



# Romania Revealed: Saxon Villages, Transylvanian Cities and Byzantine Monasteries

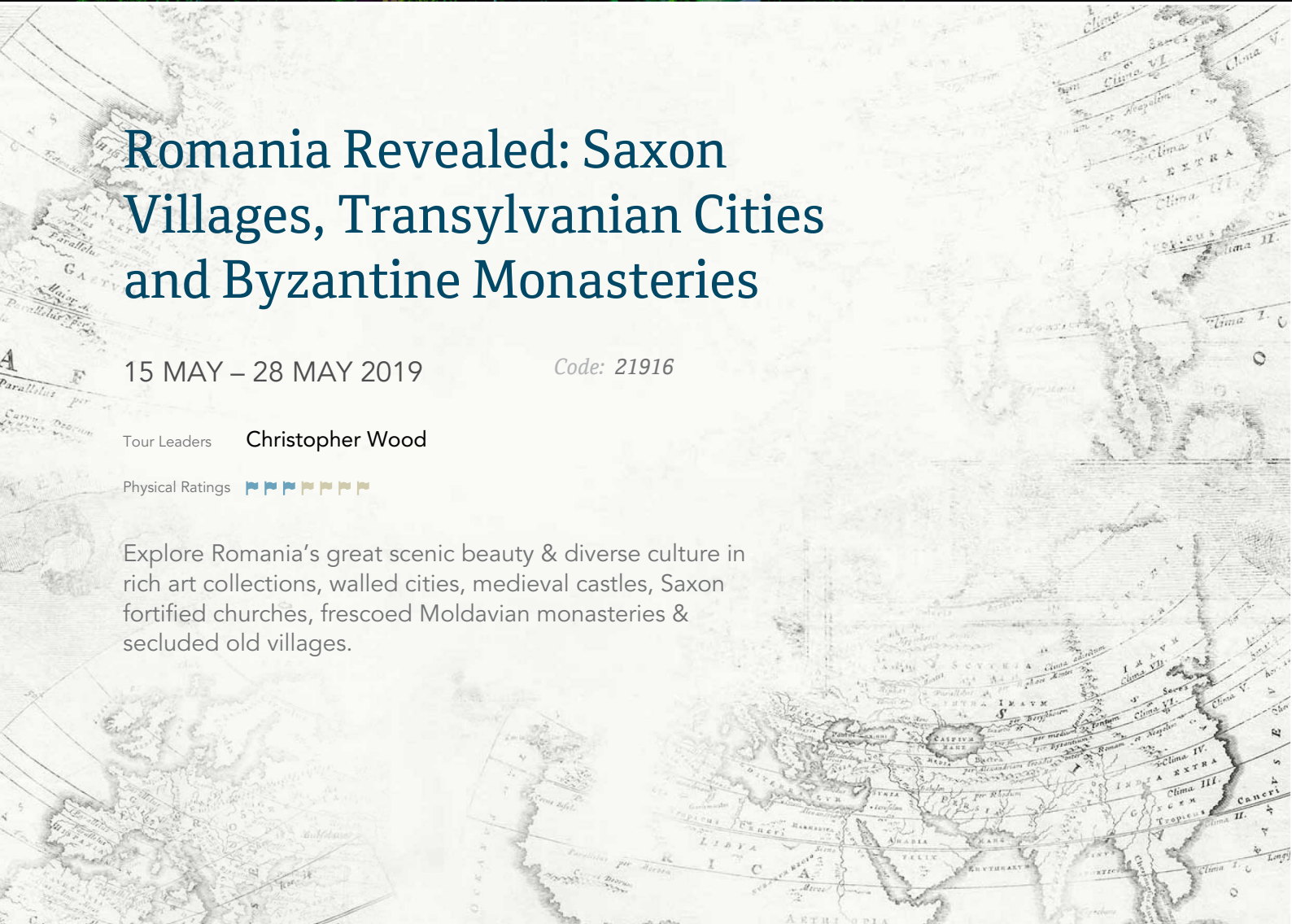
15 MAY – 28 MAY 2019

Code: 21916

Tour Leaders **Christopher Wood**

Physical Ratings 

Explore Romania's great scenic beauty & diverse culture in rich art collections, walled cities, medieval castles, Saxon fortified churches, frescoed Moldavian monasteries & secluded old villages.



## Overview

### Tour Highlights

- This cultural tour of Romania, led by Christopher Wood and arts educator and consultant Angelica Iacob, travels through little-known medieval towns and picturesque countryside. Lectures will also be provided by Dr Adrian Jones, OAM.
- Moldavia's unique heritage of painted monasteries, where every inch of both inner and outer walls is covered with brilliantly coloured late medieval and early modern Byzantine paintings.
- Centuries-old wooden churches and villages nestled in medieval agricultural landscapes of isolated Maramures; one of the richest heritages of wood architecture in the world.
- Picturesque old Saxon cities originating from the 11th-century German migration to Transylvania.
- Medieval fortified churches built by German migrants; these once existed in Western Europe but are long gone from there.
- Grand country houses and palaces like Princess Marie of Romania's Pelisor, and Mogosoaia Palace, which fuses Italian Renaissance, Ottoman and indigenous elements in a unique harmony.
- Fine collections of Romanian and European art with brilliant Eastern icons and the works of masters such as Van Eyck, Brueghel, El Greco, Rembrandt and Brancusi.
- Priceless collections of gold artefacts, dating from the Paleolithic to the 20th century.
- Beautiful mountain landscapes, with some of Europe's most ancient forests.
- Some of the best collections of old Turkish carpets outside Istanbul's Topkapi Palace and the V & A, in old Saxon churches, especially Brasov's Black Church.

### Testimonials

*The tour title is truthful, but there's so much more; old and new Bucharest, modernity and tradition sitting side by side in very beautiful countryside, fine art and wonderful music, royal castles, good food and drink and friendly people. The tour leadership and organisation was first class. I am very pleased I went and would go to Romania again in an instant. Hugh, VIC.*

*Having been used to touring independently, this was my first-ever guided tour. It certainly exceeded my expectations in terms of the knowledge and friendliness of leader Chris and local guide Angelica. The group all got along well with each other because of their professional backgrounds and their openness to learning, and willingness to interact with each other along the way. I found the whole experience very enjoyable and enriching. Jan, VIC.*

### 14-day Cultural Tour of Romania

Overnight Bucharest (3 nights) • Sibiu (3 nights) • Baia Mare (1 night) • Borsa (1 night) • Sucevita (1 night) • Piatra Neamt (1 night) • Brasov (2 nights) • Bucharest (1 night)

### Overview

This cultural tour explores Romania's fascinating complexity, arguably the most diverse culture in Europe. In Wallachia, Moravia and Transylvania, separated from each other by the densely forested Carpathian Mountains, we encounter an extraordinary and largely unchanged medieval, Renaissance and Baroque visual culture. We discover the meeting of the Latin and Germanic West with the Byzantine, Slav and Gypsy East. Medieval Saxon villages and fortified churches, Hungarian castles and towns, and German trading cities with grand Gothic cathedrals contrast with walled monasteries whose chapel walls are covered, inside and out, with brilliantly coloured Byzantine frescoes. In Romania, city and country stand in stark distinction.

