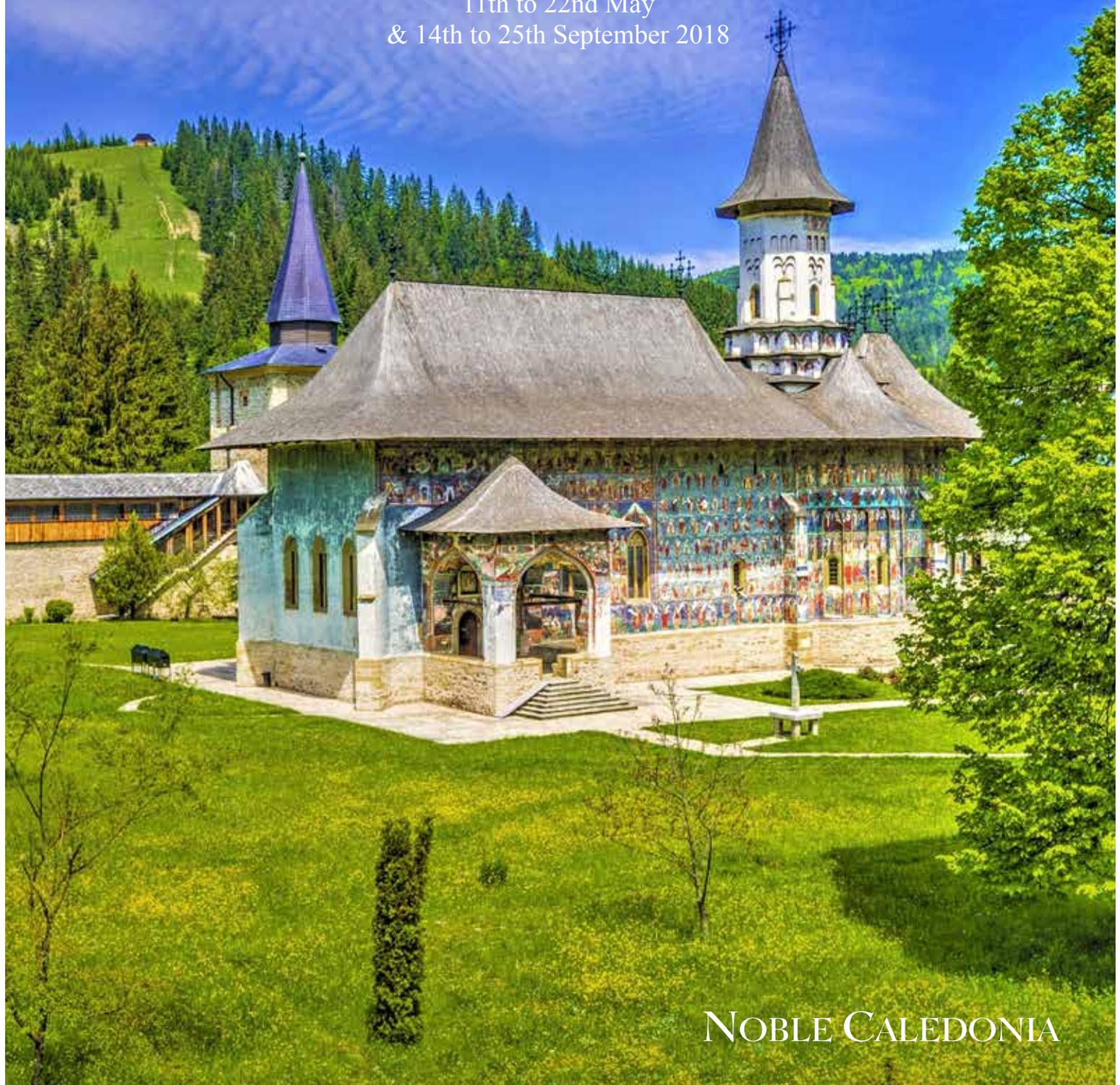


# CULTURAL TREASURES OF ROMANIA

An escorted tour of Transylvania, Moldavia and Bucovina

11th to 22nd May  
& 14th to 25th September 2018



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Bran Castle



The Romanian Athenaeum, Bucharest



The Clock Tower of Medieval Sighisoara



Interior of Peles Castle in Sinaia



Red Lake (Lacu Rosu) at Bicz Gorges

Join us for a comprehensive escorted tour through central and north east Romania. Travelling amongst the plains and slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, this unique itinerary is one of contrasts, from stunning architecture to picturesque villages and an intriguing history which will be brought to life by excellent local guides. Our journey begins in Transylvania, a land of forests, lakes and stunning Medieval towns. We will explore some restored Saxon villages and towns, many on the UNESCO Heritage List, visit fairytale castles and travel across the beautiful Carpathian Mountains, the landscape for the setting of Bram Stoker's "Dracula". We will also visit the fascinating and unique painted monasteries of Bucovina; their fine exterior and interior frescoes have been preserved since Medieval times. Highlights of our tour are endless, and this promises to be a unique journey through regions relatively untouched by mass tourism. We will stay in the best available hotels in the region.



who inspired Bram Stoker's fictional creation, Count Dracula. Enjoy a guided stroll and lunch before we continue further through the heart of Transylvania to Targu Mures and check in to the Hotel Privo or similar for an overnight stay.

**Day 4 Carpathian Mountains, Ciocanesti & Radauti.** After breakfast, take a drive through the scenic landscape of northern Transylvania, crossing the Carpathian Mountain range, the second longest in Europe. They provide the needed habitat for more than 6000 Carpathian Brown Bears and many other species that would otherwise be at risk of extinction. This is the route described by Bram Stoker in his novel "Dracula" as the fictional location of the Castle of Count Dracula. We will stop at Borgo Pass for lunch in Dracula's Castle Restaurant and continue to the bucolic mountain village of Ciocanesti to visit the Painted Eggs Museum, and enjoy a demonstration of egg painting by the local artists. Continue to Radauti and check in to the Gerald's Hotel or similar for a two night stay. Enjoy wine tasting with our dinner this evening.

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Sibiu, Romania.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight. On arrival, transfer to the Best Western Silva Sibiu Hotel or similar for a two night stay. This evening enjoy a welcome drink and dinner in the hotel.

