

# Carpathian Mountains & Transylvania Trek, Romania

Unspoiled wilderness trekking in Romania's Southern Carpathian mountains with stunning scenery from first step to last.



## Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

## Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Guesthouses
Grade	Vigorous / Strenuous
Duration	8 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 6 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Romania
Land only	Joining in Bucharest, Romania
Max altitude	2,507m/8,225ft, Vanatarea lui Buteanu Peak, Day 6

**Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available**



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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2022 Dates:

Sat 16 Jul - Sat 23 Jul  
Sat 03 Sep - Sat 10 Sep

### 2023 Dates:

Sat 15 Jul - Sat 22 Jul  
Sat 02 Sep - Sat 09 Sep

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

# Your guide

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Our Carpathian Mountains holiday will be led by a very experienced and qualified Romanian Mountain guide who speaks excellent English.

Guides include, Andrei, a professional mountain guide whose passions are rock-climbing, ski-mountaineering, walking, history, cooking and many more!

## Your trip highlights

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- Trek on quiet but challenging trails with 1,000m ascents and descents most days
- Observe the traditional Romanian way of life, and help to preserve it by staying in village accommodation
- Ascend Vanatarea lui Buteanu, 2,500m, one of the highest peaks in the Fagaras Mountains, for dramatic ridgetop views
- Visit mysterious Bran Castle, the historic inspiration for the fictional home of Count Dracula
- Stay in comfortable village guest houses and small hotels, and enjoy hearty, home-cooked food
- Explore the cobblestoned town of Sibiu with its imposing city walls and mighty defence towers

## At a glance itinerary

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Day 1	Fly from London to Bucharest. Drive to Sinaia.
Day 2	Trek from Sinaia to Bucegi and down to Pestera.
Day 3	Trek to Batrana Peak and descend to Bran.
Day 4	Visit Bran Castle. Trek to Magura Peak and descend to Magura.
Day 5	Walk up to Piatra Mica Peak and return to Magura.
Day 6	Drive to Balea Lake. Ascend Vanatarea lui Buteanu, 2,500m.
Day 7	Trek the Balea Lake Circuit and Doamna Valley. Drive to Sibiu.
Day 8	Drive to Bucharest airport. Fly to London.

## Trip summary

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As the legendary home of Count Dracula, the Carpathian Mountains have a dark mysterious image but the reality couldn't be more different. Welcome to a region of superlative alpine scenery, charming mountain villages and wonderfully hospitable people. In these rural areas little has changed for centuries; you will see small summer lodges built for the hay harvest, sheep paths through forest and meadows, and shepherds riding on donkey carts.

Romania is home to one of the largest remaining areas of pristine forest on the continent, with deep forest covering more than a quarter of the country. Bears, wolves and lynx thrive here, the highest concentration of large carnivores anywhere in Europe. Trekking through two regions of the Carpathians - the Bucegi Natural Park and the Fagaras Mountains - you will enjoy bucolic scenery of emerald green valleys nestled between foothills, and ascend through swathes of ancient forest to wild crags, dramatic peaks and precipitous gorges. In the summer, the forests are a riot of colour and birdsong whilst the meadows are alive with a flamboyant carpet of colourful wildflowers, and all around are signs of a way of life seemingly forgotten by time.

The trekking on this trip is stunning, challenging and rewarding, with ascents of around 1,000 meters most days, often with a summit as your goal. The walking around Sinaia, Bran and Margura is delightful, with superb views at every turn. In the Fagaras Mountains it becomes craggier and more dramatic, with extensive rocky ridges. There is only one night where you don't have access to your kit bag so you have to take/carry the bare essentials with you on Days 2 and 3.

Accommodation is a mix of good standard hotels in towns, a simple mountain chalet for one night, and attractive comfortable guest houses in the villages. Staying for some nights in guest houses gives you a unique insight into the way of life of Romania's rural population, and you will find the owners to be the perfect, warm-hearted, friendly hosts. They will also cook your evening meals and give you a hearty breakfast in the morning so you are suitably fuelled for your day's hike.