Sophisticated Bucharest and Sibiu have fine museums with rich collections of works by Van Eyck, Brueghel, Rembrandt, Manet and Monet, as well as colourful Eastern icons, tapestries and intricately carved wooden doors. Saxon trading cities like Brasov, meanwhile, preserve the greatest collections of old Turkish carpets outside Istanbul. In contrast, we'll explore Romanian peasant culture, which has survived unchanged in the isolated villages of Maramures and Bucovina, with distinctive wooden churches rivalling the masterpieces of Russia and Norway. Romanian folk culture has generated what Yehudi Menuhin considered Europe's richest musical tradition and the folklorist Moses Gaster deemed the world's most distinctive corpus of folk tales. 19th-century nationalists celebrated this living past which in turn encouraged a reaction by Romanian modernist artists of world standing including Brancusi, Tristan Tsara, Marcel Iancu, Dada poets and the absurdist Ionescu. We also explore Romania's post-Soviet national identity in which the past's rich diversity is overlaid by an energetic, often edgy, modernity.



## Leaders



### Christopher Wood

Founded ASA (1977) after teaching at Melbourne & La Trobe Universities. He has led over 160 tours, pioneered cultural tourism & written books, chapters & articles on architectural history & tourism. He currently leads tours to Romania & along the Pilgrim Route to Santiago de Compostela.

Chris Wood has travelled through Romania 10 times, and is now deeply involved in arts projects in the country, including writing chapters for, and co-translating parallel text books, producing thematic architectural maps of Bucharest, and recording the English version of an audio guide to Bucharest's lost sculptures! Chris founded Australians Studying Abroad in 1977, after having taught art history at La Trobe University and the University of Melbourne. Since then he has led some 125 tours to over 45 countries in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. His photographs are published in over 250 books, and in newspapers and magazines including *The Times* and *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Time*, *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Chris has been the recipient of two Australian Research Council grants and he has published 2 books, and contributed chapters to 8 others along with many articles, centring on the theory of tourism, and cultural, art and architectural history. He has co-produced, scripted, and narrated two educational documentary films on the historic and cultural landscapes of Tuscany – *Two Tales of Tuscany* – has appeared on television in the USA, and has contributed to a number of ABC radio programs, including *Foreign Correspondent*, *Radio National's By Design*, Harvey Broadbent's *Travellers not Tourists* (ABC RN), and the ABC Classic FM series *Connections*. He has periodically returned to teach in courses at Melbourne, Monash and RMIT universities and the Rhode Island School of Design.

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### Combine this tour with

#### Bulgaria & the Black Sea: Painted Towns, Byzantine Monasteries & Thracian Treasures

1 MAY – 15 MAY 2019

#### An Adriatic Journey: from Trieste to Dubrovnik

28 APR – 15 MAY 2019

#### Great Castles, Country Houses & Gardens of Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Wales

28 MAY – 16 JUN 2019

#### Poland, the Heart of Europe: Krakow, Warsaw, Torun & Gdansk

29 MAY – 10 JUN 2019



## Itinerary

The detailed itinerary provides an outline of the proposed daily program. The daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in museum opening hours, flight schedules etc. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches and evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=evening meal.

### Bucharest - 3 nights

Day 1: Wednesday 15 May, Arrive Bucharest

- Orientation Meeting and early Welcome Dinner

Those taking ASA's 'designated' flight will arrive at Bucharest's Henri Coanda Otopeni Airport, Otopeni. After clearing passport and customs, we shall drive to our Bucharest hotel. If you are travelling independently to Bucharest, we can arrange a private transfer for you, or you should take an officially marked taxi to the [Mercure Bucharest City Center](#). There will be a short orientation meeting before we enjoy an early evening meal together. (Overnight Bucharest) D

Day 2: Thursday 16 May, Bucharest

- Morning coach tour of central Bucharest
- National Museum of Romanian History
- National Museum of Art of Romania: European masterpieces
- Romanian Athenaeum (exterior)
- Visit and drinks at Vasile Grigori Museum

Bucharest, first mentioned in documents in 1459, evolved from a 14th-century settlement that was part of a chain of fortresses built across the Danube plain to protect Wallachia from the Turks. In the 18th and early 19th centuries it was subject to Phanariot Greeks, who ruled as clients of the Divine Porte. In 1862, when

Moldavia and Wallachia were united, it became Romania's first national capital. Bucharest has a unique urban form. Unlike many Western European capitals it was never surrounded, and therefore constricted, by a city wall; the Turks would not allow the fortification of Wallachian cities. Although Bucharest does possess a tightly packed historic core, the Lipschani district, most of the city developed over a wide area, its beautiful 15th and 16th century monasteries, inns and palaces separated by swathes of countryside; Bucharest's early plan seems to have been based loosely upon the Italian schema for an 'ideal city', originating in European notions of Jerusalem. In the 17th century, more churches were built, and in the 18th century many villas were added. The Phanariot Greeks built houses based upon the homesteads and inns of the Christian quarter of Istanbul, with deeply overhanging eaves and courtyards. The Phanariots also introduced public squares – *maidan* – of the type that is seen throughout Asia (eg Isfahan). The creation of the first Romanian state in 1862, and the subsequent incorporation of Transylvania after WWI, led to two periods of great creative energy, seen in literature, music, art and architecture, and reflected in the physical development of the capital. In both phases of development buildings began to fill the green spaces between the older monuments. In the earlier phase, Bucharest gained the title 'Little Paris' in part due to its magnificent monuments in the French style like the Bucharest Athenaeum (1888). At this time also, a fascinating Romanian National Style emerged. This 'Brancovan' style, characterised by picturesque arcades with intricate arches, was based upon architecture from the time of Constantine. The interwar period saw a flowering of early modernism in Bucharest, exemplified by the houses of Marcel Iancu. During the Communist period massive monuments like Ceausescu's House of the Republic (now Palace of Parliament) were imposed upon the city.

We shall visit the world's largest building after the Pentagon, but shall also see lovely old churches, old palaces, and fine Beaux-Arts, Art Nouveau and Brancovan, and modernist architecture. Central Bucharest also retains lovely parks and lots and lots of small, leafy, out-of-the-way cafés.

