local events. Such unexpected changes actually enhance the program, as guests get a more authentic insight of local life.

**Physical exertion** Generally there is no extreme physical exercise required, but sometimes we walk over hills or cross on wet terrain. You should be able to complete walks of a few hours duration so a reasonable level of fitness is required. You should meet the schedule of the tour each day, but if you feel tired you can stay at the guest house instead of walking.

**Packing for your trip and seasonal climate** Take only one main piece of baggage and a knapsack (daysac). Don't overload yourself, as you are expected to carry your own luggage. Comfortable walking boots are essential for tracking, and trainers/sandals for general travel. Temperature vary, being influenced by the physical features of the Carpathians. July and August are usually hot, but temperatures drop over night and in the mountains it can be cold even in summertime. Pack summer clothing, but don't forget a sweater plus a windproof/waterproof jacket. Bring a water bottle, insect repellent, sunscreen, a sunhat and a torch.

**Travel insurance** Although Romania is as safe as any other country in Europe, we would like to ask you to consider purchasing travel insurance.