



North-East Region Romania

Medieval Monasteries and Churches







In Romania it is said that on Easter and Christmas, God is Moldavian. It is known that Romanians are hospitable, but you feel nowhere as near to "Abraham's bosom" as in Moldova. Here, especially on holidays, Romanians open their doors, arms and hearts. Moldavians know that from homemade bakery fumes, from wine flavors and aromas of foods even the saints and common people feast, because Moldova is a beautiful braided crown, placed on the guest's foreheads who find their time to visit this region.

The first bond you will feel is the one with nature. You will get lost and find yourself in a primeval landscape made certain to delight your eye, left as like hardened by time and yet still alive and pure.

The second bond is with spirituality, which is represented on earth by the most gorgeous places of holiness and spiritual wisdom, offering pilgrimage sites at every turn. For our souls 'haunted' by daily stress, the message and the neighborhood of thousands of nuns, priests and prelates is a blessing which "feeds" and "nourishes" us every day.

And the third and most wonderful bond is the one created by the people of these places, people who are living in these blessed places, but also of the shadows of the departed, who are resting in God's garden. These are the people who shaped the first ceramics at Cucuteni, who built the strongholds of Neamt and Suceava and who painted the churches saints. You can still imagine the thunder heard in the voice of Stephen the Great, the footsteps of Alexander John Cuza in The Unification Palace, the lyrics by Eminescu and Alecsandri and above all the violins of Porumbescu and Enescu.

This trinity crown is given modestly to the guests of the region, who will carry on reminding them every day that heaven is closer than you think and is worth visiting in North-East Romania."



Iasi

- Why go?
- How to get there?
- Do not miss!

Why go?

Iasi is the most important political, economic and cultural centre of the province of Moldavia as well as one of the oldest cities in Romania. Located in the northeastern part of the country, Iasi was for many centuries the crossing point of the most important commercial routes linking Poland, Hungary, Russia and Constantinople.

Deeply rooted in history, Iasi has been the main centre of Moldavian culture since 1408. The city prides itself with publishing the first Romanian newspaper and establishing the first Romanian university. Today, Iasi is home to five universities.

Over the past 500 years, history, culture and religious life have molded the city's unique character. Iasi boasts an impressive number of Orthodox churches, almost 100, most of them located in the so-called Golden Plateau (Platoul de Aur). The oldest, the Princely Saint Nicholas Church, dates from the reign of Stephen the Great (Stefan cel Mare, 1457-1504). The finest, however, are the 17th century Saint Paraskeve Metropolitan Cathedral and Trei Ierarhi Church, the last a curious example of Byzantine art, erected in 1635-1639 by Vasile Lupu. Its outer walls and twin towers are intricately carved in what many think of as stone lace.

The Golden Plateau represents the nucleus of the city, around which the entire settlement developed over the centuries. With the Palace of Culture at one end and the Union Square (Piata Unirii) at the other, the Golden Plateau features churches and princely palaces on both sides of Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt Boulevard, which runs right through its centre. Many other important sites can be found on nearby streets.

(<http://www.romaniatourism.com/iasi.html>)

How to get there?

By airplane

Iasi International Airport is the airport serving the city of Iasi, Romania. It is located 8km northeast of the city centre. The main destinations are: Bucharest International Airport Henri Coanda (OTP), Vienna International Airport Schwechat (VIE), Roma International Airport Leonardo da Vinci (FCO), Bologna Airport (BLQ), Torino Airport (TRN), Heathrow Airport (LHR).

Iasi International Airport has started in 2013 a long-term, multi-stage upgrade program; the airport will basically be reconstructed into a state-of-the-art airport.

By train

Iasi is crossed by the 600 mainline railway: Bucharest – Barlad – Vaslui – Iasi – Ungheni (Republic of Moldova). There are daily trains to/from Bucharest, Oradea, Piatra Neamt, Suceava and Timisoara as well as several other cities in Romania. A daily train to Chisinau (Moldova) is also available.

To check the latest train schedules for domestic routes please visit the website of the Romanian Railways: www.cfrcalatori.ro The Great Railway Station, located about 1 km from the city centre, provides direct rail connections to all the major Romanian cities and to Chişinău. The railway stations are very well connected to all the parts of the city by the trams and buses of the local public transportation companies.

By car

Iasi is connected by European routes E583/E85 with Bucharest through a four lane express road, by European route E58 with Central Europe and Chişinău in Moldova, and by DN National Roads with all major cities of Romania. It is also planned an East-West freeway connection to A3 Transylvania Motorway.



Do not miss

- The National Theatre “Vasile Alecsandri”, the First National Theatre in Romania
Address: Str. Agatha Barsescu 18, Iasi
- The First Natural History Museum in the Romanian Principalities (Iasi, 1834)
Address: Blvd. Independentei 16, Iasi
- The Great Synagogue, the First Jewish Praying House in Romania (Iasi, 1659-1670).
Address: Str. Sinagogilor 7, Iasi
- Moldova Philharmonic House
Address: Str. Cuza Vodă 29, Iasi
- Casa Calimah Ghika, today Romanian Academy
Address: Bd. Carol I 8, Iasi
- Theatre Museum
Address: Str. Vasile Alecsandri 5, Iasi
- Palace of Culture
Address: Piata Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt 1, Iasi
- Museum of Moldova (housed in the Palace of Culture):
Moldavian Ethnographic Museum, Art Museum,
Moldavian History Museum, Science and
Technology Museum
Address: Piata Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt 1, Iasi

Where to stay?

You can choose from a multitude of offers, including the three or four stars hotels and also boarding houses or apartment, fully furnished and with all amenities to make your stay in Iasi comfortable.

How much?

The accommodation fees for a double room with breakfast included starts at EUR 25 / night and can reach EUR 100 / night. For more information please check the website: www.travelro.ro

Tourist information centers



Tourist Information Center Iasi

Address: Piata Unirii 12, Iasi. E-mail: turism.iasi@gmail.com; Tel/fax: 0232.261 990; www.turism-iasi.ro

"Center for Tourism Promotion" Association Iasi

Address: Str. Cuza Voda 53, C10 Building (inside GOLIA Monastery), Iasi; Tel: 0771/465.033, 0332/408.548, 0743/899.218; Fax: 0332/408.549; E-mail: centrul.promovare.turistica.iasi@gmail.com, website: www.iasi-info.ro



Neamt

- Why go?
- How to get there?
- Do not miss!

Why go?

Beautifully situated in the forested foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, Piatra Neamt is another historic Moldavian town and one of Romanian's oldest settlements. The area has been inhabited since Neolithic times. In the 15th century, Stephen the Great established a princely court here. Although many of the old sections of this picturesque town were erased to the ground under the communist regime, several interesting attractions still stand.

The area around Piatra Neamt is one of the oldest inhabited areas in Romania. The oldest traces of human civilisation in the present territory date back to the higher Paleolithic, about 100,000 years BCE.

The Cucuteni culture, whose development lasted approximately one thousand years (ca. 3600-2600 BCE) was attested in the territory of Neamt county by a remarkable number of settlements (approx. 150), archaeological diggings unearthing important museum collections of Aeneolithic artifacts. Archaeologists have also discovered objects here dating back to the Neolithic Period and the Bronze Age (about 1900-1700 BCE).

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piatra_Neamt)

How to get there?

By airplane

The city is located at 350 km north from Bucharest, the capital of Romania, in the historic region of Moldavia. The nearest airport is in Bacau, at 60 km south of the city.

By train

The 509 railway is connecting Piatra Neamt with Bacau, Bucharest or Iasi.

By car

The national road DN15 connects the city with Bacau (from where Bucharest is at 365 km through National Road E85). Piatra Neamt is also connected by DN National Roads with Iasi (135 km), Suceava (120 km) and Targu Mures (150 km).



