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UNIFICATION IN DIVERSITY

presents

'My Cultural Landscape'

Romania



TRANSYLVANIAN PLAIN

The plain lies within and takes its name from the historical region of Transylvania, located between the Someșul Mare and the Someșul Mic rivers to the north and west and the Mureș River to the south and east. It is populated by both ethnic Romanians and ethnic Hungarians. It presents a hilly relief, less forested, with wide, mature valleys with ponds along them and slopes subject to landslides. Geological formations hide very large reserves of salt (found in diapir folds) and methane gas (found in vaulted regions, called gas domes) underground. But the landscapes take your breath away.

The hilly depression of Transylvania stands out through cultural tourism linked to the multitude of historical and art monuments in the big cities (Sibiu, Alba Iulia, Cluj-Napoca, Sighisoara). Also, the presence of numerous peasant fortresses (Cișnădie, Rupea, etc.) increases the tourist potential of the region. Tourist activities are polarized by large centers (Cluj-Napoca, Bistrița) but also by several small towns

Transylvania has a rich history shaped by various civilizations and historical events. Folk music and dances often portray significant historical moments, such as battles, migrations, or cultural interactions. Through song and dance, historical events can be commemorated, retelling the stories and struggles of the past. Folk performances and reenactments may also take place during festivals or special events to bring history to life and educate the audience about Transylvania's heritage.



THE STONE LAND

Țara Moților (German: Motzenland), also known as Țara de Piatră ("The Stone Land") is an ethnogeographical region of Romania in the Apuseni Mountains. It covers parts of the Alba, Arad, Bihor, Cluj, and Hunedoara, counties of Romania and a section of it forms the Apuseni Natural Park. The zone is renowned for its folkloric traditions, stunning landscapes, and the variation of the Karstic relief which produced over 800 natural caves such as Scărișoara, Focul Viu and Peștera Urșilor (which contains fossils of *Ursus spelaeus*, the cave bear).



For centuries, the main concerns of the moți have been related to ensuring daily living, preserving the language, popular costume and Orthodox religion, freedom and dignity, ancient traditions and customs. The talent and the patience of the locals gave birth to an emblematic music instrument.

The 'tulnic' is a long, up to 3 meters cylindrical tube, with no holes, made from fir tree or spruce wood. In the beginning, the tulnic was used by the shepherds as a means of communication, but nowadays, its oblong sounds either announce the holidays or the weather changes or messages with different significations.

Various forms of folk arts are practised in Țara Moților, including woodcarving, pottery, and weaving. These crafts reflect the skilled craftsmanship and artistic traditions of the Moți people. Woodcarving is particularly notable in the region, with intricate patterns and designs carved into furniture, decorative objects, and religious artifacts. Pottery often features vibrant colors and motifs inspired by nature, while weaving produces intricate textiles used in costumes and household items.

DOBROUJA PLATEAU AND THE DANUBE DELTA

Dobrogea is a historical and geographical habitat between the Danube and the Black Sea, which is part of the territory of Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine. The wonderful landscapes of Dobrogea are today preserved in protected areas of European importance. A paradise, a wonderful touristic region and a valuable scientific area, the Danube Delta is considered to be the third largest biodiversity in the world (over 5500 flora and fauna species), offering a sanctuary for birds, fish and animals. More than 60% of its surface is unspoiled by the human touch, so it offers the unique opportunity to observe the incredible beauty of its landscapes and all the treasures lying in it.

The Dobruja Plateau has a history of cultural exchange between various ethnic groups, including Romanians, Turks, Tatars, and Bulgarians. These interactions have influenced the music, resulting in a blend of different styles and rhythms. In contrast, the Danube Delta's music is often characterized by slower, melodic tunes inspired by the serene and natural surroundings.

Folk dances play an essential role in the cultural expression of the Dobruja Plateau and the Danube Delta. These dances are often performed in traditional costumes, showcasing the distinct regional styles and influences.

The traditional costumes in this region feature vibrant colors, intricate embroidery, and various accessories. Each ethnic group within the region may have specific costume styles, reflecting their cultural heritage.



