

Bulgaria and Romania

Departing 4th June 2025

Blue Dot Travel

Go somewhere different



\$6,960 pp

Twin-share, excluding
international flights
Single supp \$1,150



BULGARIA AND ROMANIA

Medieval history, fabulous food and wine, picturesque countryside... and Dracula!

Bulgaria is a great mix of culture and tradition with Greek, Roman and Turkish influences all leaving their mark. After being caught up in both WWI and WWII and formerly part of the Eastern Block, Bulgaria has emerged with a unique identity and history just waiting to be explored. In fact, it boasts 9 UNESCO-listed World Heritage sites. You'll love the capital Sofia, a mix of old and cool. Equally, you'll be charmed by the atmosphere and old town of Plovdiv, Europe's oldest consistently occupied city.

Romania's pristine mountain landscapes and wonderful medieval towns seem to have stepped out of time. There is a lot to see and do in this mainly Christian Orthodox country. The picturesque Carpathian Mountains occupy the centre of the country, while the region of Transylvania is well known for its castles, churches and beautiful forested mountains. The quality of their wines has increased dramatically over the years, and you'll be pleasantly surprised at the wine and food culture.

Grab your camera and come join us on this fascinating cultural mix - history, beautiful scenery and wonderful food and wine. This tour is available as a stand alone tour, or as an extension to Blue Dot's May 2024 Caucasus departure.



Wednesday 4th June
Departure from Australia

Day 1, Thursday 5th June
Arrival in Sofia

Welcome to Bulgaria!

On arrival in Sofia, meet our guide and transfer to the hotel for check-in. The balance of the day is for rest and recovery after the flight. Your guide will advise when to meet up for a welcome dinner. Accommodation at Grand Hotel Sofia (or similar). *D*



Day 2, Friday 6th June
Sofia

Today, a tour of Sofia, the country's capital. The city has a population of around 1.5 million

and lies west of the country. Unlike most major European capitals, it is not on a major river. Rather, it's surrounded by mountains with ancient roads leading in and out. City tour highlights will include the St. Sofia statue, St. Petka church, St. George

Rotunda, Ruins of Serdica, National Theater, the Synagogue, Russian church, Al. Nevski Cathedral and St. Sofia church. In the afternoon, we will visit Boyana Church (UNESCO heritage listed) - a unique monument with wonderful frescoes /10thc./.. Created by a Bulgarian artist, the realistic painting style surpassed the Italian Renaissance by a century. The next stop is the National History Museum - one of the largest history museums on the Balkans. The oldest crafted gold in the world, created by the oldest civilisation in Europe, founded on the territory of Bulgaria (Varna area), the world's famous Thracian golden and silver treasures, ceramics, bas-reliefs from Bulgarian medieval capitals, etc., make a visit worthwhile. Dinner tonight is in a traditional restaurant to enjoy the local dishes and local wine. Overnight at the Grand Hotel Sofia. *B/L/D*

Day 3, Saturday 7th June
Sofia – Rila Monastery – Plovdiv

After breakfast, we'll visit the famous Rila Monastery (UNESCO-listed), the largest monastery in the country and a must-see. We'll tour the monastery with its lavish collection of precious old icons and manuscripts. An inaccessible fortress from the outside reveals a different world behind its

heavy gates, exquisite architecture with arches and columns, 1,200 outdoor murals, sunlit verandahs and old fountains. Lunch in a restaurant nearby, tasting the local fresh trout menu. We'll then continue to Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second-largest city. Accommodation is at Double Tree by Hilton, Plovdiv (or similar). Dinner is at your leisure tonight.

B/L



Day 4, Sunday 8th June **Plovdiv – Starosel – Plovdiv**

After breakfast, a city tour of Plovdiv. Plovdiv is one of Europe's oldest cities, and some historians argue that it is the oldest continually inhabited city in Europe, with civilisation dating back 6,000 years. City tour of Plovdiv - one of Europe's oldest. Tour of the Old Town, and the group will visit one of the Ethnographic exhibitions, St. Konstantin and Elena church and then the Roman Theatre. The 2,000-year-old theatre was only discovered 50 years ago. It could seat 30,000 people – an astonishing number for its time! Stroll along the pedestrian street (the longest in Europe - 1,750m) where you will see the Roman Stadium built by Emperor Hadrian – one of the largest and most impressive structures from the time of Ancient Rome in the Balkans. Depart for Starosel winery (or similar) for wine tasting and dinner in the afternoon. Over the last 10 years, this region has become well known for its quality wines and boasting many vineyards. Accommodation at Double Tree by Hilton, Plovdiv.

