



ROMANIA

Carpathians, Transylvania & the Danube River Delta

&

BUCHAREST PRE-TRIP

May 16-31, 2026

May 15-17, 2026



European Bee-eater © Mark Curley

On this mid-spring tour, we will discover the Eastern European country of Romania, a place unknown to many travelers, but one that boasts some of the finest landscapes and birding and natural history attractions on the continent. Our travels will center on three outstanding regions where multiple nights at each location ensure a more intimate travel experience: Transylvania and the Carpathian Mountains, the Black Sea coast and, legendary among wildlife aficionados, the Danube River Delta. Birders and naturalists will delight in the opportunity to travel in Romania at the most dynamic time of the year, when breeding resident birds are joined by thousands of northbound waterfowl, waders, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds. For those with an interest in history and culture, Romania's allure resides in the architectural wonders of its many historic towns and villages.

Transylvania is known for the scenic beauty of its Carpathian landscapes and its rich history. Sheer mountains, plunging gorges, and sprawling forests characterize the scenery here while Saxon fortresses, historic towns with centuries-old buildings and cobblestone streets, and a rich tableau of wildlife are main attractions. We will spend five days exploring the eastern and southern Carpathians, encountering a range of exciting bird species such as Black and White-backed woodpeckers, Crested and Long-tailed tits, Northern Nutcracker, White-throated Dipper, Wallcreeper, Barred Warbler, Eurasian Bullfinch, Hawfinch and many others. The Carpathians also are home to the largest Brown Bear population in Europe, numbering up to 8,000 individuals, and we will have a chance to see wild animals from a viewing blind.



Black Woodpecker © Fekete Harkály

On the Black Sea coast, we'll visit a variety of wetland, forest, and open-country habitats where birds are plentiful. Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Long-legged Buzzard, Booted Eagle, Pallid and Montagu's harriers, Great Black-headed Gull, European Roller, European Bee-eater, and Ortolan Bunting are expected.

Our adventure concludes with a visit to the famous Danube River Delta and a three-night stay aboard a floating hotel. Here, we'll explore the mosaic of habitats that provide refuge to an astonishing number of birds. Highlights include masses of Dalmatian and Great White pelicans, Pygmy Cormorant, Black Stork, White-tailed Eagle, Thrush Nightingale, and many others.

An optional one-day pre-trip will be available for those who would like to spend a day sightseeing in Bucharest, the fascinating Romanian capital known for its wide tree-lined boulevards, glorious Belle Époque architecture, and evocative buildings and monuments. With a licensed guide, we will visit the most famous and important sites of the city including the Palace of Parliament, Palace Square, Revolution Square, University Square, and the Old Town.

May 16–17, Day 1–2: Departure from U.S. to Bucharest, Romania

Flights from the United States bound for Europe depart on May 16 and arrive on the morning of May 17. Connecting flights to Bucharest (Henri Coandă International Airport (airport code OTP) arrive in the afternoon depending on your European connecting city.

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met outside the baggage claim by a representative of our ground agent and transferred to the **Capital Plaza Hotel Bucharest** where a room has been reserved in your name. After check-in you will have the remainder of the afternoon to yourself. Lunch is on your own. We will gather as a group at 6:00 p.m. in the hotel lobby for a trip welcome and introduction, followed by dinner.

NIGHTS: Day 1: On board international flight

Day 2: Capital Plaza Hotel Bucharest

May 18, Day 3: Bucharest to Odorheiu Secuiesc

Departing Bucharest this morning, we will head north to the mighty Carpathian Mountains in Transylvania. Along the way we may see our first Common Buzzard or Eurasian Marsh-Harrier coursing over the agricultural fields along the highway. Climbing into the mountains, we'll arrive at the resort town of Sinaia, home to the dramatic Peles Castle of King Carol 1st of Romania and a famous medieval monastery built in the late 17th century. The surrounding evergreen forests host Gray Wagtail, Crested Tit, Firecrest, Red Crossbill, and White-throated Dipper along the streams. After lunch we continue driving north with short birding and comfort stops. In the late afternoon, we will arrive at our hotel near Odorheiu Secuiesc, close to the Harghita Mountains.

