Welcome to Romania, welcome to Bucharest!

What to do in 2 hours
What to do in 1 day
What to do in 2 day

Updated April 2014
- The legend has it that the city of Bucharest was founded on the banks of the Dambovita River by a shepherd named Bucur, whose name literally means "joy" His flute playing reportedly dazzled the people and his hearty wine from nearby vineyards endeared him to the local traders, who gave his name to the place.

- Known for its wide, tree-lined boulevards, glorious Belle Époque buildings and a reputation for the high life (which in the 1900s earned its nickname of "Little Paris"), Bucharest, Romania's largest city and capital, is today a bustling metropolis.
Bucharest - 2 hours trip

- **Parliament Palace**: Built by Communist Party leader, Nicolae Ceausescu (formerly known as the People's Palace) is the second largest administrative building in the world after the Pentagon. It took 20,000 workers and 700 architects to build. The palace boasts 12 stories, 1,100 rooms, a 328-ft-long lobby and four underground levels, including an enormous nuclear bunker. Now houses the Deputy Chamber of the Romanian Parliament.

- **Unirii Boulevard**: was the communist Romania's replica of Parisian Champs-Élysées, with a length of 3,500 m. Construction began in June 1984. Initially called The Boulevard of Socialism Victory, the street is lined with socialist-realist apartment blocks of North Korean inspiration.

- **University Square**: buzzing with crowds and traffic from early morning until late at night, this area is one of the most popular meeting places in Bucharest. The square brings together some remarkable architectural masterpieces on each of its four corners, starting with the University of Bucharest's School of Architecture, the Bucharest National Theatre, the neoclassical Coltea Hospital and its lovely church (1702-1794) and the Sutu Palace, now Bucharest History Museum. In the middle of the square, on a little island, 10 stone crosses pay respect to those killed during the 1989 revolution. Below the square is an underground passage with shops and eateries, allowing pedestrians to cross from one side of the square to another and to access the subway station.
Bucharest – 2 hours trip

- **Arch of Triumph**: initially built of wood in 1922, to honor the bravery of Romanian soldiers who fought in World War I, Bucharest's very own Arc de Triomphe was finished in Deva granite in 1936. Designed by the architect, Petre Antonescu, the Arc stands 85 feet high. An interior staircase allows visitors to climb to the top for a panoramic view of the city.

- An impressive edifice standing in the northern part of the city, since 1956, **Casa Presei** is a smaller replica of the Lomonosov University in Moskow - Russia.

- **Calea Victoriei**: is Bucharest's oldest and, arguably, most charming street. Built in 1692 to link the Old Princely Court to Mogosoaia Palace, it was initially paved with oak beams. The street became **Calea Victoriei (Victory Avenue)** in 1878, honoring the country's independence from the Ottoman Empire, once with the Romanian War of Independence. Stroll along this street from Piata Victoriei to Piata Natiunilor Unite to discover some of the most stunning buildings in the city, including the **Cantacuzino Palace**, the historical **Revolution Square**, the **Military Circus**, the **CEC Headquarters** and the **National History Museum**.

- The Royal Palace: Erected between 1927 and 1937 in neoclassical style, the palace was home to King Carol II and to his son, King Mihai I, until 1947, when the monarchy was abolished in Romania. Today, the former Royal palace houses the [Romanian National Art Museum](#).
Bucharest – 1 day trip

- **Revolution square**: the square's importance stretches back long before the dramatic events of the 1989 Revolution. On the far side of the square stands the former **Royal Palace**, now home to the **National Art Museum**, the stunning **Romanian Athenaeum**. At the south end of the square, you can visit the charming **Kretzulescu Church**.

- **The Romanian Athenaeum**: the work of French architect Albert Galleron, who also designed the National Bank of Romania, the Athenaeum was completed in 1888, financed almost entirely with money donated by the general public. One of the preeminent public fundraising campaigns ever in Romania, the "Give a penny for the Athenaeum" campaign saved the project after the original patrons ran out of funds. With its high dome and Doric columns, the Athenaeum resembles an ancient temple.

- **Old Princely Court**: at the centre of the historic area are the remains of the Old Princely Court (Curtea Veche), built in the 15th century by Vlad Tepes, also known as Vlad Dracula. According to local lore, Vlad kept his prisoners in dungeons which commenced beneath the Princely Court and extended under the city. All that remains today are a few walls, arches, tombstones and a Corinthian column.