Do not miss

- **Curtea Domnească and St John's Church in Piatra-Neamț**
Address: Piața Libertății 2, Piatra Neamț, Neamț
- **The Ethnographical Museum in Piatra-Neamț**
Address: Piața Curtea Domnească 1, Piatra Neamț, Neamț
- **The Wooden Synagogue in Piatra-Neamț**
Address : Str. Dimitrie Ernici 7, Piatra Neamț, Neamț
- **History and Archaeology Museum in Piatra-Neamț**
Address: Str. Mihai Eminescu 10, Piatra Neamț, Neamț
- **The Neamț Stronghold**
Address: Str. Arcașului 1, Targu Neamț, Neamț
- **Ion Creangă Memorial Museum**
Address: Str. Creangă Ion 110, Cartier HUMULEȘTI, Targu Neamț, Neamț
- **The Cucuteni Eneolithic Art Museum**
Address: Str. Ștefan cel Mare 3, Piatra Neamț, Neamț
- **The Art Museum in Piatra Neamț**
Address: Str. P-ta Libertatii 1, Piatra Neamț, Neamț



Where to stay?

The accommodation to the monasteries in Moldavia is always an unique and special experience. The sensation lived hearing the church bells in the evening or seeing the silhouette of a monk who hits the wooden plate at sundown is unforgettable. The monasteries in Moldavia, Neamt county are offering numerous possibilities of accommodation for pilgrims and visitors. The accommodation fees at the Neamt monasteries are very low, some of the monasteries or hermitages offer lodging for free. It is best to call first to check the availability of accommodation places in the monastery. In the city of Piatra Neamt you can stay also in a hotel or you can choose from a wide selection of boardinghouses or villas situated in the beautiful surroundings of the city, or on the routes to the monasteries.

How much?

The accommodation fees for a double room at the boardinghouses start from EUR 18 / night and can go up to EUR 27 / night, but most of them are negociable and there are also discounts.

Tourist information centers



"GHEORGHE IACOMI" Tourist Information Center, Piatra Neamt

Address: Piata Garii (departure station of the telegondola),
tel.: 0726124358, email: cit_pneamt@yahoo.com,
www.neamt-turism.ro

Tourist Information Center, Piatra Neamt

Address: Piata Garii Piatra Neamt (vis-a-vis from the departure station of the telegondola), tel: 0740563384, email: info.neamt@gmail.com

Suceava

- Why go?
- How to get there?
- Do not miss!

Why go?

Suceava is the seat of Suceava County, in the Bucovina region, in north-eastern Romania. Once the capital of Moldavia (from 1388 until 1565), Suceava is an excellent starting point for trips to the many historical, cultural and natural attractions travelers can enjoy in the Bucovina region. Suceava is also the gateway to visiting the Painted Monasteries of Bucovina.

The town has some noteworthy attractions of its own, including Saint George's Church, a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Bucovina Ethnographic Museum, with its valuable folk costumes collection and traditional items exhibits, and Suceava's main tourist site, the remains of the Princely Court.

Other sights in Suceava include the 14th century Mirauti Church, the Zamca Monastery and the Bucovina Village Museum, dedicated to the woodcraft, ethnography, history and folk art of the region. The Bucovina History Museum displays medieval armors, coins, weaponry, tools and ancient documents. Visit these archeological and historic gems before heading to the painted monasteries area. (<http://www.romaniatourism.com/suceava.html>)

How to get there?

By airplane

The "Stefan cel Mare" Airport, situated at 12 km from the city of Suceava ensures the direct access through the Henri Coanda International Airport Bucharest.

By train

The railway access in Bucovina is provided primary by the 500 mainline railway: Bucharest – Bacau – Roman – Suceava – Kiev (Ukraine) – Warsaw (Poland) – Moscow (Russia).

Another possibility of access is the railway that connects Moldavia with Transylvania on the route: Iasi – Suceava – Vatra Dornei – Cluj Napoca – Timisoara.

There are daily trains from/to Bacau, Brasov, Campulung Moldovenesc, Cluj, Constanta, Gura Humorului, Putna, Timisoara, Vatra Dornei, Vatra Moldovitei, and several other cities in Romania.

There is a daily INTERCITY (Express) service from/to Bucharest (approximate travel time: 6 hours).

To check the latest train schedules for domestic routes, please visit the website of the Romanian Railways: www.cfrcalatori.ro

By car

In Bucovina you can easily go by car on the European route E85, which crosses Europe from north to south, connecting the Baltic Sea and the Egean Sea, respectively Lithuania and Greece and which crosses Romania on the route Siret – Suceava – Bacau – Bucuresti – Giurgiu, the distance between Suceava and Bucharest being of 435 km.

Another route of access by car is the European route E576 that connects Russia (Rostov on the Don River) and Austria (Vienna), going through Romania on the route Halmeu – Baia Mare – Bistrita – Suceava – Botosani – Iasi – Sculeni (Republic of Moldova), the distance between Baia Mare and Suceava being of 297 km.



Do not miss

- **Princely Court of Suceava**
Address: Dealul Cetatii, Suceava;
- **Bucovina Museum – The History Museum**
Address: Str. Stefan cel Mare 33, Suceava;
- **Bucovina Village Museum**
Address: Str. Cetatii, Suceava
- **The Black Pottery of Marginea**
Location: 32 miles northwest of Suceava, Marginea village;
- **The Ethnography Museum in Radauti**
Address: Str. Stefan cel Mare, Radauti;
- **“Art of Wood” Museum**
Address: Str.Calea Transilvaniei 10, Campulung Moldovenesc;
- **Folk Traditions Museum of Bucovina**
Address: Str. Republicii, E58 2, Gura Humorului;
- **Princely Inn Ethnography Museum Suceava**
Address: Str.Ciprian Porumbescu 5, Suceava;
- **Marian Sanctuary in Cacica**
Address: Cacica commune;
- **The Art Museum Ion Irimescu, Falticeni**
Address: Str. Mihai Eminescu 2, Falticeni;

Where to stay?

You can find boardinghouses of all clasificasions, mountain agrotouristical lodges, but also minihotels or luxury villas. In the area there are also three, four or five stars hotels.

How much?

The accommodation fees for one night in a boardinghouse are varying between EUR 13 and EUR 18, and for a hotel the prices can start at EUR 27 and go up to EUR 67 for a double room / night.