There is plenty of cultural and historic interest on the holiday, and your expert guide will bring it all to life for you. No visit to historical Transylvania would be complete without a stop at imposing Castle Bran, the legendary home of Dracula, and your last night is spent in the beautiful, culturally rich town of Sibiu.

For anyone looking for meaty walking on quiet trails, but with scenery every bit as stunning as the Alps in Western Europe, this is definitely the trip for you.

### **Special notes**

#### **Land only clients and airport transfers**

We will provide one group transfer on the start day from Bucharest Airport and one transfer back to the airport on the last day. Please note it is essential if you are booking your own flights, that your flight arrives by 4pm on Day 1, and departs after 4pm on Day 8, due to the long drives involved on these days.



# Your trip itinerary

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## Day 1: Fly From London To Bucharest.

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There is a single, timed group transfer from the airport to your hotel in Sinaia. The drive takes 1½ - 2 hours to Sinaia, a lively attractive skiing resort, with stunning architecture. There are beautiful views of the Bucegi mountains and surrounding forests. The town is home to a 17th century monastery, formerly a royal family residence and German neo-Renaissance castle - Peles Castle. Commissioned by King Carol I in 1873 and completed in 1883, the castle served as the summer residence of the royal family until 1947. Its 160 rooms are adorned with the finest examples of European art, Murano crystal chandeliers, German stained-glass windows and Cordoba leather-covered walls.

**Overnight: Hotel Rina or Similar, Sinaia**

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## Day 2: Trek from Sinaia to Bucegi Plateau, 1,900m (and extension to 2,200m), and down to Pestera, 1,600m - 6-7 hours.

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From your hotel you begin walking uphill. You soon leave the road taking a well defined stony path, which zig zags up through the forest. It's a pleasant walk through a mixture of fir and beech trees. Eventually, after about an hour of climbing, you emerge into the open hillside where you'll see the royal sheepfold. You continue upwards on a well marked trail on open hillside until you reach the plateau. You'll see a hotel here which is where Romania's sports teams head for altitude training. There is a giant cross on top of a hill which was built after WWI. No doubt you will find a suitable spot on the plateau to stop for lunch. There are great views to be had of the surrounding mountains, dramatically steep limestone cliffs, and you can see back down to Sinaia.

You continue to ascend slightly until you reach the conglomerate outcrops known as the 'Sphinx' and 'Babele' (the Old Ladies). This is a popular spot for Romanians to visit and most come up by cable car. You descend for 1½-2 hours, first on the open hillside, and then through mixed forest, until you reach Lalomita River Valley and your accommodation. On this day you will not be supported by a vehicle so you'll need to carry what you need for your overnight stay, which will just be a change of clothes and minimal toiletries.

Total ascent/descent on walk: 1,200m ascent, 600m descent.

**Overnight: Hotel Pestera or Similar, Pestera (Meals: B L)**

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## Day 3: Walk to Batrana Peak, 2,200m, and descend to Bran - 7 hours.

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You leave your hotel and begin ascending on a winding trail, past sheep enclosures and meadows towards a waterfall. You continue climbing the western ridge of the Bucegi Massif until you reach Batrana Peak at 2,200m, marked with a small cairn. You'll see a refuge just below. There are excellent views here of the surrounding mountains, valleys and meadows, dotted with neat haystacks and wooden huts for storing hay. Your route is an ancient passage for shepherds and their flocks and you will see sheep being herded up the mountain, as this way of living is still very much alive. During the time of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, this was also a smugglers route. In front of you lies Bran Country, with a landscape shaped by millennia of pastoral life and traditional habitation.



You start descending along the big limestone and granite walls and then into the woods, heading towards Bran village where you will spend the night.

**Overnight: Bran Chalet or Similar, Bran (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 4: Visit to Bran Castle. Walk to Magura Peak, 1,350m, and descend to Magura - 4-5 hours.**

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Today you start the day with a visit to Bran Castle, also known as Dracula's Castle. Author Bram Stoker never actually visited Romania. Instead he is believed to have created his imaginary castle, home of fictional character Dracula, from an 1865 book on Transylvania which describes Bran. The origins of the real Bran Castle date back to the early 13th century and the Teutonic Knights who erected a citadel there to defend the southeastern border of Transylvania. Today an aura of mystery still surrounds the conical towered castle which is dramatically situated on a rocky outcrop, and there is plenty to explore, inside the museum and out.