After touring central Bucharest we shall visit the National Museum of Romanian History. Its great treasure is an extraordinary collection of gold artefacts dating from as early as the Palaeolithic period (600,000-6000 BC) and covering ancient Dacia, the Migration Period, the emergence of the medieval Moldavian and Wallachian principalities, Gothic and Renaissance Transylvania, the Phanariot period, the emergence of the National monarchy, and the 20th century. The other exhibit that we shall view in this museum is the great collection of plaster casts taken from Trajan's Column, in Rome, picturing Trajan's invasion of Dacia (101-102 and 105-106 AD). This priceless gift was given to Romania by the Italian government. The many plaster casts allow you to explore close up the vast, intricate relief cycle depicting the Roman army's operations in this region.

We shall eat lunch amid rich wood sculpture and panelling, gilt and painted walls, fine ironwork and stained glass in the wonderful Neo Gothic Caru' cu Bere restaurant that was founded in 1879, and has remained unchanged since it was moved to its present location in 1899. The Caru' cu Bere will give you a taste of Romanian café life during the late 19th and early 20th century when Bucharest was the most vibrant cultural centre of Eastern Europe.

We shall spend some of the afternoon in the rich European collection of the National Museum of Art of Romania. This museum, housed in the former Royal Palace, is composed of a wing dedicated to Romanian art and a European wing whose fine collection, including works by Brueghel, Bronzino, Tintoretto, Cranach, Zurbarán, El Greco, Rembrandt, Monet, Pissarro, Signac and Sisley, derives from the 19th-century Royal Collection.

After exploring this collection we shall view the exterior of Bucharest's Athenaeum. Its magnificent opera hall, designed by the French architect Albert Galleron, is arguably the finest 19th-century opera hall in Eastern Europe. The building is home to the George Enescu Philharmonic, named after Romania's greatest



composer; Yehudi Menuhin was his most famous pupil.

We shall end this afternoon nearby in the fascinating Vasile Grigori Museum, where you will explore the collection of this important Romanian modern artist. Drinks and snacks will be served at the museum. (Overnight Bucharest) BL

### Day 3: Friday 17 May, Bucharest

- Mogosoaia Palace
- Lunch at Stirbey Palace
- National Museum of Art of Romania: Romanian Collection
- Theodor Aman House Museum
- Special Dinner at the Restaurant Savart

Just outside the city we shall endeavour to visit Mogosoaia Palace. Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu built Mogosoaia (1698-1702), one of the most beautiful and distinctive palaces in Eastern Europe. It is in the Brancovan or *Brâncovenesc* style, the revival of which we have noted in 19th-century Bucharest architecture. The palace has a symmetrical plan inspired by the Italian Renaissance, but is adorned with wonderful galleries with intricate arches, ascribed variously to the influence of Venetian and Ottoman architecture. Although inspired by foreign models, these elements are combined in an utterly unique way, reflecting the fascinating syncretism of Romanian culture.

Nearby we enjoy lunch at the beautiful Stirbey Palace, which encompasses a wide lawn, church, chapel, summer pavilion, park, water tower and lake. The sumptuous palace in the style of a Swiss hunting lodge with fine Neo-Gothic elements, was built for Barbu Dimitrie Stirbei, prince of Wallachia, in 1850. Its fine Neo-Byzantine chapel was completed at the end of the century.

After lunch we return to the centre of the city to visit the National Museum of Art of Romania, where we shall explore the extensive Romanian art collection. This includes icons and iconostases, rich textiles and intricately carved wooden thrones and doors from Orthodox churches and monasteries, courtly garb and decorative objects from the Moldavian and Wallachian principalities, Gothic treasures from Catholic Transylvania, as well as a very significant 19th-century and early modernist painting and sculpture collection. The medieval collections reflect Romania's fertile mix of Eastern and Western cultural elements. The 19th-century collection begins with portraits in which men are clothed in the fashions of the Ottoman court, whereas women follow French fashion. There is also a large corpus of Romanian Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Modernist works, whose fine quality shows the country's close links to Paris. Modernist artists include the famous Romanian artists Constantin Brancusi and the Dadaist Marcel Iancu (Marcel Janko). This rich collection, of the works of artists like Nicolae Grigorescu, Theodor Aman, and Matisse's old friend Theodor Pallady, like Bucharest's architecture and Enescu's music, show the cultural vitality unleashed by Romania's attainment of national unity.

Our day concludes with a visit to the lovely small house museum of one of Romania's finest 19th-century artists, Theodor Aman. After travelling to Crimea during the Crimean War, where he painted *The Battle of Alma*, Theodor gained a scholarship to study in Paris, where he was much influenced by the Barbizon School. Some of the most fascinating works in the house museum's collection are small sketches painted on the lids of cigar boxes, which are very like those of Australia's Heidelberg School.

This evening we dine at the contemporary gourmet Restaurant Savart, where chef Manuela Paraschivescu has created an eclectic menu with influences from all around the world. (Overnight Bucharest) BLD

## Sibiu - 3 nights

Day 4: Saturday 18 May, Bucharest – Curtea de Arges – Cozia – Sibiu

- Biserica Domneasca St Nicolae, Curtea de Arges
- Episcopal Church, Curtea de Arges
- Cozia Monastery

This morning we depart Bucharest early by private coach for the Wallachian Royal shrine of Curtea de Arges (Court on the River Arges), where we shall visit two extremely important and beautiful churches. Curtea de Arges is located in the upland region of Wallachia called Muntenia, on the southern verge of the Transylvanian Alps. The Biserica Domneasca St Nicolae is a stunning small Byzantine construction variously dated between the 12th and 14th centuries. It was modelled upon the churches of Constantinople that take their name from the Comnenus dynasty (1081-1185). It is liberally decorated with a large cycle of frescoes, whose style and iconography, like that of the church of St Saviour in Chora in Istanbul, is based upon the *Erminii*, a Byzantine manual that laid down strict rules for the creation of images.

After lunch in Curtea de Arges we shall visit the early 16th-century Episcopal Church founded by Prince Neagoe Basarab (1512-1521). This church, with whom the tragic poem of the builder Master Manole is associated, perhaps best of all represents the fascinating syncretism of Romanian culture. To a Byzantine triple-apsed east end is linked a grand narthex – a royal mausoleum – giving the church a basilical plan usually associated with the West. Its extraordinarily intricate façade architecture, however, is even more fascinating. It has many Byzantine elements and Islamic motifs that seem to derive from Persian art, as well as distinctive Romanian ‘barley-sugar’ cupolas.

On our drive north into Transylvania this afternoon you will gain your first taste of the awesome scenery of Romania. We follow a narrow valley through the Carpathians into Saxon Transylvania and along the way we visit Cozia Monastery. This little-visited but lovely complex has two churches; a monastery church and infirmary church (1542). The monastery church was completed in 1390 by Serbian architects and is modelled on the churches of the Morava Valley. Trefoil in plan, with a long rectangular narthex, it is tall and narrow. The exterior walls are decorated with filigree latticework, decorative tiles, blind arcades and classical columns. Influences for these motifs are as diverse as Classical Greek and Islamic forms.