B/D



Day 5, Monday 9th June **Plovdiv – Kazanluk – Veliko Tarnovo**

After breakfast, the group will depart for Kazanluk, a small town in the world's only 'Valley of Roses'



famous as the 'Valley of the Thracian Kings'. The ancient Thracian town Seuthopolis and the Thracian tombs around it are now exposed at the history museum.

The ancient gold funeral mask is as important a discovery as the treasures of Agamemnon and Tutankhamun. The Thracian Tomb dates back to the 4th century BC (UNESCO-listed) a masterpiece of Thracian architecture and painting, offering a unique insight into the life of the ancient Thracians. Drive further for a visit of a private, family-run Rose Oil Distillery, built in 1991 and located in a beautiful rose garden with selected rose varieties. Visit of the local Ethnographic museum, where you will see the oldest method for extracting rose oil, established more than 350 years ago. You will see the modern methods of extracting rose oil, feel the spirit of the old tradition and taste some of the delicious rose jam, rose liqueur or rose brandy. Next, we'll drive to

of Etur's open-air living museum – unique in South-Eastern Europe. The lifestyle and old Gabrovo crafts from the National Revival Period (18th-19th century) have been brought back to life here. Master craftsmen fashion beautiful, colourful ceramics, copper vessels, silver jewellery, leather and wooden articles, musical instruments, icon-paintings, and more. Continue to the stunning Veliko Tarnovo, the ancient capital of Bulgaria, which was recently announced as the cultural capital of the Balkans. We'll enjoy a cheese-tasting with local wines and dinner in a restaurant in the Old Town. Accommodation at Yantra Grand Hotel (or similar). *B/L/D*



Day 6, Tuesday 10th June **Veliko Tarnovo – Rouse – Bucharest**

After breakfast, we will visit the medieval Tzarevets Fortress and have some free time for any last-minute shopping at Samovodene market. Drive further to Rouse, the most significant Bulgarian port on the Danube, for a city tour. Then we will say farewell to our guide in Bulgaria and meet our new Romanian driver and guide at 16:00 hrs.

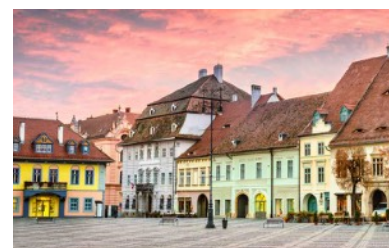
Welcome to Romania!

Continue to our final destination, Bucharest. Dinner and overnight at Bucharest Grand Continental (or similar). *B/L/D*



Day 7, Wednesday 11th June **Bucharest**

Today, a walking tour of Bucharest and a panoramic view of the most important buildings and squares: The Arch of Triumph (the same architecture as the Arc de Triomphe in Paris), Romanian Athenaeum (Bucharest's most prestigious concert hall and home of George Enescu Philharmonic), the former Royal Palace, Opera house; Squares: Victoriei, Romana, Revolution, Universitatii and Unirii. And visit to Parliament House.



After lunch, we'll continue our walk to the old historical centre, including the Lipskani District, with its old buildings, pedestrian streets full of restaurants, bars, clubs, and shops with antique or artistically handmade souvenir products. We'll visit Curtea Veche Church, the oldest church in Bucharest, in the Old Historical Center, which preserves its original shape and grounds. This evening, free time and dinner on your own. Overnight at Bucharest Grand Continental. *B/L*