Tourist information centers

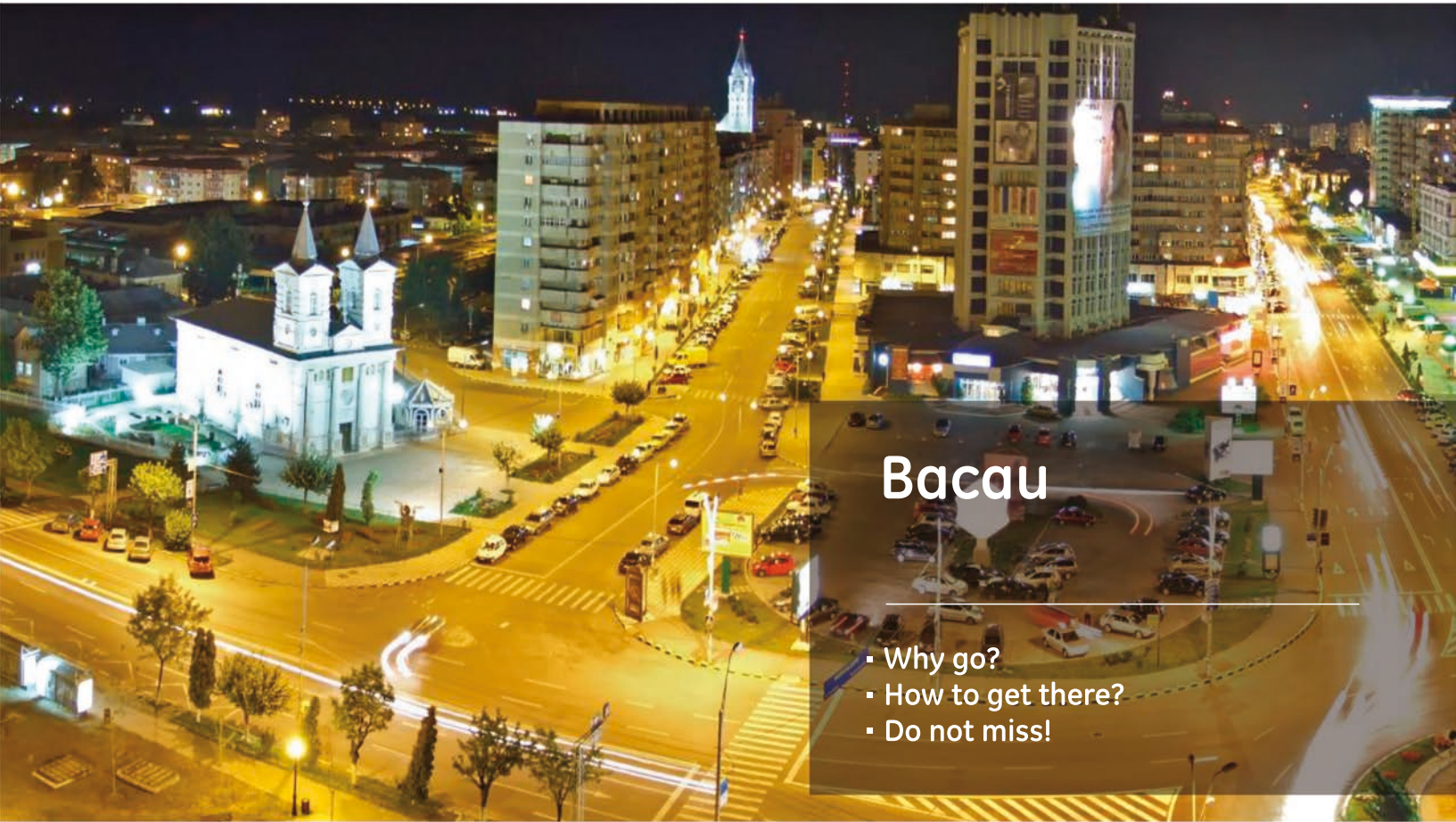


County Tourist Information Center INFOTURISM

Address: Str. Stefan cel Mare 23, Suceava;
Tel./Fax: +40 230.551.241; E-mail: infoturism@suceava.rdsnet.ro

Tourist Information Center Campulung Moldovenesc

Address: Str. Sirenei 21, Campulung Moldovenesc;
Tel.: +40 726.577.560; Fax: +40 230.310.866;
E-mail: birou@turismbucovina.ro;
www.turismbucovina.ro



Bacau

- Why go?
- How to get there?
- Do not miss!



Why go?

Bacau is the main city in Bacau County, Romania. As of 2011 census, it has a population of 144,307 making it the 15th largest city in Romania. The city is situated in the historical region of Moldavia, at the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, and on the Bistrita River (which meets the Siret River about 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) to the south of Bacau. The Ghimes Pass links Bacau to the region of Transylvania.

The city of Bacau is not seen as an important tourism sight on the country map, and the city does not reveal special landmarks in this area. None the less, at a closer look, hidden among the imposing buildings that are marking the recent development of the city, you can discover coquette locations which can uncover a strong cultural impress of the city.

The fame of the Bacau County is also confirmed, on the cultural level, both by the public figures given in different ares (Nadia Comaneci, Tristan Tzara, George Bacovia, Vasile Alecsandri, Radu Beligan, George Apostu, Nicu Enea) and the cultural projects carried out during the years.

Although the first documentary attestation is found in the commercial privileges offered by Alexandre the Good to the Lvov merchants (1408), the origin of the city is lost in the mists of time. What we know for sure is that at the end of the 14th century, Bacau was already a well coagulated urban settlement, one of the most prosper in the Southern part of Moldavia, having military and commercial attributions.

The city of Bacau was occupied, for a short while, by the Hungarian armies, led by Matei Corvin in 1467. The city is also renowned for its important role in the commercial relationships between Moldavia, Transylvania and Wallachia, also being a very important customs point.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bacau>)

How to get there?

By airplane

With a runway of 2,500 m long and 80 m wide and a total surface of over 200 ha, Bacau "George Enescu" International Airport is the largest airport in the north-eastern region of Romania.

The favourable geographical place in the central part of Moldavia, at approximately equal distances from the main neighbouring cities – Galati, Brasov, Suceava, Iasi, Piatra Neamt, Vaslui, Focsani and the quick access to important terrestrial ways of communications: the Bucuresti – Suceava railway and the European route E85 (both at less than 400 m of the airport) are important advantages for the future development of the airport.

The main destinations are: London, Paris, Milano, Torino, Roma, Antalya.

By train

The Bacau Railway Station (Gara Bacau) is one of the busiest in Romania; it has access to the Romanian railway main trunk number 500. Thus the city is connected to the main Romanian cities; the railway station is an important transit stop for international trains from Ukraine, Russia, and Bulgaria.

By car

The city has access to the DN2 road (E85) that links it to the Romanian capital, Bucharest (288 km to the South) and the cities of Suceava and Iasi (Iasi – 128 km, Suceava – 147 km, to the North). The European route E574 is an important access road to Transylvania and the city of Brasov situated at 181 km. The city is also located at the intersection of several national roads of secondary importance.





Do not miss

- George Bacovia Memorial House
Address: Str. George Bacovia 13, Bacau
- Nicu Enea Memorial House
Address: Str. Nicu Enea 64, Bacau
- The "Mihail Jora" Athenaeum and a Philharmonic Orchestra
Address: Str. Razboieni 22, Bacau
- "G. Bacovia" Dramatic Theater
Address: Str. Iernii 7, Bacau
- Princely Court Ruins
Address: Str. Nicoale Balcescu, Bacau
- "Ion Borcea" Nature Sciences Museum
Address: Str. Gheorghe Vranceanu 44, Bacau
- "George Apostu" Contemporary Art Museum
Address: Str. Crangului 18, Bacau
- "Anton Ciobanu" Pottery Art Galleries
Address: Str. Decebal 1, Bacau

Where to stay?

In the vicinity of the sites promoted there are various accommodation facilities offered by hotels and boardinghouses and also by some monasteries.

How much?

The accommodation fee for one night in a hotel starts at EUR 30, including breakfast.

Tourist information centers



Tourist Information Center Bacau

Address: Str. N. Balcescu 16 (inside the Moldova Hotel), Bacau;
Tel./Fax: +40 234.571.915;
E-mail: orotaru_bit@yahoo.com



Botosani

- Why go?
- Do not miss!

Why go?

Botosani County lies in the north-east of Romania, bordering Iasi County in the south, Suceava County in the west, Ukraine in the north and the Republic of Moldova in the east.

Botosani is the capital city of Botosani County, in northern Moldavia, Romania. Today, it is best known as the birthplace of many celebrated Romanians, including: Mihai Eminescu (born in Botosani 1850 - 1889), George Enescu (born in Liveni 1881 - 1955), Nicolae Iorga (born in Botosani 1871 - 1940) and Stefan Luchian (born in Stefanesti 1868 - 1916) and by the impressive gallery of creative personalities that increase the Romanian culture's prestige in many domains.

The thing that makes Botosani county stand apart from the other areas of Romania is, indubitably, the culture. In the area of Cucuteni civilization from the late neolithic medieval art has bloomed – expressed especially through religious edifices realized in moldavian style during the reign of Stephen the Great and his descendants and the paintings that cover them, the modern era recording a diversity of artistic manifestations, some of them yet unpracticed, in more important cities of the country.
(<http://www.turismbotosani.ro>)

Where to stay?

Whatever your budget is, you will find for sure the offer suited for you, cheap deals and discount rates on any type of hotel you desire.

How much?

The accommodation fees vary from EUR 30 for a night in a double room up to EUR 50, but you can also get discounts or special offers.