**Day 2 Sibiu.** This morning we will explore the city of Sibiu, one of the seven walled cities founded by the Saxons. We will take a drive around the city, seeing such sights as Great Square, Small Square, Liars Bridge, the Orthodox Cathedral, the Brukenthal Museum and stop at the Lutheran Cathedral of Saint Mary, the most famous Gothic-style cathedral in Sibiu. After lunch in a local restaurant, enjoy some free time to explore the Old Town which retains the grandeur of its earlier days when rich and powerful guilds dominated regional trade. This afternoon we

will visit Sibiel, stopping en route in Cristian to visit the old fortified church. Sibiel is a beautifully preserved village which maintains many age-old traditions within its community. We will visit the local museum to see the rich collection of glass-painted icons and later we are all invited into a local home for a traditional dinner.

**Day 3 Biertan, Sighisoara & Targu Mures.** Today we continue to drive through the rich and fertile plateau of the Tarnave Rivers, stopping at the Transylvanian Saxon village of Biertan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Continue to Sighisoara, a perfectly intact 15th century gem with nine towers, narrow passageways and cobbled streets, burgher houses and ornate churches, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Sighisoara is the birthplace of Vlad Dracula

**Day 5 Painted Monasteries of Bucovina.** Today we have a full day tour to three of the most fascinating painted monasteries of Bucovina. The tour will begin with Voronet Monastery, the



The Transylvanian Saxon village of Biertan



Fresco from Voronet Monastery, Bucovina

“Sistine Chapel of the East”. Here the frescoes inside and out are painted an intense ‘Voronet blue’ and even after 450 years, the paintings still look bright and fresh. Next we visit Moldovita Monastery, awarded the ‘Golden Apple’ trophy by the Federation of European Journalists. We will have lunch in a local restaurant here before continuing to the largest and finest of the painted monasteries, the Sucevita Monastery. Here we see thousands of painted images on a background of emerald green. This evening we will enjoy dinner and a folklore performance at the hotel.