BURZENLAND

Burzenland, also called the Carpathian Bend Depression or the Braşov Depression, is a historical and ethnographic region in southeastern Transylvania, with Braşov as the most important town. The coat of arms of the region consists of a blue or black shield and a silver lily accompanied by two stars (silver or gold). These colors are also representative of the folk costumes in the area. Like many regions with a rich cultural heritage, Burzenland has its unique traditions, music, dances, folk costumes, and arts that reflect the local culture and history.



Burzenland has a vibrant musical tradition, with influences from Romanian, Hungarian, and German cultures. Folk instruments such as the violin, accordion, and flutes are commonly used.

Folk dances play a significant role in representing the culture of Burzenland. These dances are often performed in groups and reflect the region's agricultural and pastoral traditions. Popular dances include the Hora, and Sirba. These dances involve intricate footwork, lively movements, and traditional formations.

Various festivals and celebrations in Burzenland provide platforms for showcasing traditional music, dances, and folk costumes. These events, such as harvest festivals, cultural fairs, or local gatherings, often feature live performances, traditional exhibitions, and opportunities for people to engage with the region's rich cultural heritage.

THE CARPATHIANS OF MARAMUREȘ AND BUKOVINA

The Carpathian Mountains, particularly in the regions of Maramureș and Bukovina in Romania, have a rich cultural heritage that is reflected in folk music, dances, folk costumes, and historical events. Bukovina is a historical region, variously described as part of either Central or Eastern Europe (or both). Maramureș is a unique location in the geographical heartland of Europe, land of wooden churches, mythological richness, impressive landscapes, carefully preserving the culture, traditions, and lifestyle of its past.

The Carpathians of Maramureș and Bucovina are known for their rich folk arts and crafts. Skilled artisans create intricate woodcarvings, pottery, woven textiles, and painted Easter eggs (known as "pysanky"). These crafts often depict traditional symbols, motifs, and scenes from local folklore. Woodcarving, in particular, is highly regarded in Maramureș, where elaborate wooden gates, crosses, and sculptures adorn the villages.

One of the most important traditions in Maramureș and Bukovina is the celebration of Christmas. On Christmas day, villagers put on their colorful, hand-made traditional clothes and attend the Christmas mass in wooden churches, and on Christmas Eve both children and adults sing carols, visiting all the houses in the village with the intention of warding off evil spirits. These customs tell a lot about the spirituality and deeper connection these people have with their heritage and nature.



WALLACHIAN PLAIN

The Romanian Plain is located in southern Romania and the easternmost tip of Serbia, where it is known as the Wallachian Plain. Part of the historical region of Wallachia, it is bordered by the Danube River in the east, south and west, and by the Getic Plateau in the north. Bucharest, the capital of Romania, is located in the central part of the Romanian Plain.



Folk music in the Wallachian Plain is diverse and reflects the local traditions and influences. Traditional instruments like the cobza (a plucked string instrument), the pan flute, and the violin are commonly used. Folk songs from the region may depict everyday life, love, nature, and historical events.

Traditional folk dances are an integral part of the cultural fabric in the Romanian Plain. These dances are often performed in circles or lines, with intricate footwork, synchronized movements, and energetic patterns. They serve as a means of socializing, celebration, and preserving cultural heritage.

Historical events and figures from the Wallachian Plain have also inspired folk music and dances. For example, the stories of famous rulers like Vlad the Impaler (also known as Dracula) or the struggles for independence have influenced folk songs and dances. These performances serve as a way to honor and commemorate the region's history and the people who shaped it.

Folk costumes in the Wallachian Plain are vibrant and reflect the region's historical influences. Traditional costumes for both men and women are often adorned with elaborate embroidery, colorful patterns, and handmade details. The costumes vary from village to village, showcasing local traditions and customs.

THE HAȚEG LAND

The Hațeg Land is a region located in the southwestern part of Transylvania, Romania. It encompasses an area around the town of Hațeg and includes several smaller localities and villages. The region is known for its picturesque landscapes, rich history, and unique natural heritage.

