Dracula tour in Transylvania (5 nights)

Tour Description:

Travel in the shadow of the Carpathians and across the wild Transylvanian landscape to discover remote Gothic ruins and fortresses, medieval castles, precipitous gorges and historic accounts of the real Dracula.

At Curtea de Arges, visit the surreal 14th-century monastery with soaring cupolas that seem to defy the laws of gravity. At Poienari Fortress, ascend the steep cliff to Vlad the Impaler’s forbidding center of command. In Sibiu, tour the ultra-fortified Saxon city where the governors of Transylvania ruled for centuries.

In Sighisoara, a resplendent medieval citadel, enjoy the spectacular view from the iconic Clock Tower. After a walking tour of the legendary Old Town, venture into the house where the Vlad the Impaler was born—now a restaurant and café—for a cup of coffee.

Proceed to the epic Bran Castle, a military fortress built in the 14th century by the merchants of Brasov to defend a precious trade route. In Brasov’s Old Town, tour the Black Church, the medieval city walls, and the culturally significant St. Nicholas Church. Sample some Transylvanian traditional food, at one of Brasov’s best restaurants.

Next, visit Peles Castle, the luxurious 19th-century royal residence of Carol I, filled to the brim with precious marble, crystal, Venetian mirrors, and extravagantly carved walls. Explore the elegant Sinaia Monastery before winding up your tour on the islet of Snagov, believed to be the final resting place of Dracula.

Tour Highlights:

• explore Bucharest, the Romanian capital
• discover the charming medieval cities of Sibiu, Sighisoara and Brasov
• uncover the history behind Bram Stoker's Dracula
• visit Romania’s most famous castles: Bran (a.k.a. Dracula's castle) and Peles
• tour the Snagov monastery, the supposed resting place of Vlad the Impaler Dracula
• enjoy the services of a private, licensed tour guide, who will uncover the best sights along your route
• overnight in centrally located, quaint, locally-owned 3 and 4 star hotels, perfect for exploring on own

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Bucharest, city tour

Bucharest’s first mention in historical annals, as a prominent fortress and citadel, took place in 1459. The settlement quickly became the seat of the infamous Vlad the Impaler, powerful Prince of Wallachia and real-life inspiration for Bram Stoker’s Dracula. Today, only a handful of medieval sites have survived the long period of Communist rule. Modern Bucharest represents a mélange of architecture from every subsequent time period, with old French and Soviet-influenced buildings providing the sharpest contrast.

Arriving in Bucharest, you’ll be introduced to your guide and settle into the comfortable Berthelot Hotel, the perfect starting point for an in-depth exploration of this magnificent modern capital. On your panoramic city tour, you’ll witness the vibrant cultural renaissance now sweeping the city.

*should you travel to Bucharest on a flight that arrives late in the afternoon or evening, the city tour can also be done the next morning
Day 2: Bucharest – Curtea de Arges - Poienari castle - Transfagarasan road - Sibiu

This morning, set out on your journey to the medieval Transylvanian city of Sibiu. On the way, pause to tour the 16th-century Curtea de Arges monastery, resting place of the Romanian royal family and one of the most breathtaking and unusual churches in all of Romania. Delve into the curious, often tragic legends attached to this highly sculptural architectural masterpiece.

Next, venture into the untamed Transylvanian countryside to tour the ruins of the atmospheric Poienari Fortress. Vlad the Impaler chose this steep, nearly impenetrable location as his safe house and castle, enslaving aristocrats arrested for treason to effectuate a full restoration of the existing structure. Climb more than a thousand steps to reach the fortress’s abandoned cliff walls, and visualize the turbulence that took place here hundreds of years ago.

On your way to Sibiu, you’ll take one of the most extraordinary roads ever built: the Transfagarasan Road, carved into the gorgeous surrounding countryside during the Communist regime. The Transfagarasan crosses the Carpathian Mountains at a high altitude, and the scenery is astonishingly beautiful. Hold on tight and enjoy the view as you wind your way around hairpin turns and over spectacular mountain passes.

Afternoon brings your arrival in Sibiu. Check into your hotel, then join your guide for a walking tour of the medieval historic district, witnessing the elaborate and ingenious fortifications put into place by the Saxons. As an important crossroads for trade, Sibiu was often besieged, and a complex system of reinforcements was devised to deter the enemy.

*please note the Transfagarasan road is open only between June and September. Outside this period, you will travel on the road going along the Olt river valley

Overnight in Sibiu, Hotel Casa Leveslav**** (located in the Old Town)

Day 3: Sibiu - Biertan fortified church - Sighisoara

Departing the fascinating town of Sibiu, you’ll recommence your journey on the way to the Biertan fortified church (UNESCO World Heritage Site). Biertan is representative of the highly fortified architectural style employed throughout Transylvania during the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, when townspeople built and maintained ”peasant fortified churches” with the intention of scrambling safely inside and locking heavy doors in case of attack.

Next, you’ll proceed to Sighisoara, one of the only inhabited European citadels still in existence. Take a guided walk through the UNESCO World Heritage Old Town and peruse the History Museum, housed inside the picturesque 13th-century clock tower. Climb the 17th-century covered wooden staircase to explore the Church on the Hill.