After visiting Cozia, we drive through the steadily narrowing Olt River Pass into Transylvania. Transylvania has a totally different cultural landscape to Wallachia. This is the territory of German villages and fortified churches. The latter are medieval complexes with a church surrounded by up to four rings of walls watched over by martial towers. These religious citadels protected the people and their livestock from Turkish and other incursions in a land which was constantly contested by outside powers. Much of the region’s wealth derived in the Middle Ages from the migration of Germans who brought with them technology such as looms, giving birth to a thriving textiles industry. Textiles were also traded, and one fascinating local custom was that the inner walls of churches are often hung with old, extremely rare Turkish carpets.

We shall encounter a number of these fortified churches, called ‘Real Citadels of Faith’. The Germans built their towns along the main trade routes that have long, continuous streetscapes of coloured façades. Wide, arched entrances to courtyards puncture these façades. Goods were stored and agricultural implements, animals and produce kept in the courtyards. With its fortified churches and distinctive towns this region makes you feel as though you have been transported back to late medieval Germany, into a Brueghel painting. (Overnight Sibiu) BLD

Day 5: Sunday 19 May, Sibiu



- Orientation tour of Sibiu
- Council Tower and other medieval towers
- Brukenthal Museum
- Afternoon at leisure
- Evening Talk on Romanian History and Culture

We spend the day in Sibiu, a Transylvanian town founded by medieval German migrants. Its oldest street dates from the 12th-century migration of Flemings, Frankonians and Saxons to Transylvania. Sibiu's houses are prettily coloured with steep roofs punctured by quaint openings that look like half-closed eyes; these vents were used to air goods stored in their attics. Sibiu is also the home of ASTRA (Asociatia Transilvenene de Arta si Literatura), a society founded in 1861 to encourage Romanians in Transylvania to appreciate and explore their own culture. ASTRA founded important museums and many of the region's greatest writers were members.

We visit the fine city square, beautifully restored when Sibiu became 'Capital of European Culture' for 2007; Forbes lists Sibiu as the 8th-most idyllic place in the world to live. At one end is the medieval council tower, which was both a centre for urban life and a symbol of the city's pride and independence.

We shall also visit Romania's second finest art collection, after the National Museum of Art of Romania (Bucharest). After a decade living in Vienna as Governor of the Great Principality of Transylvania (1777-1787), Baron Samuel von Brukenthal returned to Sibiu with his collections, and the Hochmeister's Calendar for the year 1790 mentions among the attractions of the city a painting collection including 800 paintings displayed in the halls of the Brukenthal Palace. Over time this collection was enriched. The collection of European paintings originally belonging to Brukenthal now includes around 1200 works from major schools from the 15th to the 19th century. The Flemish and Dutch schools are represented by masters from centres such as Anvers, Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Amsterdam, Leiden and Utrecht. The pride of this collection is a group of paintings by Hans Memling, Jan van Eyck, Pieter Brueghel the Elder and Pieter Bruegel the Younger. Masters such as Lucas Cranach the Elder represent the Germans and Austrians. The Italian school, although made up of a relatively small number of works, nevertheless includes renowned artists: Botticelli, Tullio Lombardo, Titian, Paris Bordone, Sebastiano Ricci and Alessandro Magnasco. The afternoon will be at leisure. This evening, there will be an illustrated talk on Romanian history and culture in the hotel. (Overnight Sibiu) B

#### Day 6: Monday 20 May, Sibiu – Biertan – Sighisoara – Apold – Cisnadia – Sibiu

- Fortified church of Biertan
- Fortified church of Axente Sever (time permitting).
- Apafi Manor
- Medieval Citadel of Sighisoara
- Fortified church of Apold
- Fortified church of Cisnadia

Today we explore the development of the Transylvanian fortified church and city. Biertan is one of the finest, most complete, extant examples of a fortified church. It stands on a hill above its village, approached by a long covered wooden staircase and defended by high walls and fortress towers. Within the fine Gothic church hang old guild banners (the guilds of the town were responsible for defending the enceinte as well as furnishing the church) and there is also a beautiful altarpiece. The treasury of the church is protected by a powerful old wood and iron door that has an extraordinarily intricate locking system so unique that it was exhibited at a 19th-century Paris exhibition.

After visiting Biertan we shall, if time permits, visit the lovely Apafi Manor, which has been restored by the Mihai Emenescu Trust. It was built by the Hungarian princely family, the Apafi, probably in the 15th century. It is most unusual to have a Hungarian manor house in a Saxon village. Hungarians seldom governed Saxon communities. Archaeology reveals that the Manor House was built in several phases. There was a house on the site in the 15th century. The present house was built, in its original form, by (or possibly before) the 17th century. It appears to have been altered in the 18th-19th centuries. This manor lay in ruins until the Mihai Emenescu Foundation, which numbers among its past and present board members Patrick Leigh Fermor, John Julius Norwich, Yehudi Menuin and Sir Stephen Runciman, took it over and restored it as a small guesthouse; the patron of the Foundation, who has been deeply involved in restoring a number of Saxon monuments, is Prince Charles.

We shall spend the middle of the day exploring Sighisoara, one of the most visually exciting fortified towns in Romania. It is made doubly romantic by its association with the Pied Piper of Hamelin, who is believed to have brought the children of the ungrateful citizens to the myriad passages and catacombs beneath the citadel. Set on a rock surrounded by the 'silver coils of the Tarnava Mare [River]' as well as by deeply forested hills, Sighisoara is the most complete fortress city in Transylvania. Strong towers, each built in a distinctive style by a different guild of the town, protect its walls. Of particular interest is the Clock Tower that has an intricate clock with seven oak figures symbolising days of the week that used to appear on the hour. These figures contain a marvellous mix of references to Greek mythology, local legend and astrology. The oldest private building in the citadel is the 15th-century house of Vlad Dracul, father of Vlad the Impaler, Prince of Wallachia, who may have been born here. There is an old German school with Baroque frescoes and a church with magnificent paintings and fine altarpieces, one of them by Johannes Stoss, the son of the famous Nuremburg sculptor, Viet Stoss, a leading figure of the Northern Renaissance.