NIGHT: Desag Resort, Zetevaralja



Peles Castle © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

May 19, Day 4: Birding in the Harghita Mountains

Today we will wind our way east into the rolling Harghita Mountains covered in coniferous forest. The open valleys, ravines and woods here are home to a nice array of woodland birds including five species of woodpeckers—Black, Eurasian Green, Gray-headed, Great Spotted, and Middle Spotted; Common Cuckoo; Great, Eurasian Blue, Coal, Willow, Crested, and Long-tailed tits; Eurasian Nuthatch; Eurasian Blackcap; Lesser Whitethroat; Common Redstart; several flycatchers; Goldcrest; Firecrest; Eurasian Bullfinch; and Hawfinch. Rarer denizens of the forest that we hope to encounter in the course of the day include Hazel Grouse, Northern Nutcracker, and Eurasian Three-toed and White-backed woodpeckers. These latter species are secretive and occur in low densities and will require some luck to find. The elusive and enchanting Ural Owl also breeds in ancient beech woods. This evening, we will visit a specially located (and comfortable) blind to view Brown Bears. This area is one of the best places in Europe to see bears, and we feel that our chances for success are high.

NIGHT: Desag Resort, Zetevaralja



Northern Nutcracker © NAGY



Brown Bear, Harghita Mountains © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

May 20, Day 5: Birding to the scenic Biczaz Gorge and Killer Lake

Climbing into the eastern Carpathian Mountains, we will end up at the narrowest canyon, Biczaz Gorge, an excellent place for Wallcreepers as they hunt spiders and arthropods in the cracks and crevices of the rocks that form this spectacular fissure in the

earth. Along the stream at the bottom of the gorge, we will seek White-throated Dippers and Gray Wagtails among the boulders being splashed by the rushing water. In the shrubby woodlands near the top of the mountains, we will seek the elusive and striking Ring Ouzel. Overhead, Alpine Swifts slice through the air effortlessly as they catch insects to feed their young that are tucked away in the crevices of the higher cliffs of the gorge. Chamois, a small goat relative, also haunts the higher rugged slopes. Nearby Killer Lake was created in 1837 when a small stream was abruptly blocked by a landslide in the forested valley. The lake is still populated by the dead trunks of trees, preserved by the high mineral content of the lake. A wet meadow near Senetea may harbor nesting Common Rosefinch, and chances are good to see Great Gray Shrike, Whinchat, and Lesser Spotted Eagle. Eurasian Sparrowhawk and Northern Goshawk are also present in the surrounding woodlands but are less conspicuous in the breeding season. The noisy Corncrake, hidden in the wet grass, may be calling throughout the day in spring.

NIGHT: Desag Resort, Zetevaralja



Wallcreeper © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

May 21, Day 6: Travel to the Southern Carpathians, birding en route

After breakfast we set off on our journey south. Our first stop is in Sighisoara with a city tour. Entering the town is like stepping into a fairy tale. Narrow cobbled streets and alleyways wind through charming villas and brightly colored 16th century houses. The UNESCO-protected citadel, the best preserved of its kind in Europe, was the birthplace of one of history's great monsters, Vlad Tepes, who would come to be known as Vlad the Impaler or Dracula.

Leaving Sighisoara we drive south to reach the town of Viscri where we'll lunch in an authentic Romanian restaurant, offering locally sourced ingredients. In favor of a visit to a similar, more impressive site in Prejmer, we will forego a visit to the Viscri fortified church, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We continue our drive south to Prejmer where we will wander around a beautiful fortified church built by the Saxons, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Surrounding the cross-shaped church, originally built by the Teutonic knights, are walls 12 meters high and 4 meters thick that protected the church and Prejmer's inhabitants during times of war, when each family would retreat into its own room. Wheat and smoked hams stored in the towers were sufficient to support the whole village during long sieges. The entrance is a separate fortress complete with holes once used for pouring boiling tar on invaders. A deep moat with drawbridge once surrounded the fortress. Prejmer was often the front line of defense, being the southeastern-most Saxon settlement. Although it was attacked more than 50 times by Mongols, Turks, Tatars, Cossacks and Moldavians, the fortified church was overwhelmed only once. We will take about an hour to tour the site.