- **Lipscani District (the Old City Center)**: perhaps the city's unique charm can be best observed in the area known as Lipscani, the area is home to many art galleries, antique shops and coffee houses.
Bucharest – 1 day trip

- **Macca – Vilacrosse Passage**: a beautiful arcaded street with an unmistakable vintage and romantic vibe from the honey-like lighting (due to the yellow glass roof), lined with cozy coffee shops. This hosted the first Stock Exchange House of Bucharest.

- **Stavropoleos Church**: the oldest monument in Bucharest, a citadel built on Dambovita banks that Vlad the Impaler, turned into princely court and military residence, to fight against Turkish armies.

- **The Military Circus**: Standing guard imposingly, this neoclassical masterpiece, designed by Romanian architect Dimitrie Maimaroiu, was built in 1912 to serve the social, cultural and educational needs of the Romanian army. Banquets and official events are still hosted in the ballrooms, while the upstairs area is reserved for the army's library, as well as offices and classrooms for officer instruction.

- **The Palace of the Savings Bank (CEC)**: This boasting building is one of the most impressive neoclassical facades in the city. The structure was built in the 19th century to the design of French architect Paul Gottereau (who between 1875 and 1900 designed more than 50 buildings in the city, to house the first Romanian Savings Bank)
Bucharest – 1 day trip

- **Manuc’s Inn**: Built between 1804 and 1808 by the wealthy Armenian trader Emanuel Marzaian (called by the Turks, Manuc Bey), the inn was witness in 1812 to the preliminary talks of the Peace Treaty that put an end to the Russian-Turkish War (1806-1812). A favorite meeting and resting place for tradesmen in those times, Manuc's Inn has preserved to this day its old style and flavor. It now serves as a hotel with a restaurant, a wine cellar and a pastry shop.

- **Metropolitan Cathedral**: Set atop one of the city's few hills, known as Mitropoliei, the Metropolitan Church has been the centerpiece of the Romanian Orthodox faith since the 17th century. The church was built by Constantin Serban Basarab, ruler of the province of Walachia between 1656 and 1658, to a design inspired by the Curtea de Arges monastery. It became the Metropolitan Church in 1668 and the seat of the Romanian Orthodox Church in 1925.

- **Village Museum**: Founded by royal decree in 1936, this fascinating outdoor museum, the largest in Europe, covers some 30 acres on the shores of Lake Herastrau in Herestrau Park. It features a collection of 50 buildings representing the history and design of Romania's rural architecture. Steep-roofed peasant homes, thatched barns, log cabins, churches and watermills from all regions of the country were carefully taken apart, shipped to the museum and rebuilt in order to recreate the village setting.
Romania - 1 day trip

- **Peles Castle** & Sinaia Monastery in Sinaia: 80 miles N of Bucharest. Access: car, bus, train
- **Bran (Dracula's) Castle in Bran & Ethnographic Museum in Bran**: 84 miles N of Bucharest. Access: car, train to Brasov, and bus from Brasov to Bran
- **Sinaia**: The former summer residence of the Royal Family, has the most monuments per capita of anywhere in the country. It is a must see for those visiting Romania (or living here). **Peles Castle** is considered by many one of the most beautiful castles in all Europe. It was the final resting place for several Romanian monarchs including King Carol I.
- **Brasov**: Founded by Teutonic knights at the beginning of the 13th century, until the 18th century Brasov was still predominantly inhabited by Transylvanian Saxons – a heritage that gives the city its distinctively German feel.
- **Bran Castle**: described in Bram Stoker’s novel as Dracula’s residence, this castle located high above a valley perched on a rock, with a flowing river below, in the Principality of Transylvania.
- **Rasnov Fortress**: located on a rocky hilltop in the Carpathian Mountains, 650ft. above the town of Rasnov. Strategically located on the commercial route linking the provinces of Transylvania and Walachia, Rasnov differs from other Saxon fortresses in that is was designed as a place of refuge over extended periods of time.
Romania – 2 days trip

Here are some 2 day-trips ideas:

- Black Sea Riviera (Tomis Port, Mahmudia Mosque, Ovidiu Square& the Roman Mosaic Edifice, Mamaia Resort)

- The Danube Delta – the best preserved delta in Europe, in Unesco Heritage since 1991

- Carpathian Jewels: the cities of Sighisoara, Sibiu, Saschiz, Brasov, Bran Castle, Rasnov Castle

For more details, please contact our Concierge.