Tourist information centers



Tourist Information Center of Botosani County

Address: Calea Nationala 62, Botosani;

Tel.: +40 231.514.686, +40 231.513.334; Fax: +40 231.513.334;

www.turismbotosani.ro

Do not miss

- "Saint Nicholas" Church (Address: Popauti, Botosani County), foundation of ruler Stephen the Great and Holy from 1496; interior paintings, of a great value, date from XVth century, still holding partial the church placed in a strategically position determined by the frequent invasions of the enemies attracted by the riches of the town. Because of this reason, they added to the initial building of the church lasting walls and a surveillance tower, giving to the construction the look of a veritable fortress.
- Cosula Monastery from the locality with the same name, built during Petru Rares's reign, by Matias Cosulvei – the treasurer (1532), still keeps the original wall-paintings of a great value made between 1537 – 1681.
- Bals Storesti Monastery (Address: Frumusica, Botosani County) was founded by the boyar Grigore Bals, in 1776, but in the same year it was torched, being at the boundary between estates. The present church was built by Lascar Sturdza and Evghenia Ursachi in 1819. Closed in 1870 by the boyar Mavrocordat, it was reopened in 1945, only for a short period of time, because the communists closed it again in 1959. The church and the hermitage become once again a place of pilgrimage for the parishioners after the fall of the communism.
- Vorona Monastery is the most important monastery of Botosani County and it is situated at 15 km south – west of Botosani. The beginnings of the monastery date around the year 1600, when, a couple of monks arrived from Russia, built here a small church made of wood. In 1835 the archimandrite Rafail built on its place a church of bricks sanctified with "Lord's Mother Birth (Nasterea Maicii Domnului)". There are here two more churches, a religious library dating since XVII-XIX centuries and accommodation spaces for pilgrims. The monastic complex is situated at the edge of a beautiful forest with a surface of 150 ha.



- "Nicolae Iorga" Memorial House (Address: Str. Nicolae Iorga 14, Botosani), situated in one of the houses where great historian Nicolae Iorga passed his childhood. Two sections of the house hold a photo documentary exposition and an exhibition of Iorga's first written editions. Another section holds a regularly updated library of history. The Iorga family's salon boasts an interior dating from the final decades of the 19th century;
- "Octav Onicescu" Memorial Museum, realized in October 1995, houses the furniture that once belonged to the mathematician and philosopher Octav Onicescu. In addition, there are also his manuscripts, writings, diplomas, books from his personal library, family photos, and decorations, offering an intimate portrait of a Romanian polymath;
- County Museum (Ethnographic section), housed in a fine example of late-18th-century architecture that once served as the house of Manolache Iorga, the grandfather of the great historian Nicolae Iorga. Open to the public since 1989, the museum displays the most important elements of the area's rural culture; artifacts of the principal occupations, traditional crafts, traditional costumes, and other customary and traditional crafts specific to the Botosani region personalities of Romanian art and culture;
- County Museum (Historical and Archaeological section), housed in a historic monument dating from 1913, presents in its 17 rooms the story of Botosani's evolution from prehistory to the present. Exhibits include the dawn of civilization in the region, from the paleolithic era, to the neolithic era (with Cucuteni ceramics), and finishing with the Bronze and Iron Ages. More notable displays include weapons made of sharpened stone and bone, decorated pottery, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines, seals belonging to the lords of Moldavia, and historic jewelry.
- "Stefan Luchian" Art Galleries, the fine-arts section of the County Museum, pays tribute to Botosani's rich artistic heritage, including the paintings of Stefan Luchian, Octav Bancila, and many other contemporary artists; the works of many renowned illustrators, foremost among them Ligia Macovei, the most celebrated illustrator of the poems of Eminescu; the sculptures of Iulia Onila and Dan Covataru; and the tapestries of Cela Neamtu, Aspazia Burduja, and Ileana Balota;
- "Mihai Eminescu" National Theatre; the building was opened in 1914, partially destroyed by the bombings of 1944, and restored in 1958 and again in the 1990s. The theatre hosts a team of actors whose remarkable evolution was crowned by their winning of the Grand Prize at the International Theatre Festival in 2001 at Piatra Neamt. The Grand Hall of the theatre also hosts numerous other cultural activities, of which the most notable are the concerts of the Botosani State Philharmonic.
- "Vasilache" Puppet Theatre; home to a troupe of puppeteers appreciated not only in Romania but also abroad, as evidenced by their win at the International Puppet Festival in Siliistra, June 2001. Every two years the theatre organizes the International Gala of Puppet Theatre, which brings to Botosani the most prestigious names in puppet theatre, from Romania and abroad;
- Botosani National Philharmonic, who generally performs in a 19th-century neoclassical building known as Vila Ventura, are renowned all over the county, its artists often finding themselves invited on a permanent basis to participate in concerts throughout Romania and abroad. The Philharmonic is the principal organizer of the series of tributes to George Enescu, tributes which benefit each year from the presence of the great personalities of Romanian art and culture;

A close-up photograph of a golden wheat field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that fills the sky and the field. The wheat stalks are in sharp focus in the foreground, with their heads of grain clearly visible. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Vaslui' and a bulleted list.

Vaslui

- Why go?
- Do not miss!

Why go?

Situated in the eastern part of Romania, at the border of the European Union with the Moldavian Republic, Vaslui County should also put in value its cultural-monumental potential, which is not to be neglected for its history and authenticity. The historical monuments, either archeological sites from different centuries or traces of former medieval buildings, or wooden or brick churches, buildings with special architectural age and value, all together represent the most expensive treasures of today's Vaslui.

It is true that it cannot proud itself with spectacular landscapes like those of The Valley of Prahova, North Moldavia or the seaside, but Vaslui County holds unconventional touristic attractions, for example magnificent churches, old monasteries made of wood, picturesque villages where the old popular customs are well preserved and still practiced or where one can participate to the rural household works side by side with the villagers. (<http://www.vaslui-turism.ro>)

Where to stay?

In Vaslui you can choose between hotels situated in the center of the city or picturesque boarding houses in residential areas. You can also choose to stay in the countryside and be housed by locals and observ or even participate at the day to day life.

How much?

The prices for accommodation in Vaslui are between EUR 30 / night in a double room and EUR 85 / night at the hotels in Vaslui. If you choose boardinghouses or to be housed by locals in the countryside you can negotiate directly discounts or special offers.





Do not miss

- The „Beheading of Saint John the Baptist” Princely Church in Vaslui is the foundation of the ruler Stephen the Great, dated in the year 1490, as a chapel of the princely court. As the votive inscription on the western wall says, the church was erected in less than five months (April 27 – September 20).
- Codaesti – The „The Birth of the Theotokos” wooden church, Pribesti village, was founded around 1844 by the steward Lupu Bals and his wife, Eufrosina, as court chapel, on the place of a church having as „St. Nicholas” as titular saint, certified in 1636, and rebuilt in 1765, by the Ruset (Roset) family. The church is part of the assembly of the Roset-Bals mansion. The 19th century wood on oil iconostasis is preserved. „The Homily Book of Varlaam”, printed in Jassy in 1643, contains annotations about the founders.
- The architectural assembly of the Bishopric of Husi (the 15th-20th century) consists of the “St. Apostles Peter and Paul” Church, the belfry tower, the diocesan palace, the cells, and the precincts wall. The Bishopric of Husi was installed, in 1598, in the princely court founded by Stephen the Great at the end of the 15th century.
- The „Stephen the Great” County Museum, was opened on the 26th of September 1975, being appreciated back then as well as now as the newest museum in the country, aspect visible to this day, as well as the best executed from the thematic, scientific, and museotechnic point of view. The „ Stephen the Great” County Museum comprises sections of archeology, medieval and contemporary history, ethnography, plastic arts and a humor saloon called „Constantin Tanase”.
- The Mavrocordat Palace is the most famous of the historical monuments of Vaslui. It was erected at the end of the 19th century, by Gheorghe Mavrocordat, and is one of the most beautiful buildings in town, impressive for its ornaments, sizes and style, enduring throughout the ages, being very close to the original form. Main access is being made by a portal with a decorated steeple with ceramic plates and at present hosts the Palace of Children (Students' Club).
- The Ghica House was built in the neoclassical style and is the oldest building in town. It belongs to Elena Ghica (owner of the borough of Vaslui), sister of the last ruler of Moldavia, Grigore Ghica.
- The Madarjac and Ornescu Houses were made by Italian masters like Delcasse and Ornescu and are significant for the image of the Romanian cities in the 19th century.
- The memorial house „Emil Racovita” (1868-1947), the place where he was born, is organized in memory of he who founded speology and comprises objects connected with the life of the scholar's childhood, photocopies, facsimils (exact reproduction of a text, a signature, design or painting with the help of photography, phototype, by manual copying).

itinerary

Medieval Monasteries and Churches in Moldavia



We propose a cultural and historic itinerary that includes the most important sights from the patrimony of the region in an effort of crystallization of this domestic market and valorization of its high potential for development offered by the religious tourism attractions in North-East Romania. The continuous increase in the importance of religious tourism in Romania brought to light that it might be the only sector which could bring a steady income in some areas that do not possess other resources.

