

Poiana Brasov

Poiana Brasov is the most famous resort for winter sports in Romania and also an important tourist center.

It has 9 ski slopes with varying degrees of difficulty, sports grounds, a lake, discos, bars and restaurants. Accommodation is mostly provided in luxury hotels, hostels, villas or cottages. The resort is at the foot of the Postavaru at an altitude of 1030 m and the highest peak at the altitude of 1799 m (Cristianul Mare), which means an altitude difference of almost 800 m.



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Șc. Gimn. Nr.9 Nicolae Orghidan, Brașov, Proiect strategic Erasmus+ KA229 "MY ROOTS BECOME OUR WINGS" - TRAVEL AGENCY, nr. de ref. 2018-1-CY01-KA229-046875_2

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Welcome to Brasov



The city in the heart of Romania!

Brasov

Brasov (German: Kronstadt, Hungarian: Brasso) is the capital city of county Brasov. Cradled by mountains, it benefitted from its strategic position – near the passes which connect the historical provinces of Transylvania, Moldavia and Wallachia– and evolved into a major economic as well as cultural centre. In the Middle Ages it was the most important city in Southeastern Europe. Nowadays, it is a popular tourist attraction in all seasons.

The sights are breathtaking: majestic mountains, with peaks covered by snow from November to April, with slopes where skiers can practice their favourite sport; trails winding through forests where the scent of resin imbues everything and which take the hikers all the way to the peaks of Postavaru or Piatra Mare.

Towering over the city is Mount Tampa. Although its altitude is not very impressive (only 960m), the citizens of Brasov are grateful for its presence: guardian in times of danger, provider of fresh air, a thing of beauty in autumn when the deciduous forests which cover it explode in a spectacular range of colours, popular with hikers who follow the winding paths to its top, or with tourists who take the gondola to reach the place from where the panorama not only of the city, but of the Barga Country, unfolds under their eyes allowing them to see the Old and the New Brasov.



The Council Square

The heart of the city is the Council Square. For centuries it was the place where local as well as foreign merchants displayed and sold their goods. It is the best known and most visited place not only because of its shape and architecture, but also because, nowadays, it is *the* place to be if you want entertainment: concerts and festivals (the “Golden Stag” Festival, for example) in summer, fairs, exhibitions, terraces where one can enjoy a cup of coffee, a nice meal or a drink.



Museum of History - Change of Guard

The beautiful building in the middle of the Square houses the History Museum. Artefacts attesting to the evolution of the city and of the surrounding area impress an ever growing number of tourists. Lately, attempts have been made to bring to the attention of the tourists, as well as to that of the citizens of Brasov, personalities and moments from a glorious past: volunteers dress in costumes and uniforms worn hundreds of years ago by ordinary people and by soldiers who defended the city against greedy conquerors. Photos taken on such occasions make tourists remember the unforgettable moments spent in Brasov.



The Muresenilor House

In 1968, a descendant of the Muresianu family, donated the space as well as a valuable collection of furniture, paintings, sculpture and an archive comprising 25,000 documents, thus putting into practice the will of Iacob Muresianu. The Muresianu family played a remarkable role in the cultural and political life of Transylvania and the museum is meant to introduce the visitors into the atmosphere of effervescence which characterized Brasov in the nineteenth century. Andrei Muresianu, who partook in the 1848 revolution, wrote a poem, *Desteapta-te, romane!* Sang to a popular tune, it became not only the hymn of the revolutionaries but, in 1989, the National Anthem of Romania.



Museum of Urban Civilization

On the south side of the Square, in a thirteenth century building, the newest museum of the city awaits its visitors. Although its structure was modified at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the architecture and the decorations place it firmly among the buildings erected in the style of the Renaissance. It is dedicated to presenting the evolution of the city of Brasov, a melting pot of influences coming from the East as well as from the West from the seventeenth century onwards.



The Black Church

No self-respecting tourist leaves Brasov without visiting the Black Church! Its construction began in the late fourteenth century. In 1689, a fire started by invading Habsburg troops, blackened the walls giving the edifice its name. It is the most important Gothic-style monument in Romania. Legends and anecdotes surround this church built by Bulgarian workers to serve as a place of worship for the Saxon community. Apart from the architecture, the visitors are also impressed by the six-ton bell, the biggest in any church in Romania, by the 4,000 pipe organ – creation of Carl August Buchholz and by the collection of Oriental rugs.



In the Middle Ages, Brasov was often threatened by enemies: the Mongols, in 1241, later the Ottomans, even princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, the Habsburgs. In order to protect the city, between 1400 and 1650, the inhabitants built an impressive system of fortifications comprising thick walls, bastions, towers and even a moat. The moat has long since disappeared, but some of the walls, bastions and towers, as well as the citadel, are quite well preserved to bear witness to a tumultuous past. A walk along the “Dupa Ziduri” Alley (Behind the Walls) provides the tourists with the opportunity to observe the thickness of the walls, and to understand the evolution in the defense strategy.



The White Tower

The White Tower was built in the 15th Century. Inside there are 5 flights of wooden fighting galleries and display of the historic armouries used to defend the city.

The tower offers some amazing photographic opportunities of the city

Apart from the thick walls and of the four towers, seven bastions were erected (and, in times of siege, protected by the most important guilds of Brasov); some of them, (including the recently restored Graft Bastion which was used to connect the White Tower to the defense system for the city) are still standing the test of time. Like the White today the Graft Bastion is a museum and it is well worth a visit.