We return to Sibiu via two more lovely fortified churches, Apold and Cisnadie. The former is located on high ground at the centre of Apold village. It has a double defensive wall, towers and a fortified belfry. PLEASE NOTE: The keys to many fortified churches (other than Biertan, which is a public monument) are held by people in the towns in which the churches are sited. Our access to these churches therefore depends upon their availability on the day of our visit. Of the four churches listed above, we shall endeavour to visit at least two. Tonight we shall dine together at 'The Old Sibiu Restaurant'. (Overnight Sibiu) BLD

### Baia Mare - 1 night

Day 7: Tuesday 21 May, Sibiu – Cluj-Napoca – Baia Mare

- St Michael's Church, Cluj-Napoca
- Bontida Bánffy Castle

Today we drive through the heart of Transylvania to Baia Mare in the far north of Romania. Along the way we visit Cluj-Napoca, a city whose form, like that of Sibiu, took shape when German migrants, brought here by Hungarian kings to protect the south-eastern flank of their Danubian kingdom, imported the urban and rural cultures of the Rhineland and Flanders. Their industriousness as cultivators, craftsmen and merchants made Cluj-Napoca a thriving centre. In the 15th century Hungarians arrived, inflecting the old German town with Magyar forms. In the 18th century it was the turn of the Habsburgs, whose Austrian subjects transformed the city with grand Baroque monuments.

We shall have lunch in Cluj and shall visit St Michael's, the largest Gothic church in Romania. After lunch, we shall visit Bontida Bánffy Castle, a grand estate of the powerful Hungarian Bánffy family with different sections in the Renaissance, Baroque, Neoclassical and Gothic Revival styles. The palace was heavily damaged during World War II and is gradually being restored with the patronage of Prince Charles and

Princess Margareta of Romania. (Overnight Baia Mare) BLD

### Borsa - 1 night

Day 8: Wednesday 22 May, Maramures Region: Baia Mare – Sapanta – Bârsana – Rozalvea – Ieud Deal – Bogdan Voda – Borsa

- Merry Cemetery, Sapanta
- Wooden churches & villages of Maramures region

Today we drive from Baia Mare to Borsa. These towns stand at either end of one of the most extraordinary cultural landscapes in Europe. The Maramures region constitutes a group of isolated valleys, skirted by mountains and deep forests, which harbour a culture distinguished by its astonishing continuity with the past. Part of its population is even believed by some scholars to be the final pure remnant of the ancient Dacians.

Scattered through the valleys are towns and villages with wooden churches that constitute the densest and richest collection of traditional wooden architecture in the world, many of it preserving medieval forms. Oak and pine houses, built from the wood of nearby forests, reflect styles that once predominated throughout Eurasia, from northern Europe to Anatolia. Even more distinctive are the region's churches. These also evolved from a general idiom (seen from Scandinavia to Croatia) but took on specific forms in Maramures such as incredibly tall, elegant steeples, double-skirted roofs, and shingle cladding. These churches, moreover, contain a priceless heritage of interior wall paintings that mix Byzantine, Latin and folk elements.

In the meadows themselves, low soil ridges that are often mistaken for ancient terracing serve to separate small land holdings, as they once did in the medieval West. Set against a backdrop of mountain and forest, inflected by exquisite wooden buildings, they constitute an unsurpassable landscape of beauty. The people of Maramures have also preserved traditional clothing styles and distinctive festivals of which there are few equals. We shall drive through a number of valleys today, visiting communities and exploring villages and churches.

A particularly idiosyncratic element of local folk culture is Sapanta's so-called 'Merry Cemetery' in which wooden carved and painted grave markers depict local inhabitants with inscribed details of their lives; some of the inscriptions are hilarious, recounting the occupants' foibles! (Overnight Borsa) BLD

### Sucevita - 1 night

Day 9: Thursday 23 May, Borsa – Câmpulung Moldovenesc – Vama – Moldovita – Sucevita

- Wood Art Museum, Câmpulung Moldovenesc
- Vama: Art of painting eggs
- Monastery of Moldovita
- Monastery of Sucevita

This morning we depart Borsa for Gura Humorului in the Moldavian region of Bucovina via the famous monasteries of Voronet and Humor. Once into Moravia we follow a small, fast flowing river through historic villages like Ciocanesti. Village houses here are decorated with brightly coloured painted patterns reminiscent of the stitched designs on local textiles.

In the mid-morning we visit the Wood Art Museum at Câmpulung Moldovenesc. This town, whose name means 'Moldavian Long Field', has for centuries been a centre for lumber and possesses a museum that is



unique in Europe. Twenty rooms displaying every imaginable artefact, including shoes, beehives, butter churns, farm implements, furniture, animal traps, large sleds and even 300-year old wagons, all made of wood, provide a vivid visual narrative of peasant life. The myriad objects in this wonderful little museum form a telling companion to Romania's fascinating local architecture and extraordinary corpus of folktales and rich musical tradition.

We shall have lunch in the town of Vama, where we will be introduced to the Romanian art of painting eggs.

After lunch we drive to the first of our famous painted monasteries, Moldovita. In the 14th century, hermits began to inhabit the forests covering the hills along the Moldovita Valley and the Cimirna Rivulet. Here a small wooden church was built, and the hermitage surrounding it coalesced into an early monastic community. This constituted the first foundation on the site of the later institution of Petru Rares Voivode (1532). A fortress with powerful walls, corner and entrance towers now protects a magnificent complex. In the centre of this complex stands a tripartite plan church, its walls covered by frescoes like the pages of an open book.

The dominant colour at Moldovita is a sunny yellow gold. Moldovita has a distinctive architectural character. The nave is unusually large and incorporates two rooms. The tomb room (*tainita*) is hidden because it was there that the treasure of the monastery, its plate, vestments and other goods, were secreted in times of danger. The church's murals were finished in 1537, five years after its construction. The starlit vault of the pronaos and two icons of Holy Virgin show the Moldovita painter's masterly fusion of Western and Eastern art. The Moldovita complex includes the *Clisiarnita*, the house of Voivode and his family (or possibly a house for important guests). It is a monumental construction on the north-west side of the complex, where some of the church's treasures were kept. Sacred vessels, votive lamps, fine embroidery, manuscripts and icons were kept here for centuries. In the north-west corner of the enceinte rises a tower named *Clisiarnita* with a circular turret and winding stair. Its high roof increases the impression of verticality.

We continue to Sucevita. Ieremia Gheorghe and Simion Movila built this monastery in 1585. It is composed of a large fortified yard, with high walls and towers, boyard (aristocratic) and monastic houses. The church at the centre of this ensemble is a masterpiece of Moldavian medieval architecture. Sucevita's paintings (1601), covering its interior and exterior walls, are one of the most valuable corpuses of Romanian painting. With them the great epoch of Moldavian exterior wall painting ended. One of Sucevita's most unforgettable scenes depicts a long ladder running diagonally across the wall to heaven, climbed by monks assisted by angels. This is a metaphor for their struggle against sin. A number of the aspirants fall between the ladder's rungs and are dragged down to hell by demons. Above the ladder is a vast choir of angels, their wings forming startling colour rhythms across the church wall. (Overnight Sucevita) BLD

### **Piatra Neamt - 1 night**

Day 10: Friday 24 May, Sucevita – Arbor – Humor – Voronet – Neamt – Piatra Neamt

- Arbor Church
- Monastery of Humor
- Monastery of Voronet
- Monastery of Neamt

Today we visit three more of the magnificent painted churches and monasteries for which Bucovina is justly famous. These constitute one of the most significant corpuses of religious buildings in Eastern Europe. The monasteries were built in the lands of the Moldavian realm, which prospered for a short time due, in large part, to its inaccessibility. It is a place of high, densely forested mountains and deep valleys, a fragmented

topography that was difficult for foreign hegemonies like the Habsburgs and the Turks to control. This unique landscape, which favoured local rulers, provides an unforgettable setting for the richly painted churches we shall visit.