NIGHT: Villa Hermani, Magura, Zarnesti



Fortified church, Prejmer © Trabantos/Shutterstock

May 22, Day 7: Birding Zarnesti Gorge and the Stramba Valley

We will spend two full days in the famous Bucegi Mountains, part of the southern Carpathians. Our hotel is located in a small village surrounded by traditional small-scale farming, so we have a genuine look at the lives of local farmers. The food served here is locally sourced, fresh and tasty.

Scenic alpine meadows and vast spruce and beech forests are home to a nice array of high elevation bird species and mammals. This location gives us another chance to see Brown Bears, and beyond bears we'll watch for Chamois that are found here. Sometimes they can be seen from the terrace of our hotel. We shall search for Syrian and Eurasian Green woodpeckers, Wryneck, Black Redstart, Fieldfare, Red-backed Shrike, Eurasian Linnet, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow around our hotel in the morning. During the day we will explore Zarnesti Gorge, a fascinating valley carved deep into the stone by a quick stream. Alpine Swift, Eurasian Crag-Martin, White-throated Dipper, Gray Wagtail and Rock Bunting are easy to see here.

In the afternoon we will visit the Stramba Valley where, at the entrance to the valley, meadows and hedges are a great place for Lesser Spotted Eagle, European Honey-buzzard, European Turtle-Dove, Common Cuckoo, European Bee-eater, European Stonechat, Whinchat, Greater Whitethroat, Barred Warbler, and Red-backed Shrike. As we reach the more forested areas, Black and Gray-headed woodpeckers, Wood Warbler, Red-breasted and Collared flycatchers and Hawfinch take the stage. Sometimes even Ural Owl and White-backed Woodpecker are spotted here. If we missed seeing Brown Bears in the Harghita Mountains, we will have a second chance for bears here. A comfortable and secure bear blind is located deep in the forest. We will drive in, taking a local ranger with us. We will occupy the blind in the late afternoon, hoping the bears will visit.

NIGHT: Villa Hermani, Magura, Zarnesti



White-throated Dipper © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

May 23, Day 8: Birding around Poiana Brasov; afternoon visit to the stunning city of Brasov

In the morning, we will take the cable car to the top of Mount Postavaru, a height of nearly 6,000 feet, where the air is filled with the song of Water Pipits. Northern Wheatear and Eurasian Linnet are characteristic birds of the grassy slopes and farther down in the Dwarf Pine zone, we'll look for Ring Ouzel. Spruce forests are home to Black and Eurasian three-toed woodpeckers, and we have good chances of finding them here along with a suite of more common woodland birds of the Carpathians. Time permitting, we will explore the woodlands at Poiana Brasov for other forest species.

Fringed by the peaks of the southern Carpathian Mountains and resplendent with gothic, baroque, and renaissance architecture, as well as a wealth of historical attractions, Brasov is one of the most visited places in Romania. We will have a stroll around the old Town Hall Square where we can admire colorfully painted and ornately trimmed baroque buildings. We will admire the Black Church, the largest gothic church in Romania. Its name derives from damage caused by the Great Fire of 1689, when flames and smoke blackened its walls. We'll also take a look at the Saxon defensive fortifications. Most of the work was done between 1400 and 1650, when outer and inner walls were erected, together with massive defense towers and gates. Part of the defensive wall, once 40 feet high, seven feet thick and two miles long, can still be seen today along with bastions, towers, and ornately decorated gates.

NIGHT: Villa Hermani, Magura, Zarnesti

May 24, Day 9: Travel to Sinoie on Black Sea Coast

Today we leave the Carpathian Mountains and descend to the flat lands of the Danube Valley, reaching the Black Sea in the afternoon. Primarily a travel day, we will make a point of seeing Count Dracula's castle in Bran. The scenically located romantic castle is a museum open to tourists, displaying art and furniture collected by Queen Marie. Time permitting, we may tour inside the castle. We should expect to be here for about an hour. Bird-wise, we might spot Long-legged Buzzards and European Rollers perched along the roadside.