Castle visit over, you start your walk, climbing towards the village of Magura. The trail weaves north and south of an ascending ridge, from sunlight to shade, from hay meadows to wild forest, up to Magura Peak. A quick descent brings you to this dispersed typical mountain village where you'll stay in a guest house.

Total ascent/descent on walk: 700m ascent, 500m descent.

**Overnight: Guest House in Magura (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 5: Walk up to Piatra Mica Peak, 1,800m, and return to Magura - 7-8 hours.**

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Your walk today starts by leaving Magura village and descending for half an hour to the first of the gorges. You walk through the spectacular Zarnesti Gorges, a narrow limestone passage leading up to the wooded slopes of Piatra Craiului mountains. You then cross a patch of virgin forest opening into the meadows at the feet of the craggy eastern side of the Northern Ridge. You then ascend through green meadows to Curmatura Hut (1,450m) for around two hours. This is a lovely hut, nicely decorated inside and with a terrace with a great view of surrounding meadows and soaring limestone cliffs.

After a stop for tea at the Curmatura Hut and a well-earned rest, you continue to climb Piatra Mica Peak at 1,800m, 350m above the hut. This is initially on a good trail to a viewpoint just above the Crapauturii saddle, and then there is a steeper rocky section which involves a short scramble with a fixed chain for assistance. The summit is marked by a giant metal cross and there are fabulous views from here. It's a fine place to stop for lunch, weather permitting. It takes about 3-4 hours to reach here from Magura. You then have a fairly steep, rocky descent through the forest for 400m until you reach Zanoaga Meadow and its old sheepfold. A steep, winding descent through the woods brings you back to the start of the gorges. You then have a short sting in the tail - a half an hour ascent to take you back to the start of your walk at Magura.

**Overnight: Guest House in Magura (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 6: Drive to Balea Lake. Walk in the afternoon to Vanatarea lui Buteanu, 2,507m - 4 hours.**

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This morning you will drive to Balea Lake, a popular spot for hikers with stunning mountain scenery. In the winter it becomes a ski resort for expert skiers and snowboarders with off-piste skiing on the longest slope in the Carpathians. It's accessible by road in summer and by cable car in the winter. Here you are in the extremely impressive and dramatic Fagaras Mountains, the highest range in the Southern Carpathians. Romania's highest mountain here is Moldoveanu Peak at 2,544 although this won't be your objective today. Instead, in the afternoon, you will ascend a spectacular 2,500m rocky peak called Vanatarea lui Buteanu. The scenery is craggy and impressive here and there is an extensive rocky ridge. You descend on a well-worn trail towards Balea Lake where you will stay at the simple Cabana Paltinu hotel.

Total ascent/descent on walk: 500m ascent, 500m descent.

**Overnight: Cabana Paltinu, Lake Balea (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 7: Balea Lake Circuit and Doamna Valley walk - 6-7 hours. Transfer to Sibiu - 70 km.**

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After breakfast you climb to Capra Saddle and then Iezerul Caprei Peak, walking a circuit of the upper glacial cirque of Balea. You complete the tour with wonderful views of Wallachia to the south and Transylvania to the north, following the main ridge of Fagaras massif up to Paltinu peak and then down Doamna Saddle. Here you start a 1,000m descent to the tranquil Doamna Valley. Once you reach the treeline you make a short climb to swap to Balea Valley where the transport is waiting to take you to Sibiu.

Total ascent/descent on walk: 500m ascent, 1,300m descent.

The medieval city of Sibiu is one of the cultural highlights of your trip. Together with Luxembourg it was the European capital of Culture 2007 and its wealth of museums, architectural treasures and cultural objectives is not to be missed.