Sighisoara is significant to history as the famed birthplace of Vlad the Impaler. Born here in 1431, he became the absolute ruler of Wallachia and feared enemy of the Turks beginning in the 1450s. His childhood home is still in good repair; in fact, it is now home to the restaurant Vlad Dracul.

Overnight in Sighisoara, Hotel Sighisoara*** (located inside the Citadel)

Day 4: Sighisoara - Bran Castle - Brasov

After breakfast, you’ll set out for one of the most renowned sites in all of Romania: Bran Castle (famously called Dracula’s Castle). Because his fictional portrayal of Dracula’s castle matches Bran so closely, it is widely believed that Bram Stoker must have used descriptions of it to create the fictitious home of Count Dracula.

Outside the castle, you’ll have the chance to try an array of traditional foods: handmade cheeses, pálinka (plum and pear brandy), and traditionally-produced ham and sausages.

Next, journey to the beautifully-preserved medieval town of Brasov, in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. Your guide will lead you on a walking tour of the Old Town, where you’ll discover the Black Church, the Old Town square, and city walls built in the Middle Ages. You’ll have free time to absorb the unparalleled atmosphere in one of Brasov’s many charming cafés.
In the evening, enjoy a dinner in one of the best restaurants in town, a great opportunity to sample Transylvanian traditional food.

Overnight in Brasov, Hotel Armatti*** (located in the Old Town)

Day 5: Brasov - Peles Castle - Snagov monastery - Bucharest

In the morning, depart Brasov and travel amidst breathtaking mountain scenery to Sinaia, where you’ll visit Peles Castle, the staggering 19th-century royal residence. Famous for its unbridled opulence, the interior is encrusted with breathtaking crystal embellishments and carvings in the rarest and most exotic types of wood.

Nearby, pause to admire the Sinaia Monastery before continuing on to the 14th-century Snagov Monastery, widely considered to be the final resting place of Vlad Dracul.

By late afternoon or evening, return to Bucharest.

Overnight in Bucharest, Hotel Berthelot**** (centrally located)

Day 6: Bucharest, departure

Departure. Included transfer to the airport.

Included services and features

- The possibility of having your itinerary customised in any way you desire, at no extra charge
- Great flexibility regarding changes to the daily itinerary even after the start of the tour
- The services of a private, licensed English speaking guide/driver, available throughout the tour
- All guide’s expenses (meals, accommodations, etc.)
- Private transportation in air conditioned car or minivan (depending on the number of travellers joining)
- Complimentary wireless internet access in the car/minivan, so that you can stay in touch with your loved ones even while traveling
- All car/minivan expenses, such as gasoline, parking and road tolls
- Entrance fees as per the itinerary, with guided visits. If you wish to add any sight on the go, the guide will always be available with information during the visit
- Accommodation as per the hotel list above (we can also offer a different selection of hotels)
- Transylvanian Dinner in Brasov
- Coffee break at “Casa Vlad Dracul” in Sighisoara (Dracula’s birthplace)
- Breakfast every day
- Airport transfers
- All taxes

Not included

- Airfare to and from Romania
- Meals or beverages, other than the included ones
- Photo fees (some sights require the payment of a fee for allowing you to take pictures - they are mostly inexpensive, around 2 or 3 euro/sight)
- Gratuities for your guide (entirely up to your discretion)

Additional information

You can further explore the route of this tour by having a look at the tour map we created, with the cities the tour overnights in and all sights (Google Maps).

Click here to browse this tour on our website and send us your inquiry, and here to read our FAQ.

To read what past travellers think of their travel experience with us, check out our Testimonials page. Additionally, you might be interested in reviews from past travellers, posted on websites like Trustpilot or TripAdvisor.

About us
We are Vlad and Zoe Trestian - the owners and managers of Balkan Trails. Vlad is Romanian, Zoe is Bulgarian - we have first hand, local knowledge of the countries our tours explore.

We have been working in the travel industry in Eastern Europe since the late 1990's. In 2009, we decided to set up Balkan Trails as a family-owned and managed tour operator business. When trusting us with your travel experience, you will be dealing directly with one of us. Zoe or Vlad will be your single point of contact, so you’re always talking to an expert who has an overview of all details related to your tour.

We understand traveling is personal and individual, and no two travellers are alike. That is why the majority of our tours are based on customised itineraries. Your tour is exactly that: YOURS. Just let us know when you’d like to arrive and depart, what your interests are, the type of hotels you prefer, and we’ll take care of the rest.

We work with a small number of hand-picked, licensed guides. They are all have solid experience as tour guides and speak excellent English. During your time with them, you will get an insider’s perspective on the country, its people and culture. They are also the ones who will help you interact with locals - meeting locals is key to truly understanding a country.

Being a small, family-run business and working with a small number of carefully selected guides also means we can only manage so many tours each year. And that’s OK. Our focus is not organising lots of “just OK” tours. We are here to create memorable travel experiences. And those do come in limited numbers. Looking forward to showing you our part of the world.

Vlad & Zoe Trestian

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