**Day 6 Radauti, Tarpesti & Piatra Neamt.** This morning we visit Agapia Monastery, built at the beginning of the 17th century. The interior of the main church has been fully redecorated by the great Romanian painter Nicolae Grigorescu. Our tour continues with a visit to the first private museum of Romania, located in the village of Tarpesti, followed by a traditional homemade lunch in a local home. Later we will transfer to Piatra Neamt and check in to the Central Plaza Hotel or similar for an overnight stay and dinner.

**Day 7 Bicz Gorges & Brasov.** After breakfast we drive back to Transylvania via the Bicz Gorges, one of the Carpathian’s deepest gorges at over

300 metres and a spectacular site. Nearby is Red Lake (Lacu Rosu), so named because of the reddish alluvia deposited by the Red Creek. We visit Sumuleu–Ciuc Fransiscan Monastery, which is the most important pilgrimage location for Catholics of South Eastern Europe. Lunch will be taken at Miercurea Ciuc before we continue to Brasov for a three night stay at the Aro Palace Hotel or similar.

**Day 8 Brasov.** We have a full day to explore Brasov. Founded by the Teutonic Knights in 1211 and settled by the Saxons as one of the seven walled citadels, Brasov exudes a distinct Medieval ambiance and has been used as a backdrop in many recent period films. Our city tour will include the Old Town Hall Square; the Black Church, the largest gothic church in Romania; Rope Street, the narrowest street in Europe at just four feet wide; Catherine’s Gate, built in 1559 and the only original gate to have survived from Medieval times; and the Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church. After lunch enjoy some free time or join the optional excursion to the Prejmer Fortified Church. Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant, specialising in traditional Romanian cuisine.

**Day 9 Brasov.** Relax and enjoy another day in Brasov. Meals are under your own arrangements today.

**Day 10 Bran, Sinaia & Bucharest.** Surrounded by an aura of mystery and legend and perched high atop a 200-foot-high rock, Bran Castle owes its fame to its imposing towers and turrets as well as the myth created around Bram Stoker’s “Dracula”. Built on the site of a Teutonic Knights stronghold dating from 1212, the castle was first documented in an act issued by Louis I of Hungary on November 19, 1377, giving the Saxons of Kronstadt (Brasov) the privilege of building the Citadel. We continue through the lush landscape of the Azuga-Busteni Mountains,

often referred to as the ‘Romanian Alps’. We will stop at the Halewood sparkling wine company in Azuga for a tour and tasting followed by lunch. This afternoon we visit Peles Castle in Sinaia, considered by many as the most beautiful castle in Europe. Continue to Bucharest and check in to the Pullman Hotel or similar for a two night stay.

**Day 11 Bucharest.** Today we discover Bucharest exploring the main sights of the city and seeing the boulevards with their decidedly French style. Visit the Parliament Palace, the second largest administrative building in the world at 3.77 million square feet. This gargantuan construction is Ceausescu’s most infamous creation, and makes for a fascinating tour (*please note closure at short notice is possible if unannounced official functions are taking place*). After lunch in a local restaurant, enjoy some time at leisure before meeting this evening for our farewell dinner.

**Day 12 Bucharest to London.** Transfer to the airport for your return scheduled indirect flight to London.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£2495** Single: **£2895**

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • 11 nights hotel accommodation • All meals (with the exception of lunch and dinner on days 9 and 12) • Wine, beer and soft drinks with dinners • Excursions • Entrance fees • English-speaking guides • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, optional excursion on day 8, lunch & dinner on days 9 & 12.



Painted Egg Museum at Ciocanesti



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## NOBLE CALEDONIA

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
Cover images: Front - The Painted Monastery of Sucevita at Bucovina; Back - Peles Castle, Sinaia