NIGHT: Hotel Mondial, Baia

May 25, Day 10: Birding the Black Sea coast and wetlands at Histria and Vadu

Today we will explore one of the best birding areas in Europe, the wetlands of Histria and Vadu. At Histria the habitat of muddy pools, ponds, extensive reedbeds, and steppe and sandy scrub attracts many species in great numbers. Great White and Dalmatian pelicans are often seen on the lakes in big flocks. Pygmy Cormorant; Great and Little bitterns; Great and Little egrets; Gray, Purple, and Squacco herons; Glossy Ibis; Eurasian Spoonbill; Ruddy Shelduck; Garganey; Ferruginous Duck; Eurasian Marsh-Harrier; White-tailed Eagle; Black-headed and Caspian gulls; Whiskered, White-winged, Black, and Common terns; Calandra Lark; Bluethroat; Moustached and Savi's warblers; Great Reed-Warbler; Bearded Reedling; and Eurasian Penduline Tit are all expected! This is one of the few areas for nesting Paddyfield Warblers in Europe, and we will listen for them singing at the edge of the reedbeds. The extensive salt marshes of Vadu support many shorebirds. Black-tailed Godwit, Common Redshank, Little Ringed and Kentish plovers, and Eurasian Curlew are breeders here. Shorebirds on migration might include Ruff; Spotted Redshank; Marsh, Wood, Green, and Curlew sandpipers; Dunlin; and Temminck's and Little stints. Rarities such as Broad-billed and Terek sandpipers are also possible. There is a population of Collared Pratincoles here, and sometimes a Black-winged Pratincole is mixed in as well. Mediterranean, Slender-billed, and Pallas's (Great Black-headed) gulls, and Gull-billed, Sandwich, Little, and Caspian terns can all be seen here with a bit of luck.

NIGHT: Hotel Mondial, Baia



Dalmatian Pelican, Pygmy Cormorants and Black-headed Gulls © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

May 26, Day 11: Birding in Cheia Gorge and around Sinoie

A trip to Cheia Gorge this morning will provide a change of scenery. A spectacular valley bordered by limestone crags, Cheia Gorge is located among the vast steppes and arable lands close to the Black Sea. Here we may find Long-legged Buzzard, Booted and Short-toed eagles, Levant Sparrowhawk, Eurasian Hoopoe, European Roller, European Bee-eater, Crested and Greater Short-toed larks, Tawny Pipit, Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush, Pied and Isabelline wheatears, Barred Warbler, Red-backed and Lesser Gray shrikes, Eurasian Golden Oriole, and Ortolan Bunting. Small ground squirrels called Sousliks are abundant in the valley. They are the favorite prey of many raptors, and sometimes draw the rare Saker Falcon to the area. The gorge is also home to a fascinating array of butterflies and other wildlife. In the afternoon, we will visit the ponds, reedbeds, and wet meadows around Sinoie to see even more water birds and to enjoy the spectacle of bird migration.

NIGHT: Hotel Mondial, Baia

May 27, Day 12: Travel to Tulcea to board the floating hotel

Today we depart Sinoie and head north towards the Danube Delta. Along the way, in the famous Babadag Forest, we will seek a variety of raptors. Levant Sparrowhawk; European Honey-Buzzard; Long-legged Buzzard; and Short-toed, Booted, Lesser Spotted and Imperial eagles have all been sighted here. In the woods we'll search for Sombre Tit, Icterine Warbler, Hawfinch and Collared Flycatcher.



European Roller © Csonkapeter

Also, along our route, we will stop at the scenic hilltop castle of Enisala where Red-footed Falcons and other raptors are often seen. A few nice alkaline lakes along our path might be worthy of a birding stop or two.

The plan is to arrive at our floating hotel in Tulcea in the afternoon so we can leave the harbor and have dinner on the boat amid the wilderness of the Danube Delta.

NIGHT: Floating hotel, Danube Delta

May 28–29, Days 13–14: Cruising the Danube Delta visiting small villages, lakes, and canals

We will have two full days of birding along the waterways of the Danube Delta, one of the most revered birding areas on the European continent.