Pilgrimage has become an important phenomenon not only in terms of its quantitative dimensions and its global reach, but also due to the socio-economic consequences for the areas crossed by the new generations of travellers.

Repackaged in order to embrace the traditional features of folk religiosity and to meet more personal spiritual needs including the search for inner peace, journeys towards holy places have experienced resurgence over the last few years.

Religious tourism may be identified as a specific type of tourism "whose participants are motivated either in part or exclusively for religious reasons". Whether they are true pilgrims animated by religious devotion or some other type of visitor or tourist, it is certain that their number is growing each year and so is the number of proposals for new religious routes.

The religious heritage in Romania is closely related to the customs of the people and the development of culture in the whole territory. Customs are still an important aspect of people's lives, and in some areas, old customs are revived to improve the cultural heritage of the area.

Religion-motivated tourism is extremely important in many parts of the world. In Romania, the only Latin country in East-Central Europe and the only Latin country whose main religion is Orthodox Christian, religious ceremonies to celebrate Saints' days, as well as all the related sites and relics, represent places for prayer and meeting with God for millions of people. The evolution of visitors' number certifies the trends and forecasts recorded on international market outlining religious tourism's increase in Romania from one year to another for more than 70% of religious settlements.

North-East Region



Iasi

- 01 The "Sfintii Trei Ierarhi" Monastery, Iasi
- 02 The Metropolitan Cathedral, Iasi
- 03 The "Golida" Monastery, Iasi
- 04 The "Galata" Monastery, Iasi
- 05 The "Cetatuia" Monastery, Iasi

Neamt

- 06 The "Bistrita" Monastery, Alexandru cel Bun village
- 07 The "Horaita" Monastery, Cracaoani village
- 08 The "Varatec" Monastery, Agapia village
- 09 The "Agapia" Monastery, Agapia village
- 10 The "Neamt" Monastery, Vanatori-Neamt village
- 11 The "Secu" Monastery, Pipirig village
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Suceava

- 13 The "Dragomirna" Monastery, Mitocu Dragomirnei village
- 14 The "Sfantul Ioan cel Nou" Monastery, Suceava
- 15 The "Arbore" Monastery, Arbore village
- 16 The "Sucevita" Monastery, Sucevita village
- 17 The "Moldovita" Monastery, Vatra Moldovitei village
- 18 The "Voronet" Monastery, Gura Humorului
- 19 The "Humor" Monastery, Humorului Monastery village
- 20 The "Probota" Monastery, Dolhasca

Bacau

- 21 Precista Church, Bacau
- 22 "Dormition of Virgin Mary" Church from Borzesti village, Onesti
- 23 The "Casin" Monastery, The Monastery Casin commune

Monasteries and Churches in

Iasi



Monasteries and Churches in

Neamt



Monasteries and Churches in

Suceava



Monasteries and Churches in

Bacau



The "Sfintii Trei Ierarhi" Monastery, Iasi

GPS: 47.154156 LAT 27.586781 LONG

A unique monument of its kind, a repository of the cultural and spiritual life of Moldavia, the Monastery of the Three Holy Hierarchs is located in the old centre of Iasi, on Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt Boulevard, formerly known as the Princely Street.

The "Trisfetite" Church, built during Prince Vasile Lupu's reign (1637 -1639), was intended to be a royal burial ground; it reflects the founder's aspiration to the Byzantine world as it combines traditional structures and shapes with precious materials and a sumptuous decoration. Metropolitan Varlaam consecrated this holy place on the 6th of May 1639, and two years later Saint Paraskeve's relics were moved here. The monastery accommodated a printing house and the "Schola Basiliiana", the future Princely Academy. In 1970 the monastery was closed and the only religious services to be officiated were the celebration of the feast day of the Three Hierarchs (30th January) and the Union Day on 24th of January. Following the 1989 events, the monastery was reopened at the initiative of His Beatitude Daniel, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bucovina.

The monument is renowned for its embroidery in stone (most of it preserved in its original form) that decorate the outer walls. Thirty different carved stone decoration bands cover the entire outside walls of the church from the base to the top of the steeples; they are inspired from the national old wood carvings and embroideries blended with Asian and Western elements. An impressive threefold twisted cord – a symbol of the Holy Trinity – makes the architectural complex of the church absolutely perfect.

(<http://manastireastreiierarhi.ro>)



The Metropolitan Cathedral, Iasi

GPS: 47.1616707 LAT 27.5823402 LONG

The Metropolitan Cathedral, Iasi (Romanian: Catedrala Mitropolitana din Iasi), located at 16 Stefan cel Mare si Sfant Boulevard, Iasi, Romania, is the seat of the Romanian Orthodox Archbishop of Iasi and Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bucovina, and the largest Orthodox church in Romania. It is dedicated to Saint Paraskeve, to the Presentation of Jesus and to Saint George. Its form was inspired by the late Italian Renaissance style (Trinità dei Monti in particular), with Baroque elements dominating the interior and exterior decorative features.

Bishop Veniamin Costache is the one who had the idea of building in Iasi a monumental church. The plan for this church was designed by the architects Johann Freywald and Bucher. The works took place first between 1833 - 1839 and then between 1880-1887, this time following the plans of the Romanian architect, Alexandru Orascu. The painting of the cathedral was done by Gheorghe Tattarescu.

It was inaugurated on 23 April 1887, at this event also taking part King Carol I and Bishop Iosif Naniescu.

In 1889, the relics of Saint Paraskeve, patron saint of Moldavia, were brought from Trei Ierarhi Monastery and continue to attract crowds of pilgrims, particularly on her feast day (October 14). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metropolitan_Cathedral,_Iasi)

The “Golia” Monastery, Iasi

GPS: 47.164852 LAT 27.589367 LONG

The Golia Monastery is one of the most complex monastic ensembles preserved to these days, due to the fact that the Church, the Tower, the precinct walls and the four corner towers are preserved. The Church was built by Vasile Lupu and his wife, Ecaterina Cercheza, between 1650 and 1652.

The project focused on two main objectives: the restoration of the Golia Monastery Ensemble and the development of an infrastructure that provided access to the historical monument area, increasing its touristic and cultural appeal.

With the combination of its Russian and oriental influence, the Western type exterior imprinted by the Italian Baroque and the eclectic superstructure of the towers, the Golia Monastery Ensemble represents an extraordinary synthesis of East and West, distinguishing itself as a unique architectural ensemble in the European landscape.

Golia Monastery was awarded within the Programme Europa Nostra 2012 for excellence in culture and conservation. The distinction was received at the beginning of June 2012 in Lisbon and consists in a certificate realized by the German graphic artist Victor de Leeuw and in a bronze plate realized by the Dutch sculptor Loek Bos.

(<http://www.europanostra.org/awards/75/>)





The “Galata” Monastery, Iasi

GPS: 47.146255 LAT 27.569071 LONG

Galata Monastery was founded by the Prince Petru Schiopu and the church was consecrated in 1584. The name comes from the quarter with the same name from Constantinople (today Istanbul), where the moldavian rulers were finding accommodation whenever they went to the sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Same as other monasteries in Moldavia, Galata has surrounding walls with a belfry – tower. The church of the monastery was taken as model for the Aroneanu Church in Iasi (1594), the church of Dragomirna Monastery in Suceava (1608 – 1609), the church of the Sfantii Trei Ierarhi Monastery in Iasi (1639).

