



Experience Wilderness Eastern Carpathians

Feel wilderness in the land of bears, lynxes, and wolves

Introduction

Romania is, except for Russia, the country with by far the highest number of bears, wolves and lynxes in Europe. These fascinating predators mainly live in the Carpathian Mountains and that's exactly where this Experience Wilderness tour leads us to! We stay in the heart of the Eastern Carpathians near Calimani National Park. In this 9 days expedition we travel via night train and mini bus to the area, pitch up our tents at a glade in the middle of a forest full of old and dead wood and experience wilderness at its best.



We stalk red deer, capercaillie, and three-toed woodpeckers, look for tracks of bear, wolf and lynx, and who knows, maybe we have very great luck to even see one of these outstanding predators? As a special highlight we also explore the area on horseback. After this wilderness adventure we relax in a small, traditional hotel before we finalize our trip with a sightseeing tour to the historical center of Sighisoara in Transylvania.



Itinerary

✦ Day 1: Night train to Medias

Departure of your night train from Vienna via Budapest towards Bucharest in the evening (-/-), Lodging: Couchette

✦ Day 2: Medias - Drive to Eastern Carpathians

Arrival in the Transylvanian city of Medias in the morning, where your [wilderness guide](#) welcomes you. If sufficient time is available, we will make a short walk through the old city centre of Medias before we drive with our minibus up to our private pension in Vatra Dornei and enjoy a dinner with local specialities.

(-/-/D), Lodging: private pension, Driving time: app. 6 h

✦ Day 3-7: Experience Wilderness, back to real nature!

Now the adventure really starts, outdoor experience at its best! First we hike up to our camp site, a glade in the middle of a forest full of old and dead wood on a 1700 m high mountain ridge near Calimani National Park. We walk with full luggage and partly off the path. Now the toughest part of our whole trip is done, and we set up our base camp and enjoy our first night in wilderness.

In the following days we hike in the wild off the path during day, dawn, dusk and night. We read tracks, observe animals by stalking and sitting, practice orientation in wilderness and making fire without matches. We interpret nature sounds, animals and plants, do some horse back riding in the wild (no riding experience necessary) and prepare simple outdoor food at our campfire. Moreover, there is enough time to explore the near surroundings on your own or to just enjoy pure nature, tranquillity, peace and remoteness.

After several intensive days in wild we remove our camp on day 7, hike back into the valley and relax in a small, traditional hotel.

(B/L/D), Lodging: tent or if you want just under the stars, Walking time: up to 7 h and 600 m elevation gain

At day 7: (B/L/-), Lodging: traditional hotel or pension



⤴ **Day 8: Sighisoara - Night train to Vienna**

After a comfortable night in a proper bed we drive with our minibus to Sighisoara, a Transylvanian city, and explore its impressive historical centre, a UNESCO world heritage site. Sighisoara is also supposed to be the birth place of Vlad III Draculea, who should have served as the model for the famous Count Dracula in Bram Stoker's novel Dracula. In the evening we return to Vienna by night train.

(B/-/-), Driving time with minibus: app. 6 h, Lodging: Couchette,

⤴ **Day 9: Arrival in Vienna**

In the morning we arrive in Vienna

(-/-/-)

It is of course possible to extend your stay in Romania on an individual basis. Furthermore you can also get to Medias or Vatra Dornei on your own. This will reduce the price by the train ticket costs. For a small additional charge we can also support you in organizing your extension or travel.

Trip notes

- ⤴ Flexibility, assistance (e.g. by preparing food or setting up the camp) as well as ability to work in a team are prerequisites for this tour. We act in nature, therefore we might have to deal with bad weather and unpredictable nature incidents. Weather and nature can influence our itinerary and as a result delays or changes can not be excluded. Therefore participants have to be flexible and show patience as well as understanding for unavoidable situations.
- ⤴ Good physical condition and agility over difficult terrain is necessary as we mainly go off the path. In addition to this we have to carry all the luggage including food and tents to and from the camp site on the first and last day, often off the path and 600 m up a partly steep slope.
- ⤴ Staying and sleeping out in wilderness requires tolerance and willingness to get out of your comfort zone. Our meals are regional or organic, but basic, and there is only a simple outdoor shower facility.
- ⤴ We respect Romanian culture and the environment that we are in, avoid unnecessary disturbances, sensible places and times as well as strictly adhere to a "leave no trace camping" ethic. We expect the same behaviour from all our participants.



- ⤴ Spirit of adventure is a prerequisite, as we are stalking several days through wild nature! To avoid dangerous situations the wilderness guide has to be obeyed at all times. Participants take part in this tour at their own risk and therefore have to sign an indemnity form at the beginning.

- ⤴ The tour will be cancelled if extreme weather conditions (e.g. heavy storm; long-lasting, intensive bad weather) are predicted. If that is the case, one can of course resign free of costs. As an alternative we will try to start a new tour as soon as possible.

- ⤴ Important notice: I am just guiding these wilderness tours, booking and other organizational activities are done by the travel agency [Tierra Incognita](#)! For further organizational information and booking please contact them directly.

Dates and prices

For this year no tours are planned. Anyhow, on request we can organize a private tour for you.