The Danube Delta is the second largest and the best-preserved delta in Europe. The approximate surface area is 4152 km², of which 3446 km² are in Romania. The Danube branches into three main arms in the delta: Chilia, Sulina, and Sfântu Gheorghe. The Danube Delta is a low alluvial plain, mostly covered by wetlands and water. It consists of an intricate pattern of marshes, channels, streamlets and lakes. It hosts over 300 species of birds as well as 45 freshwater fish species in its numerous lakes and marshes. We will float on the channels of the Delta and explore lakes and marshes on smaller motorboats. Eared and Red-necked grebes, Pygmy Cormorant, Great White and Dalmatian pelicans, Ferruginous Duck, Purple and Squacco herons, Eurasian Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Common Kingfisher, European Bee-eater, and European Roller can all be seen around the boat and on the lakes. Black Stork, White-tailed Eagle, Gray-headed and Middle-spotted woodpeckers, and Thrush Nightingale inhabit the alluvial forests and can also be found along the riverside.



Birding from atop a riverboat on the Danube Delta © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays



Common Kingfisher © Ecotours Wildlife Holidays

Overall, these two days will likely be the most bird-filled of the trip. In fact, we may find ourselves sipping a cold beverage from an armchair atop the floating hotel's viewing decks while surrounded by lots of birds at very close range. The whole experience is thoroughly wonderful.

NIGHT: Floating hotel Danube Delta

May 30, Day 15: Return to Bucharest

We leave the boat after breakfast this morning and head towards Bucharest. We will stop several times for birding en route. We plan to arrive in Bucharest in the afternoon.

This evening we'll gather for a final meal and checklist session before bidding fond farewells.

NIGHT: Vienna House Easy by Windham, Bucharest

May 31, Day 16: Departure for home

We will organize transfers to the airport this morning, but participants are free to depart Bucharest at any time. Departing flights will arrive in the USA today.

BUCHAREST PRE-TRIP

MAY 15–17, 2026



Palace of the Parliament, Bucharest © Kaljami/Wikimedia Commons

On this brief pre-trip, we will spend a full day in Bucharest exploring the city’s wonderful architectural displays, historical sites, and cultural heritage. We will participate in a guided tour of several top destinations, all of which reflect the pride of the Romanian government, past and present. This opportunity provides an excellent introduction to Romania and nicely complements the natural history pursuits of the main tour.

May 15–16, Day 1–2: Departure from U.S. to Bucharest, Romania

Flights from the United States bound for Europe depart on May 15 and arrive on the morning of May 16. Connecting flights to Bucharest (Henri Coandă International Airport (airport code OTP) arrive in the afternoon depending on your European connecting city.

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met outside the baggage claim by a representative of our ground agent and transferred to the **Capital Plaza Hotel Bucharest** where a room has been reserved in your name. After check-in you will have the remainder of the afternoon to yourself. Lunch is on your own. We will gather as a group at 6:00 p.m. in the hotel lobby for a pre-trip welcome and introduction, followed by dinner.

NIGHTS: Day 1, On board international flight

Day 2, Capital Plaza Hotel Bucharest

May 17, Day 3: Bucharest city tour

This one-day pre-trip will consist of a walking and driving tour of Bucharest, one of Europe's most charming and beautiful cities. For this activity, we will be joined by a licensed guide who will provide interpretation as we move around the city.

Known for its wide, tree-lined boulevards, glorious Belle Époque buildings and a reputation for the high life, Bucharest, Romania's largest city and capital, is a bustling metropolis. We will visit the most important and famous sites of the city. One is the Palace of Parliament (Ceausescu's House of the People) a communist-era legacy and the second largest administrative building in the world. We will visit Palace Square, a historical site surrounded by highly evocative buildings and monuments, such as the former Royal Palace.



Vasile Alecsandri National Theater, Bucharest Manole Alexandru

We will stroll around Revolution Square, where the communist dictator Ni Ceausescu held his last public speech. University Square, home to emblematic buildings and sites such as the National Theater, the University of Bucharest, and Sutu Palace are also places that we should see. We will walk around the Old Town, the historical nucleus of the city and pedestrian area, which is now a fashionable entertainment district full of cafes, restaurants, and nightclubs.

We will return to the hotel in the mid- to late afternoon with time to relax and freshen up before starting the main tour this evening.

