

EXPLORE



EXPERIENCE



CAVE

CLIMB



THE APUSENI

HIKE



WITH US!

CAMP

The Apuseni Mountains, Romania:

Located in the northwest of Romania, the Apuseni Mountain region is an area unsurpassed in its unique beauty. Nature is teeming with rushing rivers, breathtaking rock walls, over 24,000 kilometers of caves, and lush forests – offering spectacular hiking, rock climbing, caving, kayaking and camping.



Plus, Romanian Carpathians still preserve the biggest number of bears and wolves in Europe.

Ancient mountain culture is alive in the small Apuseni villages. The area, in one word, is stunning. It's one of the many regions that make Romania an astonishing mosaic of nature and culture unlike any other on the planet.

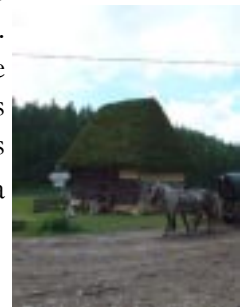
Our Caves:

Holding claim to the world's first speleological research institute (Emil Racovita Institute of Speleology, University of Cluj), Romania boasts a long and famous history in the world of underground adventure and discovery. The Apuseni Mountain region in the Northwest of the country is home to 80% of Romania's most remarkable caves, offering a variety of difficulty levels, formations and experiences. Please have a look at the accompanying document, caves.pdf, to see a list of some of the karstic gems you can explore...



Culture of the Apuseni

Our caves are not the only treasures that make this area so striking. Outside the caverns, you will be transported back to centuries past, as you experience the culture of this unique region. (And you won't find a McDonald's anywhere near...)



Planning your trip:

So, we recognize that people are not clones (yet). Each person/group has their own likes and dislikes, ability levels and time limits. Hence, we take the time to tailor your adventure to YOUR specific needs. You tell us the amount of time you've got, the types of caves you want to spelunk and the level of difficulty you're ready for, and we'll design your trip according to your particulars.

Our excursions range anywhere from 15 to 45 Euro per person per day, depending on your specifications.

A top-o-the-line excursion (including everything, except personal equipment costs about 45 Euro per day. Or you can choose to let us arrange local homestays for you, opt to camp, provide your own meals, and so on. If you just want a guide, team equipment and transportation, our charge runs about 15 Euro per day.



Getting here...

Oradea, Apuseni Experince's home base, is located just 10 kilometers east of the Hungarian/Romanian border, a measly 247 kilometers from Budapest. It's most convenient (and usually cheapest) to get to us via this route, rather than going through Bucuresti. If you fly into Budapest, we can arrange to meet you at the airport, or there are three trains daily from Budapest to Oradea (6:00, arriving in Oradea at 11:30; 9:05, arriving at 14:27; and 17:05, arriving at 22:40), all of which leave Budapest from Nyugati Station. From Oradea, the distances to the main karstic areas in the Apuseni are short (to Suncuius: 70 kilometers, to Girda: 135 kilometers; to Padis: 110 kilometers), and "Apuseni Experince" will get you there in our CAVE MOBILE. Cost of transportation from Oradea to the caves will be included in your trip price.



Where you'll rest your head (Accommodations)

We have cabins located in three main caving areas of the Apuseni Mountains: Suncuius, Padis and Girda. Situated anywhere from a 20 minute to a three hour hike from the cave entrances, these cabins are a welcome haven after long hours of spelunking. Amenities at Girda and Suncuius cabins include electricity, running hot and cold water, toilets and showers. The cabin in Padis has electricity and outdoor toilets, and showers are in the construction phase and will be finished sometime this fall (2002). Costs: Suncuius offers both two and six-person rooms. A bed in the two person room costs 4 Euro, and in the 6 person room, 3 Euro. Girda cabin has one room with 25 beds and another room with 6 beds; cost is 3 Euro per person, per night. 3-person and 7-person rooms are available in Padis at 5 Euro and 3 Euro per person, per night, respectively. Make us do all the shopping and cooking for an additional 4 Euro per person per day.