The Hațeg Land has a long-standing tradition of craftsmanship, with artisans specializing in various traditional crafts. These include woodcarving, pottery, weaving, and traditional costume making. These crafts not only showcase the creativity and skill of the local artisans but also preserve traditional techniques and designs that are part of Romania's cultural heritage.

The region is home to numerous historical sites and architectural treasures. One notable example is the Corvin Castle, also known as Hunyadi Castle, located in Hunedoara. This Gothic-Renaissance castle is one of the largest and most impressive in Romania and represents the country's medieval architectural heritage. The region also features traditional Romanian houses and churches, which exhibit unique architectural styles and decorative elements.

The natural beauty of The Hațeg Land has inspired artists, writers, and poets throughout history and continues to be celebrated as an integral part of Romanian cultural heritage.



APUSENI MOUNTAINS

The Apuseni Mountains, also known as the Western Carpathians, are a mountain range located in western Romania. They are part of the larger Carpathian Mountain range, which stretches across several countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The mountains are home to a rich and varied flora and fauna, with many protected areas and nature reserves. The Apuseni Mountains also have a significant cultural and historical heritage, with traditional villages, medieval castles, and ancient churches scattered throughout the region.



This region has preserved the traditional rural way of life, showcasing the customs, architecture, and craftsmanship that have defined Romanian culture for centuries. The local communities still maintain their unique traditions, folk art, and traditional festivals, providing a glimpse into the country's rich cultural heritage.

The Apuseni Mountains are home to various ethnic groups, including Romanians, Hungarians, and Roma communities. This diversity has contributed to the cultural fabric of the region, fostering a blend of different traditions, languages, and customs. Exploring the Apuseni Mountains allows visitors to experience this multiculturalism and understand the importance of cultural coexistence in Romania.

The Apuseni Mountains are steeped in folklore and legends, which have been passed down through generations. These tales often revolve around mythical creatures, heroes, and supernatural beings, reflecting the beliefs and imagination of the local people. They provide insights into the spiritual and cultural mindset of the Romanian people.

MOLDAVIAN PLATEAU

The Moldavian Plateau is a geographic area of the historical region of Moldavia, spanning nowadays the east and northeast of Romania and most of Moldova (except the south). The cultural heritage of this region is rich and diverse, and it is reflected in various aspects.

Moldavian folk music is characterized by lively and energetic melodies with complex rhythms. The music often reflects the region's rural traditions, incorporating elements of both joy and melancholy.

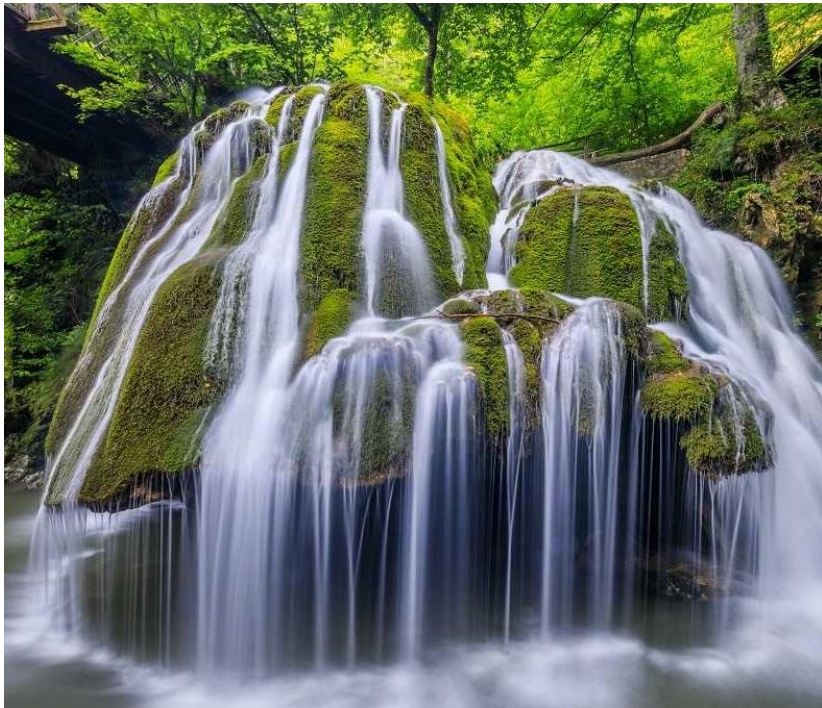
The lively tunes and fast-paced rhythms enhance the energetic nature of the folk dances. The hora is a popular circle dance in Moldavian culture. It is performed by a group of people who hold hands and move in a synchronized manner, forming a large circle. The dance reflects the unity and sense of community within Moldavian villages. The sirba is another lively dance that originated in the region. It features intricate footwork, quick tempo, and energetic movements.