Inclusions

Costs include:

- Tour itinerary as described above
- 2 nights in a double room in traditional pensions
- Train ticket from Vienna to Medias and back from Sighisoara to Vienna in a couchette
- Transport from Medias to Vatra Dornei and back to Sighisoara in a minibus
- Camping equipment (not including tents, can be rented for a fee of EUR 40 per tent - Type "Hilleberg Allak")
- Full board in the wilderness, for the rest as listed in the itinerary
- English and German speaking, professional wilderness guide for the whole trip in Romania
- Fee for horse back riding including local horse guide
- Conservation donation to protect the wilderness area (EUR 5) and for local mountain rescue service (EUR 5)

Costs do not include:

- Tip for guides
- Travel insurance



Terms of payment

Deadline for booking 3 weeks prior to departure via info@tierra-incognita.at. At time of booking 20% of the full price has to be paid and at least 2 weeks prior to departure the balance has to be paid up. Booking is only valid after the 20 % deposit is paid. Important notice: Restricted number of participants! Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

This journey is organised by the travel agency [Tierra Incognita](#). In addition to the regulations listed above the general terms and conditions¹ of [Tierra Incognita](#) shall apply.

Tierra Incognita - Reisen mit Weitblick

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Eintragungsnr. 2007/0029 im Veranstalterverzeichnis des BMFWA

1 Cancellation rates:

until 30 days prior to departure	20%
29 to 20 days prior to departure	50%
19 to 10 days prior to departure	65%
9 to 4 days prior to departure	80%
as of 3 days (72 hours) prior to departure of the travel price.	100%



Equipment checklist

It is important to restrict your personal equipment to essential items. As a general rule the weight of your backpack should not exceed 20-25 % of your body weight. Important notice: At the starting point of our wilderness hike you will get some additional 6 kg of group equipment (including cooking utensils) and food to carry.

To facilitate your packing we developed a checklist of items we strongly recommend for your outdoor luggage during our stay in wilderness. Concerning clothes this list gives an orientation, but you can of course vary based on personal preferences. However, the total weight of your clothes should not be significantly higher than in our checklist and it should fulfil the same purpose. In general more light clothes are better than a few heavy ones ("multi-layer principle"). Furthermore, clothes should be durable and light as well as bright colours of outside clothes should be avoided. Earth or neutral colours such as green, brown, khaki, or grey are preferable so that animal eyes do not catch us that easily.

- Personal medical requirements
The wilderness guide has a general first aid kit, but if you need a specific medicine you have to bring it yourself. Furthermore, you have to inform us upon booking about relevant health problems.
- Waterproof, lightweight tent
Two persons should always use one tent to save weight and space. If you are travelling by yourself we are pleased to put you in contact with other group members to find a second person. If necessary, you can also sleep in a one person tent. However, that of course increases the weight of your backpack significantly. In case you do not have a suitable tent, you can rent a high quality 2-person tent (Typ "Hilleberg Allak") from us for EUR 40 (please indicate that when booking).
- Sleeping bag
A so called three-seasons-sleeping bag with a comfort zone significantly below -3°C fits best
- Sleeping mat
- Trekking rucksack
With a volume of 60-70 litre
- Optional soft-pack rucksack
A small, lightweight daypack that can be packed into your big trekking backpack during the hike to and from the camp. It can be used for our probably two full day walks. We recommend that two persons share one daypack.

- 2 T-shirts
Fast drying sportswear preferable, but normal shirts are also okay
- 2-3 underpants
- 1 long pant
Might be more comfortable for cold nights and in the sleeping bag
- 2-3 trekking socks
- 2 long sleeved trekking trousers
Preferable with zip-off possibility
- 1 long trekking shirt
- Fleece pullover or jacket
- Trekking jacket
- Rain jacket
If you use a waterproof trekking jacket an additional rain jacket is not necessary. As an alternative you can also take a rain poncho, that protects also the rucksack from rain
- Rain-cover for rucksack
Not necessary if you use a rain poncho
- Rain trousers
- Gaiters (optional)
To prevent water from entering the top of the boot when your trousers are wet
- Head gear
- Light woolly hat and light gloves
During bad weather conditions it can be very cold in the mountains
- Waterproof, ankle-high hiking boots
- Light shoes (optional)
Preferable light shoes with thin, flexible sole for silent walking and as second shoes in our camp, e.g. moccasins, "Vibram Five Fingers", if applicable trekking sandals
- Pocket knife
- Head lamp and spare batteries
- Water bottle
Minimum 1,5 litre
- Light trekking towel
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Sun cream
- Needle and thread (optional)
- Feminine hygiene (optional)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Photo equipment (optional)



- Hiking stick
Highly recommended, as we often walk at steeper terrain
- Additional personal documents (e.g. passport)
- Second bag
For items you do not need during our wilderness stay (e.g. clothes from your arrival). We will store that in the pension.

To forget our daily stressful life, to keep the atmosphere wild even when in camp, and not to disturb other participants, the following items are forbidden while we are in wilderness:

- Mobile phone
- Watch
- Radio, mp3-player,...

The wilderness guide will bring the following items, so it is not necessary for you to pack them:

- First aid kit
- Cooking and eating utensils
- Soap (biodegradable)
- Toilet paper
- Camping equipment:
Tarp, water canister, outdoor shower,...
- Field guide books
- Mobile phone
Only for emergencies. You are not allowed to bring your personal mobile phone during our stay in the wild
- Food
Basic regional or organic outdoor food, such as muesli, bread on a stick, pasta, hard cured sausage, lentils, rice, hard cheese, berries, nuts, dried fruits, tea, coffee, milk powder. If you are vegetarian, please indicate that upon booking. If you like sweets or bars you have to bring them yourself. We sleep near a spring, therefore water for drinking and washing is available. If you like isotonic drinks you can bring fizzy tablets.