Our first visit is to the lovely small church of Arbor, which is particularly noted for the Italian influence upon its paintings. Italian trade with the Black Sea passed through Moldavia and along this route came Italian artists. Whether by an Italian or a Romanian heavily influenced by Italians, the paintings of Arbor's west end are noted for their powerful spatial organisation, showing that the artist had mastered the style of artists like Giotto.

We next drive to Humor Monastery, another important medieval monastery, founded in 1530 by a Moldavian *boyar* (aristocrat), Toader Bubuiog, and his wife Anastasia, during the reign of Petru Rares. Close by are the ruins of an earlier church from the reign of Alexander the Kind (1400-1432). Humor is architecturally important because it was the first foundation to have an open porch and *tainita* (a hiding room) above the room of tombs where church treasures were hidden. The open porch leads to a narthex and thence to a nave, which is separated from the circular apse by a beautiful ancient iconostasis carved in wood.

The interior and exterior walls of Humor Monastery church are covered with frescoes in the Byzantine style. In the narthex is a series of images representing the *Synaxary* (Calendar), the icon of the *Assumption of the Virgin*, the icon of the *Akathist Hymn of the Virgin*, and portraits of the great Christian hermits and angels. On the vault of the room of tombs are scenes from the *Life of the Virgin*. Portraits of saints and the monastery's donors and a cycle of *Christ's Passion and Entombment* decorate the nave walls and on the vault is *Christ Pantocrator*. The altar with its sacred images completes this precious ensemble of fresco-paintings. The apse vault bears images of the *Virgin with Christ*, the *Last Supper*, saints and Church leaders, following Orthodox iconographic tradition. The delicate, untouched exterior frescoes, the masterpiece of the monastery, are by Toma Zugravul (1535). They depict the *Annunciation*, the *Tree of Jesse* and the *Last Judgement*. Particularly interesting are depictions of the siege of Constantinople.

Our final visit for the morning is to the monastery of Voronet, built in 1488, and dedicated to St George the Martyr. A pious hermit, Daniil, and Prince Stephen the Great were responsible for its foundation, a princely token of gratitude for divine intervention in a battle against the Turks. Daniil became the first abbot, and is buried in the narthex. In 1547, Bishop Grigore Rosca, whose tomb is also here, added the porch and the exterior paintings. Monastic life at Voronet was interrupted in 1785 when Bucovina was annexed to the Habsburg Empire. It became a working monastery again in 1991 with the arrival of a community of nuns who combine their life of prayer and worship with housekeeping and farm work, running a painting workshop and providing guided tours of the monastery for visitors. The paintings in Voronet's porch represent the Christian Orthodox Calendar. Above the entrance, in the narthex, lies a superb icon – *Dulcea Imbratisare* (the Sweet Embrace). The monastery's votive painting is found in the nave. Stephen the Great, the Lady Maria-Voichita and Bogdan, his heir, are depicted in the act of donating the monastery to Christ, through the mediation of St. George the Martyr. The imperial doors of the gilded yew-wood iconostasis are a masterpiece of wooden sculpture, as is the throne of the Metropolitan Bishop Grigore Rosca.

The artistic climax of the building is, however, the *Last Judgement* on the exterior west wall. Voronet's colour is a unique blue, seen especially in the background of the *Tree of Jesse*. Graeco-Latin philosophers are depicted in the borders to the left and right of the *Last Judgement*. On the left of the entrance door lies the haloed image of St Daniil the Hermit. Above the door is the beautiful *Deisis Icon*. It depicts Christ as Judge flanked by Mary and St John the Baptist who both mediate on behalf of the visitor. The paintings in the nave and at the altar were blackened from the smoke of hundreds of years of burning candles, and are at present undergoing restoration.

We shall eat lunch before driving south to the Monastery of Neamt. Neamt does not have the exterior frescoes of the other monasteries we have visited. It does, however, have beautiful polychrome shaped brickwork enlivened by coloured glazed ceramic shapes set into its walls. The monastery is particularly important as the early royal monastery of the great ruler, Stephen the Great. He established an important community here that included important schools of manuscript illumination and textiles production. After visiting Neamt we drive to our hotel in Piatra Neamt. (Overnight Piatra Neamt) BLD

### Brasov - 2 nights

Day 11: Saturday 25 May, Piatra Neamt – Bicz Canyon – Prejmer – Brasov

- Bicz Canyon
- Fortified Church, Prejmer

Today we drive south through the Carpathian Mountains via the awesome Bicz Canyon (*Cheilele Bicz* – ‘the Keys of Bicz’) to Eastern Transylvania.

After lunch near the Canyon, we drive south through the open grasslands of one of the most beautiful areas of Romania, a fascinating region of beautiful villages, probably founded in the 14th century for the Székely families who had arrived in this particular area in the late 12th and 13th centuries. The Székely people have remained here to this day. They speak a dialect of Hungarian and use strange runes that you can see on the elaborate carved gateposts of their houses. The history and ethnicity of the Székelys is uncertain. Perhaps the most cogent explanation is that they were a border people moved south to create a southern buffer by the Magyar (Hungarian) Árpád dynasty. But it is also sometimes argued that they arrived in Romania before the Magyars settled the Hungarian plain and were once part of either the Hun or Avar migratory groups. Diverse explanations of their origins reinforce our appreciation of the extraordinary complexity and diversity of Romanian history and culture.

Near our destination, Brasov, we visit the Fortified Church in Prejmer, which is considered the equal of Biertan. The thick, high walls of this 15th-century complex surround three courtyards, in the largest of which is an austere Gothic church. Prejmer is more elaborate than Biertan and its position on a plain required that it have higher walls. On their inside face are a large number of cells reached by interesting wooden walkways. These cells acted both as residences and storerooms for the surrounding community that retreated to this fortress in times of danger. Some stores were, in fact, kept here permanently in case the locals were surprised by an attack and did not have time to stock their citadel. (Overnight Brasov) BLD

Day 12: Sunday 26 May, Brasov – Sinaia – Brasov

- Peles Palace Castle, Sinaia
- Pelisor Palace, Sinaia
- Black Church and its collection of Turkish carpets, Brasov

Early this morning, we drive into the Carpathian Mountains to the beautiful mountain resort of Sinaia, where we visit the great 19th-century palace complex of the Romanian royal family. Peles Palace Castle is a massive, late 19th-century German Neo-Renaissance fantasy, built as a summer retreat for King Carol I and Queen Elisabeta. Its extraordinary historicist interiors range from Gothic halls to an Islamic Revival section inspired by the Alhambra, Granada.