You can also choose to camp or ask us to arrange accommodations with local villagers in their homes. Campground fees are approximately 1 Euro per person per day. Homestays run about 4-5 Euro per person per night and generally include breakfast and dinner.



Some recent trips... (samples for you to drool over)

Here are a few examples of excursions we've designed for past groups. If one of them catches your eye, you're welcome to request that we do the same for you.

Karst and Culture, 7 days of caving and exploring traditional culture. Visits: Unguru Mare cave (show cave), Batranului Cave and Vantului Cave and a pottery where white ceramics are produced (alone across Europe). Visit Bears' cave (a show-cave) and the "Flutur" (Butterfly) museum in the village of Chiscau. Then you enter the world of the Moti (inhabitants of the mountaineous areas), where you'll be accomodated and guided along trails in the Upper Garda region and Ocoale) Poarta lui Ionele and Scarisoara Ice cave – show caves, the Avenul din Sesuri cave).

Cost: 240 euros/person, for a group between 4-8 people. Availability : all year round. Please note that prices are subject to change.



Caving for Life is a hardcore caving programme designed for those cavers who want to test themselves in our “Hades World”

For 10 days in wintertime or 12 days during summer you can be connected to sportive speleology in the Apuseni. We have selected some of the most challenging and attractive caves in the Apuseni to offer you as a part of this trip.



- Suncuius area: Vantului cave, Stanu Foncii and Ciur Ponor (near Rosia)
- Chiscau area: Micula and the Bears' cave (show cave), Petit Tibi aven
- Garda area: the Aven of Sesuri and Hoanca Urzicarilor aven, Scarisoara Ice Cave (show cave).

Cost: 440 euros/person, for a group between 4-8 people. Availability : all year round. Please note that prices are subject to change.

Gear

All excursion costs include use of team equipment (ropes, carbide, spits, etc.). As for personal equipment (harnesses, jumpsuits, descenders, headlamp, helmet, etc.), you'll need to bring your own or plan to hire at an additional cost.

We do have some equipment available for hire (fully equipped helmet = 1.80 - 2.30

Euro/day, carbide lamp = .30 - .50 Euro/day, harness = 1 Euro/day, tent = .60 - 1.50 Euro/day), so let us know in advance what you'll need and we'll do our best to arrange it for you.



The Fearless Leaders (Our Guides)

Our staff of 10 male and female guides is certified through the Romanian National Caving School, officially recognized by the Romanian Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Romanian Scientific Academy. (And we're awaiting recognition in the next month by the Romanian Ministries of Education and Tourism). These leaders range from 20 to 46 years in age and have 3 to 25 years of hard-core caving experience and 2 to 10 years of guiding experience. They're quite dashing (cute bums) and, well, not in the least what we'd call boring... English and French speaking guides are available

Who's "we"?

“We” are the Center for Protected Areas and Sustainable Development Bihor (CPASD) We're based in the city of Oradea, near the Hungarian-Romanian border, at 60 km from Apuseni Mountains and have been around since 1994, working to protect and conserve the Apuseni Mountains. As part of our long-term strategy to save these mountains, we've developed an ecotourism business, named “Apuseni Experience” to bring visitors into the area safely, highlighting long-term protection of the environment.

10% of all revenues from tourist activities shall be donated to programmes aimed at preserving and developing the natural patrimony of the Apuseni Mountains.

The main goal of our business is to preserve the nature and culture of the region through ecologically based tourism. Profits from the business will be used to finance nature conservation projects in the Apuseni Mountains including trail marking, creation of eco-friendly camping facilities, enviro-awareness campaigns and cave protection. We use local individuals and resources to host travellers, the idea being to stimulate community development. We hope that in the long run this will serve as a sustainable alternative to the fierce exploitation of natural resources.



Contact info!

So, now that you know who's on the other end of the line, go on, don't be bashful - drop an email or ring us up. We'll be happy to give you more details about outdoor activities in the Apuseni Mountains or sign you up for a trip!

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More info on: www.apuseniexperience.ro
(available soon in English)