The princely house, where the prince Petru Schiopu often retired, undertook several modifications over the time and today it houses the museum of the monastery, “Sf. Apostol Iacov” Chapel, several exhibits with historical value, a fragment of a fresco with the famous “Galata red” and the church bell donated by Petru Shioipu to the church “Galata from the valley”.

During the restauration works in 1970 the tombs of two of prince’s children were discovered, Despina and Vlad, as well as the one of his wife, Maria Amirali.

From 1990, Galata is a monastery for nuns who are doing embroidery and liturgical cloths.

The church, surrounded by crenelate walls and having a tall belfry – tower at the entrance, looks like a fortress, being often used as defence position and sometimes as a princely residence. It is an example of wallachian influence over the moldavian architecture.

From nearby Galata Hill it opens a beautiful sight over the city.

(<http://www.centruldepelerinaj.ro>)

The “Cetatuia” Monastery, Iasi

GPS: 47.131505 LAT 27.584437 LONG

The Cetatuia Monastery was built by sovereign Gheorghe Duca, between 1669-1672. At the beginning, the church was surrounded by high rock walls, with bulwarks and a guard road, entrance tower, as well as corner towers.

What makes Cetatuia unique is that it has maintained the whole ensemble of monastic architecture. On the Southern part of this precinct stands the Gothic Room “Doamna Anastasia.” The royal palace is a fortified building from the 17th century. The steeple tower and the massive walls are proof that the monastery was also conceived as a refuge in case of the need for a real fortress. The monastery's church is specific for the religious Moldavian architecture of the 17th century.

The monastic ensemble, which was restored during the interwar period at Nicolae Iorga's request, also includes a museum with numerous religious objects.
(<http://www.turism-iasi.ro>)



The “Bistrita” Monastery, Alexandru cel Bun village

GPS: 46.9468945 LAT 26.2988773 LONG

Bistrita Monastery is one of the oldest religious, historical and medieval art complexes in Romania as well as the most important creation of the Musat princes in Moldova. Tradition attributes the first altar built in Bistrita to Petru I Musat, who would have commissioned a wooden hermitage on the site of the existing church. However, the main founding father of the monastery is considered Alexandru cel Bun, followed by three great Musat rulers, i.e., Stephen the Great, Petru Rares, and Alexandru Lapusneanu. Alexandru cel Bun made Bistrita his and his ruling family' resting place, hence, commissioning an imposing church in stone, dedicated to The Assumption of the Virgin , cells for the monks, a bell tower, and a mansion. Close to the turn of the century, in 1498, Stephen the Great carved his name on the list of founding fathers of Bistrita, commissioning an imposing bell tower with a chapel.

The Museum of Bistrita Monastery is extremely rich, having in its custody old religious books, embroidery, old icons, old religious books (sixteen to eighteen century), coins, and the bell given by Stefan cel Mare (bearing Moldova's coat of arms). The art collection includes the icons Punerea in Mormant a lui Iisus [Laying Jesus in His Grave] (sixteenth century) and Maica Domnului cu Pruncul [The Mother of God Mary and the Child Jesus] (eighteenth century). Moreover, on the entrance tower there is an invaluable al fresco icon of the patron saint. It is still here that we find the reputedly miracle making icon of St Anna, presented as a gift by the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II the Palaiologos and his wife Ana to the monastery in 1401, in token of reconciliation between the Ecumenical Patriarchy and the Church of Moldova.

(<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)

The “Horaita” Monastery, Cracaoani village

GPS: 47.0587006 LAT 26.2797184 LONG

Although the monastery was founded in 1822, there are documents according to which it dates from the fifteenth century. Following a divine revelation, father Irinarh Roseti built a wooden church, dedicated to Pentecost. His successor in the priory, father Ermoghen, built a new church, dedicated to Our Lord's Baptism. The church is built of stone, with brick arches, in the Byzantine style. The painting is done in Byzantine style as well. The iconostasis was made in Vienna in gilded wood and the pulpit is placed above the Beautiful Doors. The monastic complex also includes St Nicholas's Winter Chapel, a bell tower sheltering the Pentecost Chapel, and three rows of cells.

The monastery owns valuable objects, e.g., silverware, old icons and books, the most notorious of which is the silver-locked Gospel, an Apostle dating back to Prince Constantin Brancoveanu, another one from the time of Prince Serban Cantacuzino, and an Octoechos. Every year, on Izvorul Tamaduirii [the Healing Holy Spring – celebrated on the first Friday after Easter], there is a procession carrying the Icon of Our Lady, traditionally considered “redemptive of drought.” This is the place where King Carol II spent his 75-day exile in 1919 as punishment for his secret marriage with Zizi Lambrino. (<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)





The “Varatec” Monastery, Agapia village

GPS: 47.1402 LAT 26.2685 LONG

Varatec is connected to the name of Sister Olimpiada, the Mother Superior ordained by Paisie Velicikovscki. Olimpiada commissioned a hermitage, between 1781 and 1785, here in the Varatec clearing. In 1794, a wooden church was built, when mother superior was Nazaria, and later, in 1808, the church we see today was built, dedicated to The Assumption of the Virgin. Ever since 1821, the monastery endured hard times during repeated pillages. In 1900, a consuming fire destroyed almost everything.

The current monastic establishment was built after 1900 and includes the Assumption of the Virgin Church, the bell tower, St John the Baptist's Church, the Metamorphoses Church and the cells. The cruciform Assumption Church - built in river stones and bricks - has thick walls and two bell-shaped domes, combining thus the Moldavian style with neoclassical elements. The original interior frescoes, painted in 1841, were redone in 1882, in a realist style. The bronze statue welcoming visitors in front of the church represents Safta Brancoveanu and was made by Ion Jalea in 1935.

The monastery shelters a chest with relics “of more than thirty saints” and St Anna’s reputedly miraculous icon. Several other sights and pilgrimages are the tomb of Veronica Micle, the poetess, the Lahovary house, “The Silver Forest,” and “The Copper Woods”, “immortalised” in Eminescu’s poems.

(<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)

The “Agapia” Monastery, Agapia village

GPS: 47.5487 LAT 25.9387 LONG

The existence of the monastery was first mentioned in documents in 1437. Tradition claims that it was built close to an older monastic settlement whose name was connected to Agapia the Hermit.

This hermit and his disciples built a later-to-be destroyed wooden church. The first walled church was commissioned by Petru Rares and Lady Elena, and was later renewed by Petru Schiopu. Due to the frequent landslides in the area, around 1600, the monks decided to build a new church down the hill slope, an area where the current Agapia Monastery would develop. Gavriil Coci, Prince Vasile Lupu's brother and minister of war, built the new monastery between 1642 and 1644.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Agapia was a monk monastery and became a nunnery in 1803. The monastery has witnessed an extremely troubled history, e.g., several destructions, plundering, looting, ravaging, fires, etc. It also underwent several restoration works, the latest of which were completed in 2009. Nicolae Grigorescu painted the murals, combining Neoclassical with the Romanian art.

The monastery has a chapel dedicated to Virgin Mary (eighteenth century) and to St John the Evangelist. The monastery also oversees the Theological Seminar for Nuns, i.e., Saint Parascheva the Pious. All around the premises of the monastery, there are over one hundred houses of the nuns. Over the centuries, writers such as Alexandru Vlahuta, George Cosbuc, I.L. Caragiale, Calistrat Hogas, and Duiliu Zamfirescu came to Agapia as a retreat for their creative writing.

(<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)





The “Neamt” Monastery, Vanatori-Neamt village

GPS: 47.27061 LAT 26.201434 LONG

According to the documentary records of the monastery, dating from 1210, Petru Musat commissioned a stone church on the site of a formerly wooden one in 1375, which was destroyed by the earthquake of 1471. Between 1486 and 1497, Stefan cel Mare, considering that rebuilding of the old church was impossible, commissioned a new church dedicated to The Ascension of Jesus Christ, an extremely elegant and beautiful, genuinely unique architectural piece of work.

