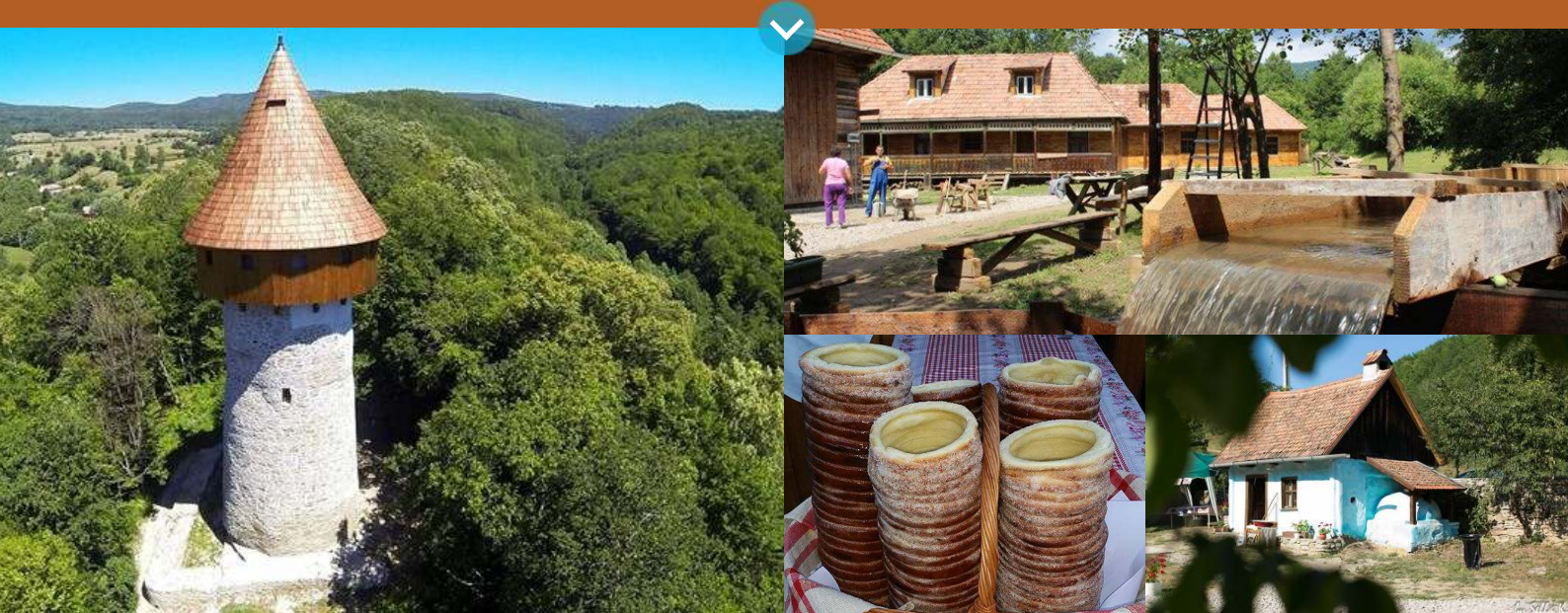


Romania

Roving Romas and Restoration



This nine day visit to Romania delves into the lives of Romanian women, from city dwellers to village mothers and the lives of the Roma society. As well as experiencing this beautiful country from their eyes, we have the opportunity to be involved in the restoration of traditional szekler houses and other activities at the Cernat Village Museum to help maintain the local traditions and customs of the area. Forget vampires, we promise Romania has plenty of wonderful surprises in store for you.



Recommended itinerary:

Culture shock rating: 

Physical rating: 

Day 1 - Arrive Bucharest and Transfer to Brasov

Welcome to Romania! After our flight from London to Bucharest we are greeted by our Romanian Trip Leader who will be joining us on this adventure. We will then transfer to the city of Brasov in the Transylvania region, around a three hour drive away, which will become our base for the next few days.

Day 2 - Contrasting Life in Brasov and Villages

Today we will rise to explore the sights of Brasov which has many features of traditional Romanian design. During our explorations we will have the opportunity to meet with local businesswomen and discuss their experience of life in the city and the discrimination they sometimes face. Afterwards, we will head to the countryside to visit some of the villages surrounding Brasov. Despite being nearby, there is a stark difference in the way of life and it will be a fascinating opportunity to compare the way of life of the local village women. We will also learn about the local EMA Association which works to assist in vocational training for local people and retaining the skills of craftsmen in the area.

After an insightful day exploring Romanian culture we will then return to our hotel in Brasov for the night.

Day 3 - Lives of Roma Women

Today we will visit two local associations of Roma not far from Brasov in the village of Dumbravita or Sacele town. Here we will have the opportunity to learn about Roma traditions and the rich history surrounding their lifestyle. We will be able to take part in activities with the associations and discover the role that women hold in this often marginalised and discriminated strata of society in Romania.

We will then return to our hotel in Brasov after an exciting day.

Day 4 – Cookery Class and Sightseeing Tour

After breakfast we will take part in a cookery class run by a local Romanian woman to learn the secrets of classic Romanian dishes (something to wow the Food Tech teacher upon our return!). After tasting our feast we will enjoy a tour of some of the top sights in the Brasov area. This includes the Rupea Fortress built on basalt rock; despite dating back to the 14th century, the water in the 60m well is still drinkable! Hopefully we won't discover any vampires hiding here in the depths of Transylvania...

We will then return to our hotel in Brasov for a final night before moving on.

Days 5/6/7 - Cernat Village

This morning we will transfer to the quaint village of Cernat which was formed with the merger of two villages: Cernatu de Jos and Cernatu de Sus. Here we will stay at the Mill Garden Guesthouse, a working watermill which is also surrounded by traditional cottages. Upon our arrival we will take part in a village tour, learning about the history of the area and the people who live there. We will also visit the Haszmann Pal Etnographycal Muesum, where we will be working over the next few days. One afternoon we will make a visit to Ika Castle and hear about local legends.

Over these three days our activities will be divided between the Mill Garden Guesthouse and the Museum. At the Museum we will be assisting in the maintenance of traditional szekler houses and gates, wood carving and furniture painting, as well as making a traditional dowry chest using local paintings and carvings and traditional painting methods. These will one day be sold in the Museum shop, helping to maintain the culture and traditions of the area.

Meanwhile at the Guesthouse we will be able to take part in a wide range of activities unique to the area such as gathering medicinal plants, making bread and 'zacusca' (a local vegetable spread), making rose hip jam, collecting berries, preparing 'muraturi' (pickles), making honey based sweets and making carpets from reused materials.

It will be a busy few days which will deepen our understanding of the traditional Romanian way of life and allow us to contribute towards a valuable project which allows the local community to maintain their traditions, culture and heritage.

Day 8 - Bucharest

From the tranquil Cernat we will return today to Bucharest where we will be able to explore Romania's beautiful capital and learn about the history of the country. Top sights include Revolution Square, the former Royal Palace, the Athenaeum Concert Hall and Athenee Palace. We will also be able to explore the maze of passageways and alleys which form the old town and stop at the People's Palace, the second largest building in the world.

This evening we will enjoy a 'farewell' dinner in a traditional Bucharest restaurant before returning to our hotel for our last night in Romania.

Day 9 - Transfer to the airport

We head back to the airport for our return flight to the UK.

Important information:

It is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. While every effort will be made to follow the above schedule, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or natural events, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides.



DAYS FOR GIRLS This trip can include a session working alongside Days for Girls, a grass roots organisation aimed at giving every woman and girl access to proper feminine hygiene products and health advice. For more information look on our website: www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls



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