Embroidery plays a significant role in Moldavian folk arts. Intricate and colorful embroidery can be found on clothing, household items, and decorative pieces. The patterns often include geometric shapes, floral motifs, and symbolic representations.



THE BANAT MOUNTAINS

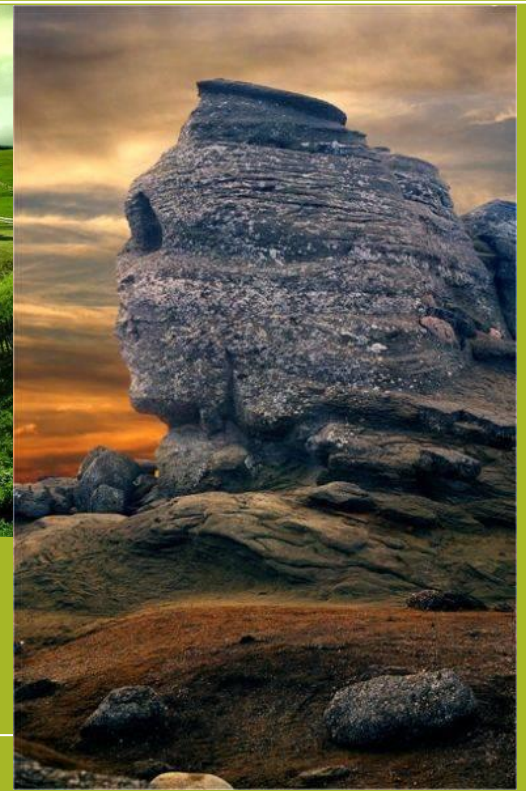
The "Banat Mountains" refer to a mountain range located in the southeastern part of Europe, primarily in the historical region of Banat. The Banat Mountains are part of the larger Carpathian Mountain system, which stretches across several countries, including Romania, Serbia, and Hungary. The mountains have historical and cultural significance, as they have been inhabited by various ethnic groups throughout history, contributing to the area's rich cultural heritage. The region's historical ethnic diversity was severely affected by the events of World War II. Today, Banat is mostly populated by ethnic Romanians, Serbs and Hungarians, but small populations of other ethnic groups also live in the region.



The Banat region has a rich folklore tradition, and many cultural festivals and events take place in the mountainous areas. These festivals showcase traditional music, dance, crafts, and costumes, providing a glimpse into Romania's cultural heritage. The folklore and traditions associated with the Banat Mountains play a significant role in preserving and celebrating the country's cultural identity.

The Banat Mountains house numerous monasteries, churches, and religious sites, some of which have a long history and are considered sacred by the local communities. These religious landmarks represent important cultural and spiritual symbols, attracting pilgrims and visitors interested in exploring Romania's religious heritage.

The Banat Mountains are known for their stunning natural landscapes, including deep valleys, dense forests, sparkling rivers, and picturesque peaks. The region's natural beauty has been a source of inspiration for Romanian artists, writers, and poets throughout history. The mountains have often been depicted in paintings, literature, and traditional folklore, becoming an integral part of Romania's cultural identity.



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