The monastery was flourishing in the eighteenth century, when St Paisie Velicovski settled at Neamt, with sixty of his disciples. Under his guidance, the monastery was buzzing with an intense scholarly activity, such as translating Filocalia [Philokaly] in Slavonic (printed in Moscow in 1793). At Neamt monastery, the Saint's disciples also translated philokalic manuscripts in Romanian.

The monastery also housed a school of calligraphy, scribes, and miniature, a school of sculptors and engravers, a printing press - founded by Venianim Costache in 1807, and currently in use - and a library with over 15,000 volumes and more than 500 manuscripts (the oldest dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), extremely important for the Romanian culture. The oldest manuscript in custody in the Neamt Monastery is a Tetraevanghel [The Four Gospels], written on parchment in the late fourteenth century.

The museum of the monastery, created in 1916, retains the iconostasis of the Neamt Stronghold Chapel, an epitaph of 1821, wood carved crosses, several icons painted by Nicolae Grigorescu, various religious regalia and robes.

(<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)

The “Secu” Monastery, Pipirig village

GPS: 47.200298 LAT 26.184368 LONG

Around 1500, a group of hermits from Neamt Monastery settled on the Secu Creek valley. Under the guidance of Zosima the hermit, in 1530, they founded Zosima's Hermitage. Prince Petru Rares commissioned a church for the new hermitage, on the site of today's graveyard. In 1550, Elena, the Prince's wife, and their sons commissioned the construction of a stone wall around the hermitage. The founders of the stone monastery were Nestor Ureche and his wife Mitrofana, parents of the chronicler Grigore Ureche.

From the civil engineering viewpoint, Secu Monastery belongs to the fortified monastic settlement category. Strong walls with square defence towers close in a rectangular area having two-storied cells on its sides. The bell tower - imposing both by its massive construction and its height - covers the west entrance. The exterior decoration is a simple median moulding, between to teethed brick rows, which divides the entire surface into two large registers, the upper register, covered by a row of elongated niches with a well-contoured arch under the cornice, and the lower register with larger niches.

(<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)





The “Sihastria” Monastery, Pipirig village

GPS: 47.175858 LAT 26.165249 LONG

The monastery was commissioned in 1655, on the site of an older hermitage bearing its founder's name, i.e., Atanasie's Hermitage. Bishop Ghedeon of Husi commissioned here the first church and cells for the community of monks. After several Tatars invasions, the settlement was in ruins, therefore, in 1734, Bishop Ghedeon commissioned a new church. In 1734, Sihastria Monastery is placed under the authority of Secu Monastery, and in 1779, under the authority of Neamt Monastery. In 1821, during the conflict between the Turks and the Eterists, the monastery was burnt down and looted. Works to rebuild the monastery started in 1824, under the guidance of Metropolitan Bishop Venianim Costache and of the prior Dometian. Then, the stone church, the bell tower, a body of cells, the gate tower, and the surrounding wall were rebuilt. In 1837, a winter wooden chapel was built that was burnt down in 1941, together with the surrounding cells. They were built again and in 1947, under the guidance of Father Superior Cleopa Ilie.

Over the last decades, Sihastria Monastery, has conducted, besides its religious activity, an intense cultural missionary activity, and has evolved into a major Romanian spiritual centre. Paisie Olaru and Ilie Cleopa, the great confessors of the monastery, have been considered genuine spiritual fathers of the Romanians. The rich editorial activity conducted in the monastery is mostly owed to archimandrite Ioanichie Balan, who founded the Sihastria Monastery Publishing House. (<http://www.viziteazaneamt.ro/>)

The “Dragomirna” Monastery, Mitocu Dragomirnei village

GPS: 47.757825 LAT 26.229928 LONG

Placed among the beautiful hills of Bucovina, at 12 km west from the old residence of Stephen the Great and the Bishops of Moldavia, the Dragomirna monastery stands tall defying time, inside the fortress walls. Built as to face the heights, in a search for light from among the forest, shadowed by a curtain of fir trees and majestically reflected by the lake nearby, this place of prayer, through its ancientness, through the originality of its style, through the elegant and solid shape, through the picturesque awakens the admiration of each visitor, so that in its presence the pilgrim is as impressed as is the historian or the art critic.

Besides the beauty of the landscape, the unusual location, what leaves an unforgettable impression is the peculiar elegance of the monument, withholding geometrical rigors of great taste, an unique stature through its proportions and lengths, exceeding all of the other Moldavian medieval monuments.

Founded by the bishop Anastasie Crimca and the chancellor Lupu Stroici between the years 1608-1609, the church is dedicated to The Descent of the Holy Spirit and impresses by its rectangular shape. The exterior decoration has a series of sculptural elements (rosettes, stars, and rhombs) that create a real embroidery. In the median area, a stone carved frieze that divides the construction, while in the interior the painting is another innovator element. The museum of the monastery preserves manuscripts, book bindings fitted with gold and silver, embroideries.

(<http://www.manastireadragomirna.ro/>)





The “Sfantul Ioan cel Nou” Monastery, Suceava

GPS: 47.641801 LAT 26.262981 LONG

The church of the “Sfantul Ioan cel Nou” Monastery of Suceava, has “Gheorghe the Saint Great Martyr the bearer of victory” as titular saint, began in 1514 by Stephen the Great's son, Bogdan the 3rd the one-eyed (1505-1517) and was finished by Bogdan's son, Stefanita (1517-1527) in 1522, being built in a tri-conic plain. The church has hallway, narthex, nave and altar.

The remains of Saint Ioan cel Nou are kept in the church, being brought to Suceava in 1402 (or 1415 – the historians are not certain) by Alexandru cel Bun and placed in the Mirauti church in the beginning, and then brought to this church by the Vaivode Petru Schiopul in 1589.

The church was painted in the interior and at the exterior in 1534, during the reign of the Petru Rares, the painting being executed in fresco, in Byzantine art. The painting was restored twice, the first time between 1906-1909, by the painter Iohann Viertelberger, and the second time between 2001 -2008. From the exterior fresco only the southern side was preserved, the God's Mother prayer list and the Spender Son's Parable (four scenes), while the Ieseu Tree was still preserved in fragments. (<http://explorebucovina.com/sfantul-ioan-cel-nou-from-suceava-monastery/>)

The “Arbore” Monastery, Arbore village

GPS: 47.733273 LAT 25.933324 LONG

The “Beheading of Saint John the Baptist” Church from Arbore (known also as the Arbore Church, although isn't the only church in the village) is an orthodox church built in 1502 in Arbore village (Suceava county) by the hatman (ministry of war) Luca Arbore. It distinguishes itself through the exterior mural paintings. The Arbore church has the dedication day the beheading of Saint John the Baptist (celebrated each year on the 29th of August).

In 1993, United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) has included the Arbore church, together with 6 other churches from the north of Moldavia (Humor, Moldovita, Patrauti, Probota, Suceava - “Sf. Ioan cel Nou” and Voronet), on the world heritage list, in the group of painted churches in the north of Moldavia. (<http://www.manastireaarbore.ro>)



The “Sucevita” Monastery, Sucevita village

GPS: 47.778175 LAT 25.711146 LONG

Included in UNESCO world heritage list and situated at 18 km from the city of Radauti, Sucevita monastery was built at the end of the XVth century on the expenses of the whole Movila family, family that gave to Moldavia two rulers and one metropolitan.

This classic Moldavian church with its five rooms, shows the first new architectural tendencies: smaller niches, and three bases for the tower. The frescoes are very remarkable, colourful and well preserved.

Three Movila brothers built the Church of the Resurrection of Sucevita around 1583. The church is the only painted church that was not founded by a ruling prince. Quite soon after the monastery was built Ieremia Movila became the ruler of Moldavia, and his brother Simion reigned in Walachia. The third brother, Gheorghe, who was during that period the Bishop of Radauti, rose to become the Metropolitan of Moldavia. The church was painted around 1595, nearly half a century after its “sister” churches. It is considered the last flowering of the custom of painting the church façades that mark the reigns of Stephen the Great and Petru Rares. Building and painting a church that closely resembled the edifices their ancestors raised decades before, was a way for the Movilas to claim to be part of the royal line of Stephen the Great.