Essential Tour Information

TOUR SIZE: The Romania main tour and Bucharest Pre-trip will each be limited to 10 participants.



TOUR LEADER:

Raymond L. VanBuskirk is an expert birder who has been guiding tours for over a decade. Raymond has led tours throughout the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Chile and most parts in between. He has guided in almost every country in Central America, across the Caribbean, and down both sides of the Andes in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. Raymond's experience is not limited to the

New World—he has traveled widely across the globe, has spent a great deal of time in the Pacific studying pelagics, and has led tours in Asia and Africa.

Raymond has had a longtime commitment to ornithology. In addition to guiding, he has conducted research with USFWS in the Arctic Ocean, North Pacific, and New Mexico. He has held leadership roles in the Central New Mexico Bird Alliance and Western Field Ornithologists. Raymond also helped guide the next generation of birders by being a regular instructor at the ABA's youth birding camps and at the Hog Island Audubon camps in Hog Island, Maine.

Raymond is also committed to including everyone in birding, and organizes and leads annual conferences for QBNA, an informal club for LGBTQIA+ birders. When not leading tours or conducting research, Raymond can be found at his home in St. Louis, Missouri with his partner, Marissa; stepdaughter Savannah; and their dog and two large snakes.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: The fee for **Romania** is **\$8,260** per person in double occupancy from Bucharest, Romania. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 (May 17) to Breakfast on Day 16, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, transfers between the group hotel and airport upon arrival and departure, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities to local guides and service providers, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Bucharest and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, gratuities to your VENT tour leaders, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: The single supplement for this tour is **\$710**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

Pre-TOUR FEE: The fee for **Bucharest Pre-trip** is **\$695** per person in double occupancy from Bucharest, Romania. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 (May 16) through lunch on Day 3, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, transfers between the group hotel and airport upon arrival and departure, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities to local guides and service providers, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Bucharest and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, gratuities to your VENT tour leaders, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal

nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: The single supplement for the extension is **\$54**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The deposit for the main tour is **\$1,000** per person, and, for the pre-tour, it's **\$500** per person. A second deposit of **30% of the remaining tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure (November 17, 2025) We accept MasterCard and Visa.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (**January 16, 2026 for the main tour; January 15, 2026 for the pre-trip**) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months before your departure date. We can easily make hotel arrangements, often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- More than 120 days prior to the tour start date: A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- 120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date: No refund will be provided.
- Optional add-ons: Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT: If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts

of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour. This coverage is included in the Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™ program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through Medjet and its MedjetAssist plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet and its MedjetAssist® plan**. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler’s consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at

the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items: <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS: A passport valid for at least three months beyond your trip return date is required for United States Citizens to enter Romania. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions. Please check the expiration date on your passport. It is recommended your passport be valid for six months beyond your trip return date. You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit <https://state.gov/travelers/> for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport and keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so do not pack it in your checked luggage.

It is very important to have your passport and money with you at all times. Suggestions for doing so are a money belt or a pouch with a shoulder strap to be worn on your side or around your neck. It is also wise to carry a copy of your passport information pages in a separate piece of luggage or photographed on your mobile phone.

VISAS: Citizens of the United States and Canada do not need to obtain a tourist visa to enter Romania. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. and Canadian citizens may vary; please check with the consulates or embassy of Spain.

ETIAS (European Travel and Information Authorization System): Starting in late 2025, Romania will be one of 30 European countries that require visa-exempt nationals of 60 countries (including the United States and Canada) to obtain special entry authorization known as ETIAS (European Travel and Information Authorization System). ETIAS is essentially a pre-approval check for travelers to most European countries. It is linked to a traveler's passport and is valid for three years from the date of issuance or until the expiration date of the passport, whichever comes first. ETIAS costs approximately \$8 USD. The authorization can be purchased online at etias.com/etias-application. At the time of writing, travelers under the age of 18 or over the age of 70 are exempt from this requirement.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING: This program is structured as casual; a birding and natural history trip with infusions of historical and cultural highlights. We suggest you bring primarily field-type clothing, which will be appropriate for most occasions; however, a nicer "smart-casual" attire may be preferred by some for evenings in Bucharest.