We shall also visit the nearby palace of Pelisor, built for Carol’s nephew and heir, Prince Ferdinand, and his consort, Marie of Romania, granddaughter of Queen Victoria. Marie of Romania was an extraordinary



woman. She was a botanist, artist and writer of children's books, and a keen patron of the Romanian National Revival. Although less grand than Peles, Pelesor is far prettier. It is light and airy, with lovely interiors not unlike those of Edwardian England.

In the late afternoon we return to the proud Saxon city of Brasov to visit the Black Church. We have now left the lands of the Székely and entered a Saxon realm. This area was heavily influenced by the Teutonic Knights, some of whom came south to Romania (whilst others pursued their 'crusade' to take Catholicism to the north-east – and founded Prussia). The Teutonic Knights, a military order that had developed during the Third Crusade, built great fortresses in this region. They were finally ousted by the Hungarian monarchy when they became too independent and powerful. Brasov prospered through its location on the main trade route between Moldavia and Wallachia. Its greatest treasure is the Black Church, named for the discolouration of its walls by fire during the Austrian invasion (1689). It is a typical Germanic hall church and its rich interior has fascinating paintings of guild insignia and one of the world's greatest collections of Turkish carpets, donated to the church by Armenian merchants returning from the East.

The Brasov display is, in fact, the best of many collections of oriental textiles in Romania, and reflects the fact that this region was one of the major conduits of oriental riches to the markets of Northern Europe; carpets depicted in the paintings of artists like Jan Van Eyck and Hans Holbein reflect this extensive trade. The Black Church collection, which hangs from its galleries, within its choir stalls and along its walls, is said to equal those of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. (Overnight Brasov) BLD

### Bucharest - 1 night

Day 13: Monday 27 May, Brasov – Bucharest

- Village Museum
- Art Collections Museum
- Farewell Dinner

We drive this morning to Bucharest. When Romania attained nationhood its frenetic urban life contrasted markedly with the culture of the vast majority of its people, who lived in villages, husbanding their flocks and tilling the land. This enduring peasant culture, unchanged for centuries, kept alive local traditions that had disappeared or were fast disappearing from more industrialised countries. This meant that 19th and 20th-century Romanian folklorists, writers, composers and artists were able to document traditional life with a richness and profundity that is unequalled elsewhere.

It is partly for this reason that Bucharest's Village Museum, with an extraordinary heritage of traditional village buildings, is believed by many to be the best of its kind in the world. We shall visit this outdoor museum. Most foreigners have no idea of the extent, quality and variety of Romania's art collections.

The afternoon will be at leisure. There will be an optional visit to the Art Collections Museum, a complex that houses a large number of 19th- and 20th century works for which there are no permanent homes. There will be a farewell dinner in Bucharest. (Overnight Bucharest BLD)

Day 14: Tuesday 28 May, Bucharest (tour ends)

- Airport transfer for participants departing on the ASA 'designated' flight

Our tour ends in Bucharest. Those travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight will be transferred to the airport.

If not, travellers may take a taxi or arrange a transfer with ASA, or stay on to see more of this fascinating country. Please contact ASA if you require further assistance. B

## Accommodation

### 14-day Cultural Tour of Romania

Accommodation is in 3-4 star hotels, in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom. Each hotel is centrally located within the cities that we visit, and has been chosen as the best available. Rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Single Supplement.

- Bucharest (3 nights): 4-star Mercure Bucharest City Center – a modern hotel located in the city centre, 350m from the National Museum of Art of Romania; various luxury stores, shops, restaurants and cafes can be reached within a 10-minute walk. [www.mercure.com](http://www.mercure.com)
- Sibiu (3 nights): 4-star Ramada Sibiu Hotel – a modern hotel located 50m from the historical town centre. [www.ramadasibiu.ro](http://www.ramadasibiu.ro)
- Baia Mare (1 night): 4-star Hotel Carpati – a modern hotel located in the commercial and cultural centre. [www.hotelcarpati.ro](http://www.hotelcarpati.ro)
- Borsa (1 night): 3-star Hotel Victoria – an alpine-style hotel, located in Borsa Maramures, 400m outside the town centre, on the edge of a pine forest. [hotelvictoria.in-romania.ro](http://hotelvictoria.in-romania.ro)
- Sucevita (1 night): 4-star Popas Turistic Bucovina – hotel and cabin complex in hills outside Sucevita set in a colourful garden. [www.popas.ro](http://www.popas.ro)
- Piatra Neamt (1 night): 4-star Central Plaza Hotel – modern hotel located in the commercial centre. [centralplazahotel.ro](http://centralplazahotel.ro)
- Brasov (2 nights): 5/4-star Aro Palace Hotel – a modern hotel overlooking the Tampa Mountain and the medieval historic quarter of Brasov. [www.aro-palace.ro](http://www.aro-palace.ro)
- Bucharest (1 night): 4-star Mercure Bucharest City Center – a modern hotel located in the city centre, 350m from the National Museum of Art of Romania; various luxury stores, shops, restaurants and cafes can be reached within a 10-minute walk. [www.mercure.com](http://www.mercure.com)