 **Day 8, Thursday**
12th June
Bucharest –
Curtea de Arges –
Cozia Monastery –
Sibiu

On our way to Sibiu, we'll stop to visit

Cozia Monastery, the oldest and most complex historical and art monument in Romania, and an important foundation of the ruler Mircea the Ancient. Depart for Curtea de Arges, the former second capital of Wallachia and visit the Episcopal Monastery Church, which is a recreation of the original built in 1512-1517 by Prince Neagoe Basarab. In the afternoon, we'll tour Sibiu, the largest and wealthiest of the citadels built in the 12th century by German settlers known as Transylvanian Saxons. Due to its important cultural significance, Sibiu was designated a European Capital of Culture in 2007. Free time and dinner on your own. Overnight in Sibiu at Hotel Ramada (or similar). **B/L**

 **Day 9, Friday 13th June**
Sibiu – Alba Iulia – Hunedoara – Sibiu

After breakfast, we'll depart for Alba Iulia, one of the oldest towns in Romania, known in ancient times as Apulum. Visit the impressive Alba Carolina citadel. The trip continues to Hunedoara to visit Corvin Castle, a Gothic-Renaissance castle with an amazing history and legends. Lunch included. Return to Sibiu in the afternoon. Free time and dinner on your own. Overnight in Sibiu Hotel Ramada (or similar). **B/L**

 **Day 10, Saturday 14th June**
Sibiu – Jidvei Winery – Biertan – Sighisoara

Departure to Jidvei, for visit and wine tasting of one of the most important wineries from Transylvania. Departure to Biertan village and visit of Biertan Fortified Church (UNESCO), one of the first and most important Saxon villages and fortified churches in Transylvania. Departure to Sighisoara (UNESCO), the well-preserved medieval citadel in Europe. Pedestrian sightseeing tour of Sighisoara of the center of this old city certified first in 1191 and built on the site of a Roman fort. We will discover its Clock Tower, Weapon Museum – next to Vlad the Impaler's birthplace, the Covered Staircase, the Evangelic Church on the Hill and the cemetery. Overnight at Sighisoara Hotel Double Tree by Hilton, Cavalier (or similar). **B/L**

 **Day 11, Sunday 15th June**
Sighisoara – Viscri – Brasov

After breakfast, we'll depart for Viscri village (UNESCO-listed), We'll enjoy a traditional lunch in

Viscri. In the afternoon, arrive at Brasov, known as Kronstadt in German. It is the most visited medieval and mountain resort city in Transylvania due to its values: the old historical centre with Gothic, well-preserved Baroque and Renaissance architecture, great food and amazing scenery. Tour of the old historical centre, including the fortifications and the old city walls, the bastions, White/Black Tower, the Black Church, Town Hall Square, and The Rope Street (the narrowest street in Europe). Overnight at Brasov Aro Palace (or similar). **B/L**

 **Day 12, Monday 16th June**
Brasov – Bran – Azuga Winery – Brasov

In the morning, departure to Bran village and to visit Dracula's Castle, which owes its fame to its imposing towers, narrow corridors in a mysterious labyrinth as well as to the legend created by Bram Stoker about Vlad The Impaler - Count Dracula. Lunch and tasting at Azuga Rhein Cellars The wine cellars from Azuga were built in 1892, by the Rhein family, an official supplier for the royal court. Sparkling wines and champagne-type wines are produced using the traditional "champenoise" method. We'll have a cellar tour and wine tasting served with cheese and bread. Return to Brasov. Free time in the afternoon. and dinner at your own leisure. Overnight at Brasov Hotel Aro Palace. **B/L**

 **Day 13, Tuesday 17th June**
Brasov – Peles Castle – Bucharest

After breakfast, we'll depart for Sinaia through the Prahova Valley along the Carpathian Mountains to Sinaia Mountain Resort. Visit and lunch at Peles Castle, a former Royal Residence. In the afternoon, visit of The Village Museum outdoor museum, one of the main tourist attractions in Bucharest, showing a unique collection in Eastern Europe of old villages, peasant houses from all the regions in Romania, and old furniture and tools. Dinner with a folkloric show at "Hanu lui Manuc" Restaurant in the Old Historical Center - the oldest inn in Bucharest, a traditional and impressive architectural building. Return to the hotel. Overnight at Bucharest Grand Continental (or similar). **B/L/D**



Day 14, Wednesday 18th June
Departure

After breakfast, depart for home or to your next destination. There'll be a transfer to the airport for those booked on the group flight departure. **B**