- **Pants:** A couple pairs of pants are essential. Many people prefer lightweight pants made of cotton or other material, but denim, though not as comfortable, is certainly acceptable.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Bass Pro-Shop and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and long-sleeved shirts made of lightweight, yet durable materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular. These provide useful protection from the sun and occasional biting insects. This type of clothing is easily self-washed and dries quickly.
- **Shirts:** A couple long-sleeved shirts in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for both warm weather and cool conditions alike. We do not recommend short-sleeved shirts as they offer no protection from the sun or mosquitos, should any be present.
- **Sweaters and Coats:** Mild to warm weather is anticipated on this trip, but a sweater, fleece, or light coat will definitely be useful for cool mornings and evenings, particularly in the mountains. You should also bring a water-repellent jacket in the event we encounter a cold front.
- **Hat:** A hat, particularly of a wide-brimmed style, for protection from the sun is essential. Please bring a baseball-style cap at the very least.

- **Swimsuit:** A few of the hotels have swimming pools.

FOOTWEAR: For footwear we recommend a good trail shoe or light hiking boot when in the field. Athletic shoes are acceptable but will not keep your feet dry and can become soiled from muddy conditions. A good walking shoe (such as an athletic shoe), may be preferred when not in the field and for our time in Bucharest.

EQUIPMENT: One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Hungary and the Czech Republic:

- **Backpack:** good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during all land excursions.
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock**
- **Polarized sunglasses** with good UV protection
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions**
- **Personal toiletries**
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries**
- **Collapsible walking stick:** A highly recommended item for those who have trouble walking.
- **Folding stool:** A recommended item for those who have trouble standing for more than 10 or 15 minutes at a time and can come in handy on walking tours. The typical folding stool is small, lightweight and portable, consisting of three aluminum legs connected by a central bolt, with a sturdy but pliable material seat.
- **Tissue packs**

Binoculars – We strongly recommend good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. We recommend that you NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like “minis” because they are small and lightweight, but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light-gathering power.

Spotting Scopes – Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS

CLIMATE & WEATHER: The climate in Romania is traditionally categorized either as continental or temperate depending on the part of the country in question. The summers typically are warm to hot and the winters cold. Owing to Romania's varied landscapes, particularly the Carpathian Mountains, the climate can vary strongly from one area to the next. The spring is a transition time when the days are often beautiful and mild, but punctuated occasionally by overcast conditions accompanied by rain. May can be rainy from the Black Sea coast to the interior in Transylvania. This tour will operate in the late spring, when temperatures should still be cool and mild. At this time, high temperatures in Bucharest will be in the upper 70s (°F) with lows in the high 50s; temperatures in the Carpathian Mountains could be 10 degrees cooler than in Bucharest while the Black Sea region should be balmy and mild. In the event of a region-wide heat-wave, highs could reach into the mid-90s even at this season. Overall, we'll likely experience a diversity of weather conditions ranging from clear, dry and beautiful to overcast and rainy.

CONDITIONS: Your trip to Romania will be a multi-faceted and enriching travel experience that combines birding with light to moderate emphasis on historical and cultural features. Most days will be dedicated to birding and natural history pursuits amid scenic landscapes; however, our travels will bring exposure to historic medieval towns and villages, some of which we'll make time to explore. For accommodations we'll stay at an array of hotels and lodges ranging from fairly simple and clean to excellent.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: This tour will be easy to moderate but please bear in mind that our city tour of the Romanian capital (optional pre-trip) will involve a moderate amount of walking and standing. We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace. This part of the world is not known for exceptional cuisine, and this should be taken into account.

FOOD AND WATER: Tap water is considered generally unsafe to drink everywhere in Romania, due to outdated purification systems and contamination. Bottled water will be available at all times. All food is safe for consumption.

CURRENCY & SPENDING: Your trip to Romania includes most necessary expenses. You will want to bring enough cash to cover personal expenses not included in the program, such as taxi rides, gifts, laundry, gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items. It is best to carry small denominations of cash as any places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. While U.S. dollars may be accepted in more populous areas, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving home, or at the airport or a bank upon arrival in Budapest.