The Black Tower

The Black Tower which was built in 1494 and re-named in 1559 when, during a storm, a lightning struck it and set it on fire. It is one of the four observation towers of Brasov Citadel built as an independent fortification outside the walls of the fortress, over 11 meters high. Situated within easy reach of the Blacksmiths' Bastion, the Black Tower in Brasov dominates with its size. A draw bridge connected it to the Blacksmiths' Bastion and thus to the city.



Catherine Gate and Gate Schei

Several gates allowed entrance to the city. However, in time, having served their purpose, they were demolished. Two such gates survived: Saint Catherine's Gate and Schei Gate. Built in 1559 by the Tailor's Guild and named after Saint Catherine's Monastery, it is the only original city gate which has survived from medieval times. Once named *Porta Valace*, it was the only gate which the Romanians living in Scheii Brasovului were allowed to use when they wanted to enter the city in order to sell the goods they produced. The coat of arms (which is also visible on the Old City House) a crown, the trunk and the roots of an oak tree, but especially the four corner turrets, symbolize the privileges granted by the authorities of Transylvania and Hungary to the city: judicial autonomy and *jus gladii* - the right to decide on capital punishment. Right next to it is the **Schei Gate** built between 1827-1828 to facilitate traffic. It is still used today both by pedestrians and by vehicles. A Latin inscription reminds those who pass under its three arches of the fact that the Austrian Emperor, Francis I, visited Brasov in 1817, ten years before the gate was erected.



Weavers' Bastion

The Weaver Bastion was built and defended by the Weaver Guild, being built during 1421-1436. The area this fortification had to protect was meadow below Mount Tampa situated on the south-west corner of the fortress.

Built in two stages, it consisted of solid oak galleries and a yard where the families of the members of the guild and their goods could find shelter. The bastion was built in two stages. Visible loopholes for bombs and arquebuses show how important it was for the defence system of the city.

Since 1950, inside the bastion, the visitors can visit the Museum of Barsa Country, and admire a seventeenth century model of the old fortress of Braşov.



Unirii Square - First Romanian School

In 1495 a school was finally opened to allow Romanians to study. Young people from villages were sent, with the effort of the entire community, to study in order to become teachers, notaries or priests and benefit serve the community which had paid for their education.

In the sixteenth century, a printing press was established there by Deacon Coresi, who printed some of the earliest books in the Romanian language. Princes of Moldavia and Wallachia donated books; various documents show the evolution of the school and its importance.



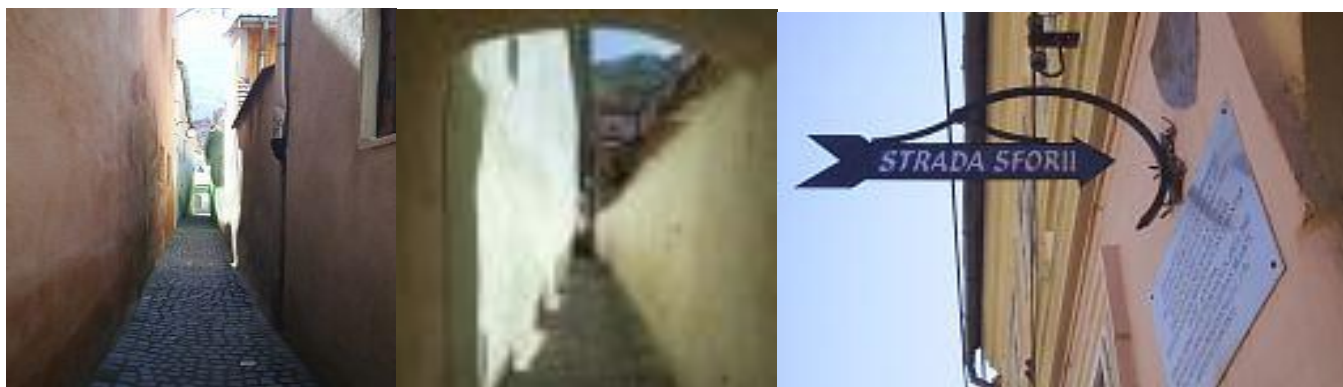
The Junii of Brasov

The part of Brasov called Schei is, apparently, the oldest and it was inhabited by Romanians, There was also a Bulgarian community settled there. People living there still form a closely-knit community, proud of its traditions and of its contribution to significant moments in the history of Brasov. The first Sunday Easter after, wearing their traditional costumes, their parade on horseback and observe rituals some of which, according to historians, are pre-Christian and are a re-enactment of myths and rituals of death and revival. Some of the participants are descendants of those who fought in the 1877-1878 which ended with the independence of Romania. Their commitment to preserving this tradition, is showed by the presence of children in the saddle, or in the arms of parents or grandparents.



The narrow street

The narrow street between the streets of Cerb and the Şchei Gate, whose existence is attested in the documents of the 17th century, was a simple corridor to help the firemen's work. Today is a curiosity of the city. It is said that it is the narrowest street in Europe. It is certain that the width, which varies between 111 and 135 cm, gives it the title of the narrowest street of the city.



Synagogue Neologa Brasov

Neologa Synagogue Braşov is one of the Jewish places of worship in Romania. It was built during the years 1899-1901, in neo-gothic style with Moorish accents. In the yard there is also a ritual restaurant, a medical cabinet and a home care service. In the beginning there were 10 families and after 1940 their number reached 6000. The community was divided into Orthodox rite (traditionalists) and neologist rites. During World War II, although they were not deported in the camps, they were strongly persecuted. After the end of the war, their number dropped to 1759 Jews, and continued to decline to the present.