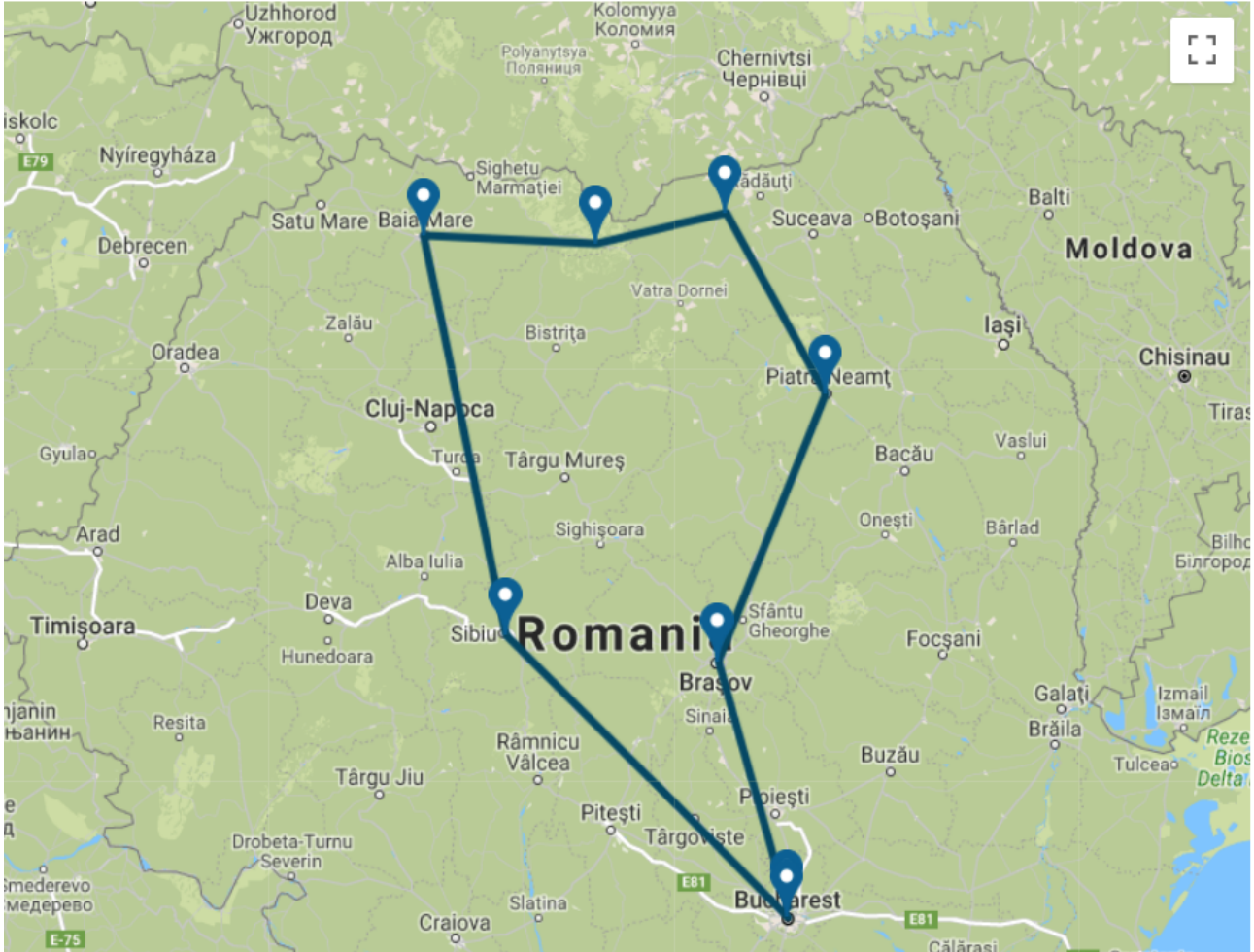
*Note: hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

### Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In most hotels, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.



## Tour Map



## Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$5690.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 July 2018

AUD \$5890.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$650.00 Single Supplement

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares please contact ASA for further information.

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom in 3-4 star hotels
- Lunches and evening meals indicated in the tour itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=evening meal
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals include bottled water only.
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports)
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour handbook
- Local guides
- Entrance fees
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Bucharest, Bucharest-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance



## Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 14-day Cultural Tour of Romania involves:

- Visiting some sites and towns (eg. Biertan & Sighisoara) that require walking up steps or uphill on uneven/cobbled streets. Cobbled streets can be very slippery during rain showers!
- A moderate amount of walking during site visits and standing during museum and other site visits.
- Extensive coach travel, sometimes on winding mountain roads; road conditions are variable.
- This tour includes the use of audio headsets which amplify the voice of your guide (despite noisy surroundings). This technology also allows you to move freely during site visits without missing any information.

Other considerations:

- 3- to 4-star hotels with seven hotel changes (some hotels do not have elevators).
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present

any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

**Please note:** it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

### Practical Information

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## Booking Conditions

### ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$500.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

### Passport Details

All participants must provide no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the program a photocopy of the front page of their current passport.

### Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In most hotels, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.





# Reservation Application

TOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TOUR DATES \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

## Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr  Mrs  Ms  Miss  Dr  Other \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ GENDER Male  Female

Passport Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed  I'm renewing my passport  ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

## Travel Plans

I wish ASA to book my airfare, please contact me to discuss my options.  Business Class  Economy Class

I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Frequent Flyer \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Airline Seat preference \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ (please note request only)

## Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like:  a twin-bedded room  a double-bedded room  a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling:  on my own  with a friend/family member Travel Companion \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish  poultry  red meat  dairy products

eggs  pork  nuts

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence  Postal Mail  Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Traveller \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_



The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at [www.asatours.com.au](http://www.asatours.com.au)
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. [www.traveldoctor.com.au](http://www.traveldoctor.com.au) tel: 1300 658 444; [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au) tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

## Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- |   | YES                   | NO                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions?           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted?        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted?               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do you have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, how will you manage this on tour?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry an epipen?  YES  NO

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

## Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, how will you manage this on tour?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine?  YES  NO

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

**Diabetics:** You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic?  YES  NO  
 Are you insulin dependent?  YES  NO
4. Do you suffer from travel sickness?  YES  NO  
 Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.

## Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept that there are inherent dangers and risks that may occur during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services provided for the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of travelling to, on and from any tour.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Indemnity applies with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
  - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
  - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
  - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally.
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of my continued participation on a tour for whatever reason (refund conditions in ASA's Booking Conditions excepted).

## Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products or services. If a service provider does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (eg. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any such service provider however caused (contingencies). You must take out adequate travel insurance against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour will be limited to the refund of amounts received from you less all non-refundable costs and charges and the costs of any substituted event or alternate services provided. The terms and conditions of the relevant service provider from time to time comprise the sole agreement between you and that service provider.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

## Booking Conditions

### DEPOSITS

A deposit of \$500.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

### CANCELLATION FEES

If you decide to cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: \$500\*  
75-46 days prior 25% of total amount due  
45-31 days prior 50% of total amount due  
30-15 days prior 75% of total amount due  
14-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

*\*This amount may be **credited** to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.*

**We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.**

### UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

### WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. If an ASA tour is forced to cancel you will get a full refund of all tour monies paid. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to daily itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

### FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

## PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

I accept the conditions on this booking form  I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

## Tour / Course Name

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Name of Traveller 1 

---

Name of Traveller 2 

---

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ 

---

 (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel     Tour Deposit
- Balance of Payment     Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
- Travel Insurance     Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) 

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## International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

## By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

## Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

### Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ  
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic  
Swift Code ANZBAU3M  
BSB 013-423  
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. 

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Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended 

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Date Money Transferred 

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## Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard & Visa 2%  
American Express 2%

Please debit my:  Mastercard  Visa  American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above 

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Credit Card Number 

---

Expiry Date 

---

 Security Code (CVC) 

---

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) 

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Cardholders Name 

---

Cardholders Billing Address 

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Postcode 

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State 

---

 Country 

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Phone 

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Email 

---

Cardholders Signature 

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## AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

Office 6, Level 1, 1087-1095 High St (PO Box 8285) Armadale VIC Australia 3143

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