Should you extend your vacation beyond what is offered in the program, you'll want to obtain local currency. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Romania is the Romanian New Leu (RON). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting XE-The World's Favorite Currency Site at: <http://www.xe.com/>.

ELECTRICITY: The electrical current in Romania is 230V (110-120V in the U.S.). Electrical outlets are one of the two European standard socket types: the "Type C" Europlug and the "Type F" Schuko. Both of these outlets are ungrounded with openings for two round pins. The electrical current in the Czech Republic is also 230V. Electrical outlets are of the "Type E" French socket type, identified by openings for two round pins spaced 19mm apart, and with a fixed grounding pin.

Many appliances now are dual-designed to operate on European electrical voltages, but you definitely should bring adapters and an all-purpose transformer if your appliances are not suitable for higher voltage or if there is any doubt.

INTERNET ACCESS: WiFi will be available at some of the hotels we'll use, but probably not all, particularly when we the floating hotel in the Danube River Delta.

LANGUAGE: Romanian is the primary language spoken in Romania, although the languages of other ethnicities are also represented including Hungarian and English. Our local guides speak English.

TIME: Romania is on Eastern European Summer Time (EEST), 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry service may be available for an extra charge at some of the hotels where we stay; however, you should bring enough clothing to get you through the trip in the event laundry service is unavailable.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal prescription or over-the-counter medication, be sure to bring an ample supply that will last through the entire tour. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun’s ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even on cloudy days. Anytime you are outdoors, you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn can be very painful and will affect your enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors, and be sure to bring an ample supply of high-SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultraviolet-blocking, polarized sunglasses.

BITING INSECTS: Biting insects, mosquitos in particular, are not an anticipated problem. However, your tour leaders will carry repellent just in case.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers 'Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Birds:

Mullarney, Killian and Lars Svensson and Dan Zetterstrom. *Birds of Europe. 3rd Edition*. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 2023 (third edition).

This is the most important and comprehensive natural history book for this trip. It is the best all-around field guide to the birds of Europe and is also available as a smartphone App.

Mammals:

MacDonald, David and Priscilla Barrett. *Mammals of Europe*. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 2002.

Reptiles and Amphibians:

Speybroek, Jeroen, Wouter Beukema, Bobby Bok, Jan Van Der Voor, and IlianVelikov. *Field Guide to The Amphibians & Reptiles of Britain & Europe*. Bloomsbury Wildlife Guides. Bloomsbury Publishing New York, NY, 2016. An outstanding newer guide.

Butterflies:

Tolman, Tom and Richard Lewington. *Butterflies of Europe*. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 2002.

History & Travel:

Kaplan, Robert D. *In Europe's Shadow: Two Cold Wars and a Thirty Year Journey Through Romania and Beyond*. Random House Publishing: New York, NY, 2016. This new publication from New York Times bestselling author Robert Kaplan offers a fresh look at Romania in light of the complications arising from a resurgent and menacing Russia. Kaplan, who maintains a lifelong fascination with Romania, explores the ancient forces and influences that shaped the modern country, and its geopolitical position in Eastern Europe at the doorstep of Russia.

Sparks, Alan E. *Into the Carpathians: A Journey Through the Heart and History of Central and Eastern Europe*. Koehler Books: Virginia Beach VA, (2015). A travelogue/memoire that describes a man's journey on foot into the Carpathian Mountains. The author's discussions of the region's wildlife and landscape occur against the backdrop of Romanian history and mythology.

CLO Apps

eBird. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files. **Highly recommended.**

Merlin Bird ID. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate birdwatchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions about his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app and the appropriate regional "pack." For this trip, please download the pack Europe. Highly recommended.

Birds of the World. “Discover the world of birds” through the Lab’s Birds of the World online resource, offering comprehensive life histories for all bird species and families. Visit the Birds of the World website, where for any bird you can learn about its appearance, distribution, diet, behavior, and more. Free samples are available at the home page, and subscriptions are available at monthly, annual, and three-year levels. Highly recommended. Exclusive to VENT, our travelers receive a 25% discount off first-time subscriptions.

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, “**VENT**”) act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on July 25, 2025, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant’s Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in

the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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