The church of the Sucevita Monastery was included on the UNESCO Heritage List on 1 August 2010 and is the only church that includes a representation of The Ladder of St. John. (<http://www.romanianmonasteries.org/bucovina/sucevita>) (<http://manastireasucevita.ro>)

The “Moldovita” Monastery, Vatra Moldovitei village

GPS: 47.657102 LAT 25.571119 LONG

Although hundreds or even thousands of people visit the monastery daily, the nuns who live in the monastery are barely noticed. Wherever the nuns are working, in the household, in the painting workshops, the embroidery ones, sewing beautiful religious clothes or painting with porcelain dust the miniature icons, all is going according to a well known order. They have the face and the behaviour of the monarch who lives in the mountains, the head bent with humility and the eyes in the ground. They only raise their eyes when are putting together their hands for prayer to fix the faces from the icons and whisper “Aleluia”.

Under the peaceful reign of Alexander the Good, protected and endowed by its founders, Moldovita Monastery has lasted until the end of the XVth century when, because of a landslide, it collapsed. Its ruins are seen even today, at approximately 500 m distance from the present Moldovita Monastery.

The ruler Petru Rares, an art lover like his father Stephen the Great, wanting to continue the existence of Moldovita Monastery, chose a place slightly to the plane from the old church of Alexander the Good and built the present church of Moldovita in the year 1532, dedicating it to the same Feast of the Annunciation. In the same period, the ruler surrounds the church with walls and defensive towers, giving it the looks of a small fortress. No doubt that there were dwellings, as seen in the foundation remains in the north side, on which the bishop Eferm of Radauti, between 1610 – 1612, built the parish house, to live, keep the treasures of the church and conduct a school for transcribers and miniature painters, continuing in this way the cultural work of Petru Rares.

(<http://www.descoperaromania.eu>)





The “Voronet” Monastery, Gura Humorului

GPS: 47.517346 LAT 25.864091 LONG

Also called the Sixtine Chapel of the Orient, Saint George's Church from the Voronet Monastery is one of the most important foundations of Stephen the Great, built between May 26th and September 14th 1488. In 1547 the church porch has been added by the Metropolitan Grigore Rosca and at the same time the facades were covered with an exterior painting. In the beginning it was a monastery for the monks, but the monastic life, interrupted after 1786, was resumed with a group of nuns in 1991.

The church, built in Stone, has the interior and the exterior painting done between 1534 – 1535 and 1547 and impresses through the method in which is done and through the colouring. The background of the whole exterior painting, the famous Voronet blue, is unique in the world but, the thing that brought to this monument the name of Sixtine Chapel of the Orient is the scene of the Last Judgment, painted in 1547 on the western facade. On the south side there is the Iesei's Tree, on the left of the entrance there are the Metropolitan Grigore Rosca and Pious Daniel the Hermit, and above it, near the dedication stone, the Deisis scene.

(<http://www.inbucovina.ro/obiective-religioase/manastiri/manastirea-voronet>)

The “Humor” Monastery, Humorului Monastery village

GPS: 47.593653 LAT 25.854279 LONG

Humor Monastery is located in Manastirea Humorului village, about 5 km north of the town of Gura Humorului, Romania. It is a monastery for nuns dedicated to the Dormition of Virgin Mary, or Theotokos. It was constructed in 1530 by Voievod Petru Rares and his chancellor Teodor Bubuioag. The monastery was built over the foundation of a previous monastery that dated from around 1415. Humor was one of the first of Moldavia's painted monasteries to be frescoed and, along with Voronet, is probably the best preserved. The dominant colour of the frescoes is a reddish brown. The master painter responsible for Humor's frescoes, which were painted in 1535, is one Toma of Suceava.

The subjects of the frescoes at Humor include the Siege of Constantinople and the Last Judgment, common on the exterior of the painted monasteries of Bucovina, but also the Hymn to the Virgin inspired by the poem of Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople relating to the miraculous intervention of the Theotokos in saving the city from Persian conquest in 626. The Persians are, however, depicted as Turks which is a common mistake in these monasteries, their paintings being used in part for political propaganda in addition to their spiritual meaning.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humor_Monastery)





The “Probota” Monastery, Dolhasca

GPS: 47.375126 LAT 26.623328 LONG

Probota Monastery (or Pobrata Monastery, its old name) is an orthodox monastery, built in 1530 in Probota village (which, in the present, belongs to Dolhasca city, Suceava county) by the ruling prince Petru Rares. The church of the Probota Monastery is dedicated to Saint Saint Nicholas (celebrated every year on the 6th of December).

The Probota Monastery carried out the role of princely necropole of Moldavia (1522 – 1677), here being the tombs of the rulers Petru Rares (1527-1538, 1541-1546) and Stefan Rares (1551-1552), of the Lady Elena Rares and of several members of the ruling families of Moldavia.

In 1993, United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) has included the Saint Nicholas Church from Probota Monastery, together with 6 other churches from the north of Moldavia (Arbore, Humor, Moldovita, Patrauti, Probota, Suceava - “Sf. Ioan cel Nou” and Voronet), on the world heritage list, in the group of painted churches in the north of Moldavia.

(http://www.descoperaromania.eu/obiective_turistice/bucovina/13/manastirea_probota)

(<http://probota.ro>)

Precista Church, Bacau

GPS: 46.562894LAT 26.91663 LONG

Precista Church is located in Bacau, Str. 9 Mai, 48 and is one of the most renowned churches in the city of Bacau. Dedicated to the Dormition of Virgin Mary, the church is part of the architectural complex of the Princely Court in Bacau.

The church of the Lord's Mother was founded, in the times of Stephen the Great, by his son Alexander and was consecrated on January 1st 1491. Built from stone and bricks, in the particular style of the epoque of Stephen the Great, the church is well balanced, harmonius, having a length of 25.68 m, the narthex width of 8.12 m and wide, at the apsis, of 11.24 m. In the same time, it is woth mentioning that, from the order of Alexander, in the year 1494, inside the church was placed a tomb stone, suspected to belong to one of the sons of the ruler prince, discovered in 1911 by the architect Virgil Draghiceanu, decorated in gothic style and exhibited in the present at the History Museum in Bacau.

In the exterior of the church, on the east side, al fresco, the ruins of the Princely House and of the defence tower of the Princely Court were restored.

(<http://www.crestinortodox.ro>)





“Dormition of Virgin Mary” Church from Borzesti village, Onesti

GPS: 46.2413559 LAT 26.8177948 LONG

Borzesti is a village from Bacau County; today, the village has become a quarter of Onesti city. Here was born and raised Stephen the Great. The ruler Stephen the Great inherited the estate from Borzesti from his ancestors. The church from Borzesti is dedicated to the Dormition of Virgin Mary and was built at the order of Stephen the Great between July 9th 1493 and October 12th 1494.

Inside the church the Culture and Religious Art Museum has been founded in 1994 with an important cultural patrimony: icons, religious exhibits and antique religious books (XVII – XIX centuries).

Mostly known under the name of “Princely Church of Borzesti”, the sight is not only an oasis of peace and faith but also a reason for pious meditation in the memory of the great ruler.

(<http://www.crestinortodox.ro>)

The Casin Monastery, The Monastery Casin commune

GPS: 46.09891LAT 26.633572 LONG

Located at 16 km from Onesti, the monastery was founded in 1655 by the ruler Gheorghe Stefan. The blueprint of the church, the architecture of the facades and proportions are identical with the ones of Golia Church in Iasi, but the shapes are simplified.

The church was surrounded by princely houses and a very high and strong stone wall with fortress like towers, being conceived as a place of defense. After the great earthquake in 1805, being severely damaged, the monastery was repaired by the Greek Father Superior Ierotei and, between 1836 – 1839, by the Father Superior Isaia from Constantinople. (<http://www.manastireacasin.ro>)



The background image shows a village scene with a church in the foreground, a forested hillside in the middle ground, and a blue sky with light clouds. The church has a prominent steeple and a smaller spire. The hillside is covered with trees, and the sky is a clear, bright blue.

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Photos: Nord-East RDA collection and other sources.

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