**Overnight: Am Ring Hotel or Similar, Sibiu (Meals: BLD)**



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**Day 8: Group transfer to Bucharest 5-6 hours. Flight home.**

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After breakfast today you will drive back to Bucharest airport, and fly home. **(Meals: B)**

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## Our grading system

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Carpathian Mountains & Transylvania trek is graded as a Vigorous/Strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

### **Vigorous**

Typically these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. This grade also covers some European treks of shorter durations. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping.

These holidays would suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

### **Strenuous**

Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

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## Trip altitude

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**Important** - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend [www.medex.org.uk](http://www.medex.org.uk) as a good source of information.

## What the price includes

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**Mountain Kingdoms** aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ An experienced English-speaking Romanian guide
- ✓ A single timed group transfer to/from Bucharest airport at the start and end of the holiday
- ✓ Accommodation in good quality hotels and guest houses on a twin share basis
- ✓ All breakfasts and picnic lunches, plus three evening meals
- ✓ Entrance fee to Bran castle and guided visit of Sibiu
- ✓ Luggage transportation on every day except Days 2 and 3
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK (if booking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ The option to attend one of our pre-trip meets in the Cotswolds
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Items of a personal nature
- ✗ Four evening meals
- ✗ Locally paid bar bills and laundry

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.



## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



### **Hotel Rina or Similar, Sinaia**

The pleasant Hotel Rina is in the centre of town, close to the the train station. The hotel has good sized, comfortable rooms with picture windows, modern amenities and free Wi-Fi. It also has a pool and spa. The Rina is within walking distance of restaurants, Peles Castle, Pelisor Castle and Sinaia Monastery.



### **Hotel Pestera or Similar, Pestera**

This is a good standard, modern hotel with swimming pool, downstairs bar and spacious restaurant. Located in the mountainous Bucegi National Park, the Pestera has well-decorated rooms with balconies, either overlooking the surrounding mountains or forests.



### **Bran Chalet or Similar, Bran**

The Bran Chalet is a three star hotel with good views of 14th century Bran Castle, the inspiration for Dracula's castle. Rooms are large and comfy with en suite bathrooms, lovely river views and free Wi-Fi. It also has a restaurant/bar offering traditional Romanian fare, and a terrace.



### **Guest House in Magura**

The guest houses in Magura are clean, comfortable and homely. They serve good, wholesome, three course evening meals (vegetarians can easily be catered for), and a generous buffet breakfast. They have pleasant hosts and you can chat to them about rural life in Romania. Most of the rooms are en suite, although in busy periods you may have to share a bathroom. Some of the guest houses have a communal living room for you to spend time in.



### **Cabana Paltinu, Lake Balea**

Set in a log cabin-style building surrounded by the Făgăraş Mountains, this remote hotel overlooking Lake Balea is just off the Transfăgăraşan highway. It has simple rooms offering free Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs, and balconies featuring full or partial views of the mountainside. Other amenities include a fitness room plus a spa area with a sauna and a hot tub.



### **Am Ring Hotel or Similar, Sibiu**

Situated in the main square of Sibiu's attractive old town, the Am Ring is set in an historic gothic building that has been converted into a comfortable yet elegant hotel. In keeping with its heritage, the furnishings are from the 19th century and the hotel has a wine cellar, two restaurants and sun terrace. Rooms are large and well-equipped with minibars, air-conditioning and free Wi-Fi.

## Meal arrangements

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7 x breakfasts, 6 x lunches, 3 x dinners.

## Flight arrangements

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### **Flight inclusive from price**

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### **Flight upgrades and regional Airports**

