

CHOOSE FROM TWO TOURS TO THE SAXON VILLAGES OF TRANSYLVANIA

20-28 June or 19-27 September 2009

Tour Organiser: Fundatia ADEPT
Tour Agent: Transylvania Uncovered

AREA

The Târnavă Mare area of Southeastern Transylvania is one of the most important natural and cultural landscapes in Europe. It includes some of Europe's finest surviving wildflower-rich grasslands.

The traditionally managed landscape is the result of centuries of good husbandry by the Saxons. The village communities still manage and nurture the land today in a way that has long protected the countryside and created a unique sense of place.

The landscape is a mosaic of ancient oak and beech forests, wildflower-rich meadows and pastures. Unspoiled villages centred on fortified churches lie peacefully in the valleys. Traditional farming is carried out in ecological balance with nature. The landscape supports an astonishingly rich wildlife of plants, birds, mammals and insects.

Giving proper value to local food and local tourism is key to the survival of the area. Friendly villagers, traditional home-made food and the timeless rhythms of country life such as the evening procession of cows returning from pasture give the traveller a glimpse of an older Europe, one not seen for generations elsewhere.

The Tarnava Mare area (85,000ha, population 23,000 in 27 small villages) is the site of a highly innovative approach to sustainable development, integrating two EU programmes: Natura 2000 for nature conservation and LEADER for rural community development. The designated area brings together parts of three counties: Brasov, Mures and Sibiu and was the county name of the area prior to communism. The villages retain their historic atmosphere and traditional ways of life.

ORGANISATIONS

Fundatia ADEPT is a charity working to protect this special countryside and give local people a secure future by promoting sustainable tourism and the marketing of high quality food products, along with encouraging ancient crafts and skills, traditional agriculture and nature conservation. A Tourist Information Centre has been opened by ADEPT in Saschiz, (for further information visit www.fundatia-adept.org).

Fundatia ADEPT have published a guide book and tourist map and both are available on www.amazon.co.uk Fundatia ADEPT is helping to train local guides and thus create employment and increase the economic benefit of tourism to the community.

Transylvania Uncovered is a specialist agency dedicated to all aspects of travel to Romania. Book your flights, accommodation, car hire or guide services with the security of a network of specialists located throughout Romania to assist you. (for further information visit www.beyondtheforest.com)

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DRAFT ITINERARY

Saturday

Afternoon

Arrive in Bucharest and transfer to hotel (40 minutes depending on traffic)

Evening

Explore scenic parts of city (if weather and time permit) followed by dinner

Sunday

Morning

Check out of hotel by 1100, then by train (departing 1300) to Sighisoara passing through the dramatic scenery of the Carpathian Mountains

Lunch

Buffett car on train

Afternoon

Arrive 1730 and transfer to hotel. Sighisoara is UNESCO world heritage site and the oldest intact and inhabited walled citadel in Europe (hotel - two nights).

Evening

Free to explore the citadel

Dinner

Restaurant in the citadel, Sighisoara

Monday

Morning

By road to Malincrav to see traditional weaving and carpet making (enterprise initiative supported by the ADEPT community fund)

Lunch:

Courtyard in Malincrav

Afternoon

A short walk after lunch to explore the village. Return to Sighisoara and then free to explore the citadel

Dinner

Wine tasting with sommelier followed by dinner in the citadel, Sighisoara

Tuesday

Morning

Check out of hotel and drive to Floresti to see barrel making demonstration

Lunch

Courtyard in Floresti

Afternoon

By road (50 minutes) to village accommodation in Crit (three nights).

Dinner

Courtyard, Crit

Wednesday

Morning

By road to Cloasterf (10 minutes) for 2-3 hour forest and meadow walk and then by road (10 minutes) to Saschiz also a UNESCO world heritage site

Lunch

Climb to ruined citadel and then picnic overlooking Saschiz

Afternoon

Explore Saschiz – visit the ADEPT Tourist Information Centre, visit church, village walk including some gardens / courtyards & cellars

Dinner

Courtyard, Crit

Thursday

Morning

Leave Crit promptly at 0900 for 30 minute drive to Mesendorf to see traditional bread making (the bread goes into the oven at 0930), village walk and visit church while the bread is cooking, returning to see bread out of oven at 1200.

Lunch

Courtyard with bread maker

Afternoon

Meet the bees in Crit, then free to explore the village

Dinner

BBQ at stana near Crit

Friday

Morning

Drive to Viscri (20 minutes), another UNESCO world heritage site (two nights). Visit charcoal maker en route

Lunch

Courtyard, Viscri

Afternoon

Explore the church and museum, tour of garden & courtyard activities, visit village shop, blacksmith and to be in the local bar in time to see the cows come home

Dinner

Courtyard, Viscri

Saturday

Morning

Horse and cart to see sheep being hand milked and cheese being made

Lunch

Traditional Saxon picnic

Afternoon

Return to Viscri & explore village on own

Dinner Courtyard, Viscri

Sunday

Morning

Depart from Viscri for Bucharest Airport in time to catch flights (3-4 hour drive depending on traffic / time of day). Stopping in the old part of Brasov if time permits for refreshments.

Four one day walks have been developed in the ADEPT project area and will be available as alternative activities for the more active members of the group (subject to guide and transport availability and may incur extra charges). Some short walks around the village of Viscri are also available.

Price £795 per person, maximum 12 per group

Additional tour dates can be arranged for group bookings

WHAT DOES THIS PRICE INCLUDE?

Tour Guides

John Akeroyd – botanist, historian and author who will lead the tour

Johann Schaaser – Fundatia ADEPT guide / translator (Romanian / English / German)

Accommodation

One night in Bucharest

Two nights in Sighisoara

Three nights in Crit (village B&B)

Two nights in Viscri (village B&B – outside toilets)

Meals

One dinner in Bucharest

Two dinners in Sighisoara

Three dinners in Crit (including one BBQ)

Two dinners in Viscri

Four lunches in village courtyards

Two picnic lunches

Plus

Transfer from airport to hotel on arrival

All local transport by rail and minibus

Wine tasting with qualified sommelier

Meals include local wines, home distilled palinca in the villages, beer and tips

Horse and cart supporting picnics / providing transport home for the weary

Copy of guide book 'The Historic Countryside of the Saxon Villages of Southern Transylvania' by John Akeroyd

Copy of tourist map of the area (1:50,000)

Copy of the 'Food & Culture Tours' booklet (also available to view or download as pdf file at www.fundatia-adept.org/html/tourism.htm)

The programme is subject to alteration if circumstances force changes to be made (such as availability of accommodation, weather, and presence of brown bears or wolves in the meadows).

WHAT DOES THIS PRICE NOT INCLUDE?

Flights to / from Bucharest, but these can be organised by Transylvania Uncovered

Lunch in Brasov

Personal items such as laundry, telephone calls, room service / mini bar in hotel room

Imported wines and spirits

Insurance - Please check that your travel insurance and cancellation cover are adequate for your needs, and valid from the day you book until the day you return from your holiday. This will ensure that you are well protected for your trip. If you are, or have been suffering from a serious illness, you are advised to obtain your doctor's permission to travel to Romania.

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