

Discover the Soul of Romania: A 10-Day Private Tour

– Perfect Danube Cruise Extension

Day 1: Budapest to Timișoara | Gateway to Romania

Leave the Hungarian capital behind and cross into Romania, where the journey begins in the vibrant city of **Timișoara**—a cultural jewel with a rich Austro-Hungarian legacy. Often dubbed “*Little Vienna*,” Timișoara’s baroque squares, colorful facades, and lively cafes make for a charming first impression. Enjoy a guided city tour, including Victory Square, Union Square, and the Orthodox Cathedral, where the anti-communist Romanian revolution ignited in 1989.



Hotel Opera 4* or similar

Day 2: Timișoara to Sibiu | Castles and Citadels

Today, travel into the heart of Transylvania, stopping first at the imposing **Corvin Castle** in Hunedoara—one of Europe’s most dramatic Gothic castles, steeped in legend and history. Continue to **Alba Iulia**, the spiritual capital of modern Romania, where the 18th-century Vauban fortress tells the story of the country’s unification. In the afternoon, arrive in Sibiu, “the city of the eyes”, one of Transylvania’s most beautiful cities, nestled in the foothills of the Carpathians.

Hotel Republique 4* or similar



Day 3: The Ultimate Road: Transfăgărășan Adventure

Begin with a walking tour of **Sibiu**, exploring its grand squares, medieval walls, and the iconic Bridge of Lies. Then, embark on a thrilling drive along the Transfăgărășan Road, hailed by Top Gear as one of the world's best drives. Wind your way past alpine lakes, waterfalls, and craggy peaks. Stop at the mysterious **Carta Monastery ruins**, a hauntingly beautiful Cistercian site, before returning to Sibiu for the evening.

Hotel Republique 4* or similar



Day 4: Sibiu to Sighișoara | Hidden Fortresses and Living History

Today's route winds through the hills to the atmospheric **Bethlen Castle** ruins, a noble stronghold being slowly reclaimed by nature. But first stop for an experiential visit to a local **Roma (Gypsy) community**, which will allow for cultural insight and candid exchange. Arrive in **Sighișoara**, one of Europe's best-preserved medieval citadels and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walk the cobbled streets on a guided tour through the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler, known as Dracula.

Fronius Residence 4* or similar



Day 5: Sighișoara to Brașov | Saxon Heritage

Leave Sighișoara behind and head to **Viscri**, a fairy-tale Saxon village backed by forested hills and home to a perfectly preserved **church fortification**, part of Romania's UNESCO treasures. Visit the **local blacksmith**, who continues to work using century-old techniques. Enjoy time to stroll through this quiet, slow-paced hamlet. Continue to **Brașov**, where you'll take a city tour through the medieval heart, including the Black Church, Rope Street, and the Council Square, framed by colorful baroque architecture and forested mountains.

Hotel Prinz Gregor 4* or similar



Day 6: Legendary Castles – Bran and Beyond

A day of legends and leisure begins with a visit to the iconic **Bran Castle**, famously linked to the Dracula myth but historically tied to Queen Marie of Romania. Explore its ramparts and hidden passages before returning to Brasov. You may choose for a relaxing afternoon or to visit the **Libearty Bear Sanctuary**, a heartwarming refuge for rescued brown bears set in a tranquil forest, outside town.

Hotel Prinz Gregor 4* or similar



Day 7: Hungarian Villages near Brașov | Hungarian Heritage of Transylvania

Step into the Hungarian heritage of southeast Transylvania. Visit the impressive **Prejmer citadel**, a UNESCO site, and explore a functioning water mill that still grinds flour the old-fashioned way. Discover the quirky Ika Tower and Haszmann Pál **ethnographical museum** with its open-air collection of rural tools and agricultural machinery. Join a local for a two-hour long **hands-on bread-making workshop** followed by a **traditional Hungarian lunch**.

Hotel Prinz Gregor 4* or similar



Day 8: Braşov – Bucharest | From Royal Trails to City Lights

Journey south toward Bucharest, stopping at the fairy-tale **Peleş Castle** nestled in the mountains of Sinaia. One of the most spectacular castles on the continent, Peleş was the favorite project of the country's first king, who devoted it 42 years of his life and a large part of his considerable fortune. With its ornate woodwork, secret passages, and royal legacy, it's a tour highlight.

Continue through the rolling countryside, towards the capital. Arrive in **Bucharest** and settle in for the capital's vibrant mix of past and present.

Hotel Capitol 4* or similar



Day 9: Bucharest Uncovered – A Capital of Contrasts

Take a comprehensive tour of Bucharest, a city of surprising layers.

From the monumental **Palace of the Parliament** to the neoclassical charm of the **Romanian Atheneum**, explore highlights both grand and intimate. Dive into local life at the bustling **Obor market**, stroll through the **Old Town**, and visit historic squares where the city's past still echoes. End the day with a newfound understanding of this dynamic and evolving capital.

Hotel Capitol 4* or similar



Day 10: Departure | La Revedere, Romania!

After breakfast, enjoy a relaxed **private transfer** to the airport for your onward journey.

Whether this tour began or ended your Danube cruise, it completes your experience with intimate insights into Romanian culture, history, and landscapes. Depart with rich stories, warm memories, and a connection to a land that's both complex and welcoming.

What's included:

- A private tour – just for you and your family or friends;
- The services of an English-speaking guide throughout the trip (guiding available in Spanish or French upon request).

- Pick-up directly from your Danube river cruise ship in Budapest;
- Transportation in a modern, comfortable vehicle, with all associated costs covered;
- 9 nights in centrally located 4-star hotels with daily breakfast;
- A bread baking workshop followed by a traditional lunch in the village;
- All entrance fees and guided visits as outlined;
- A beautiful, welcoming country ready to be explored.

What's not included:

- International flights or other transportation to/from the start or end of the tour;
- Meals not specifically mentioned above;
- Gratuities for your guide (at your discretion).