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Further information

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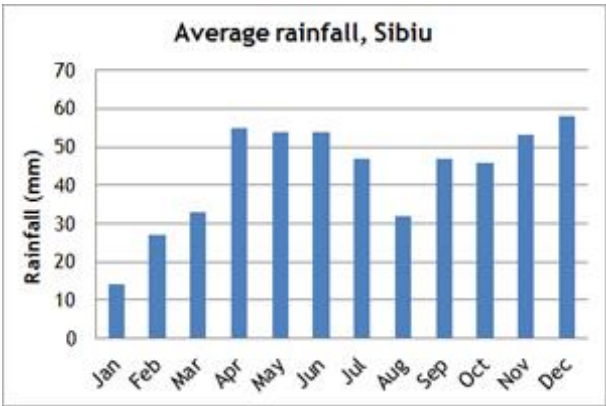
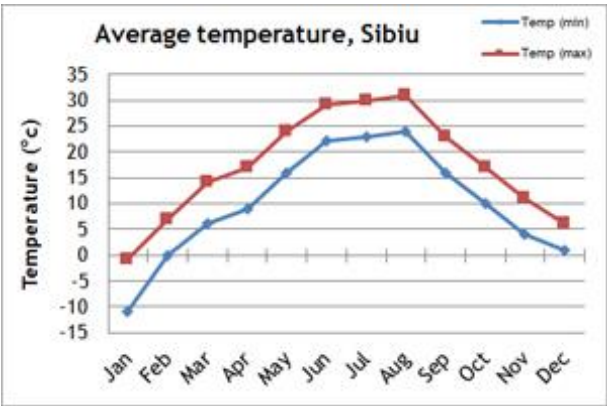
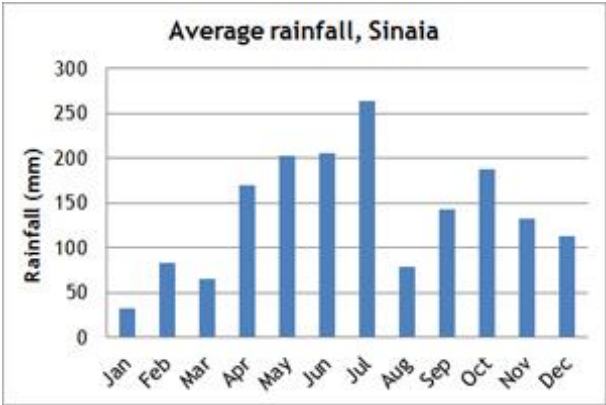
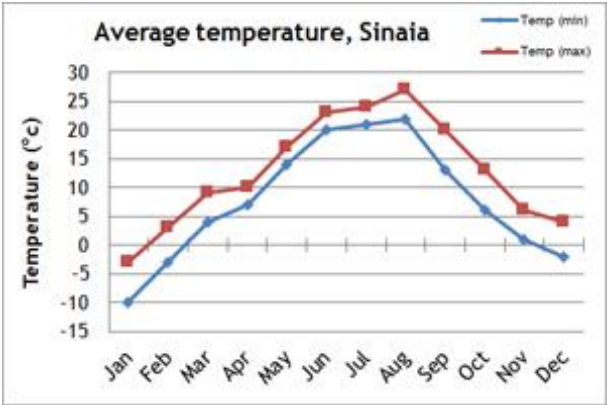
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

# Climate information



# Extensions

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## Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements.



## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- We provide luggage transfers on all but two days (when you stay in more remote accommodation). On all other days your kit bag will be taken by vehicle to your accommodation.
- We use extremely knowledgeable, experienced qualified mountain guides with a wealth of knowledge on Romania.
- On two nights you will stay in village guest houses offering a more enriching experience of life in rural Romania, along with good home cooked food.
- In towns we stay in good standard hotel accommodation.
- We include all breakfasts and lunches (mostly picnic-style) and evening meals in the guesthouse in Magura.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- Operations Manager Niki Morgan reced this trip in 2018. Please email [niki@mountainkingdoms.com](mailto:niki@mountainkingdoms.com) or call her on 01453 844400 if you have any queries about this trip and she will be happy to help.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com) or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

## What we say

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*This trip has all the ingredients for the perfect walking holiday. With superb, challenging walking, fantastic alpine scenery, characterful home-stays with great home-cooked food for a closer insight into rural Romanian life, good hotels, and an evening out in the beautiful, culturally rich town of Sibiu.*

*- Niki Morgan, Mountain Kingdoms*

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### **Carbon Offsetting**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### **Reducing Carbon Emissions**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.



