



NATURE AND CULTURE IN THE DANUBE REGION



Nature and Culture in the Danube Region

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The Fascinating Diversity of the Danube Region

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Flowing through ten countries, the Danube is the most international river in the world. The Danube Region is the site of great diversity: not only in the natural landscapes and geography, but in terms of culture, history and ethnicity. Its lively and distinct languages, traditions, foods, arts and crafts make this European region a source of enduring fascination.

Each of the countries along the Danube has established several Protected Areas which are responsible for preserving the rich natural and scenic diversity. They are the sites of some of Europe's largest and most fascinating wetlands habitats.

There was a time when the Danube was a nearly insurmountable barrier keeping people apart. But today, the river unites both countries and their local populations in their common goal of protecting and preserving the Danube Region's natural heritage and cultural diversity. Come visit us and experience the fascination of the Danube Region.



Exploring and conserving the Danube's rich heritage

Several regions along the Lower Danube are models for the conservation and exploration of the Danube's natural and cultural heritage: for example the plains at the triangle formed by the borders of Hungary, Croatia and Serbia; the Danube islands of Persina between Bulgaria and Romania; the Danube Delta and the Prut River region shared by Romania, Ukraine and Moldo-

va. Each of these Danube regions is not only home to a huge number of different animal and plant species, but also many ethnic groups. While their various cultures may be separate and unique, they are joined and connected by the Danube River. Together, the Protected Areas of the Lower Danube preserve and promote their respective regions both as natural heritage sites and tourist destinations, making it possible for visitors to experience and enjoy the natural and cultural diversity of the Lower Danube region.

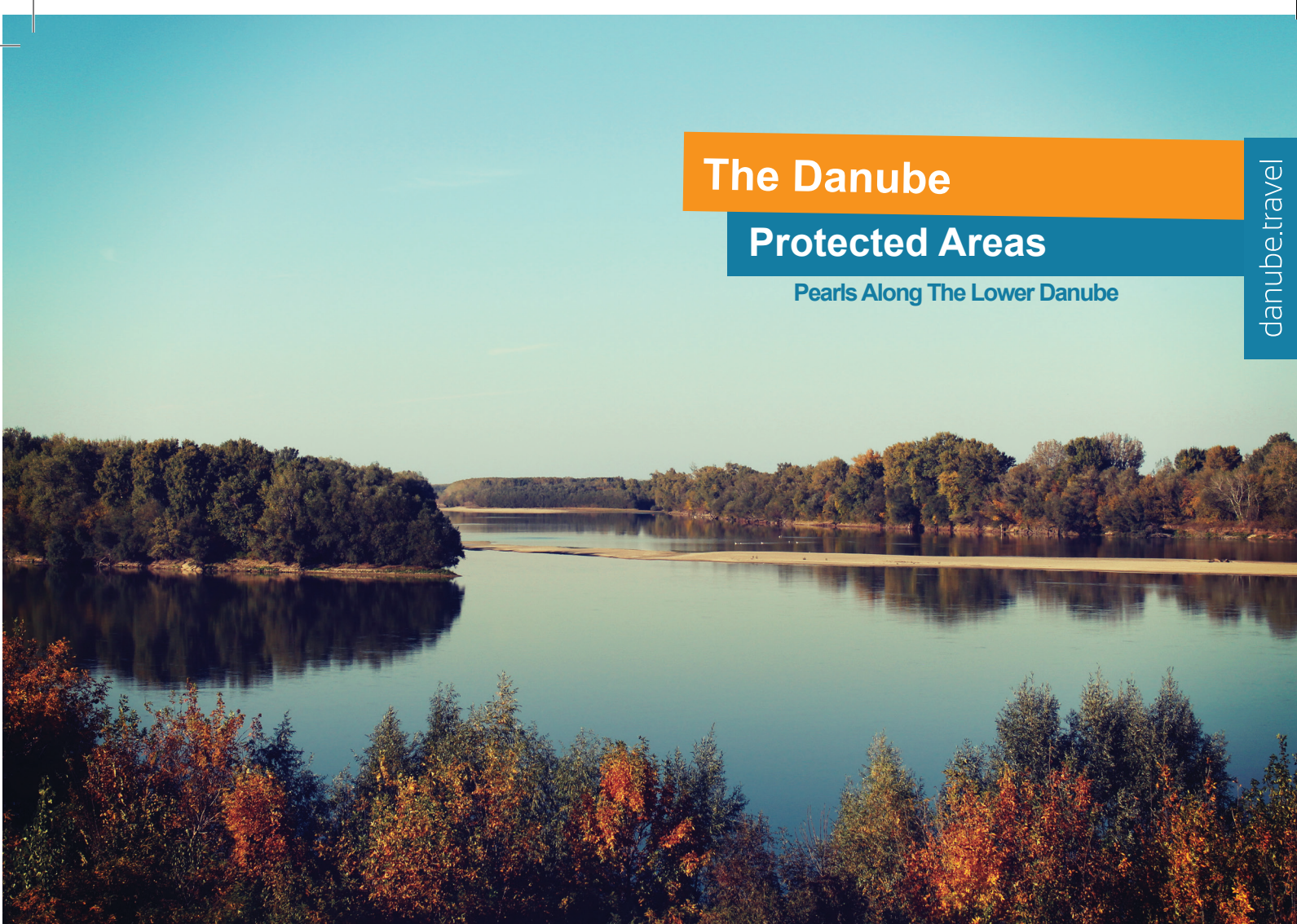


The Danube

Protected Areas

Pearls Along The Lower Danube

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Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Romania/Ukraine), Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Park (Romania), Lower Prut Nature Reserve (Republic of Moldova)

At the end of its 2,860-km journey through ten European countries, where it empties into the Black Sea, the Danube forms one of the most beautiful deltas in all of Europe and the world. The greater part of the Danube Delta (82%) lies in Romania, while the remaining 18% spreads in Ukraine. It is the second largest and best preserved delta on the European continent. As one of the most pristine wetlands in Europe, its diverse ecosystem hosts more than 7,400 species of flora and fauna.



A few kilometres upstream, the Prut River flows into the Danube, forming the border between Romania and Moldavia. The Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Park on the Romanian side and the Lower Prut Nature Reserve on the Moldovan bank share the responsibility of protecting their common ecosystem.

The unique hub formed by the Protected Areas in three neighbouring countries is mirrored by the equally unique and colourful cultural traditions and events of the over 20 different ethnic communities which have left their cultural mark on the region.

Persina Nature Park

Located on the Bulgarian stretch of the Danube, the Persina Nature Park boasts numerous inland marshes and islands which it aims to protect and preserve. The park's name comes from Persin Island, the largest of the Danube's islands in Bulgaria and the fourth largest in Europe.

Once nearly submerged after the construction of dams and drainage systems along the periphery of the island, and due to the construction of the Iron Gate Dam in Serbia, Persin Island and its surroundings have now been restored to nearly their original natural state. Today, the wetlands and marshes of Persina Nature Park are once again home to more than 210 different bird species.

Duna-Dráva National Park and Kopački rit Nature Park

Before the Danube leaves Hungary it passes a large area of untouched wetland forests which form the Duna-Dráva National Park.

The waters of two rivers, the Danube and the Dráva, play a key role in the formation of this landscape. As a result, a great variety of habitats with vibrant ecosystems can be found within this park.

The Kopački rit Nature Park is located directly across the border on the Croatian stretch of the Danube and at the mouth of the Dráva River.

The area is one of the most important alluvial floodplains in Europe; its internal delta has a very distinctive appearance. Regular flooding constantly changes the shape and function of the different parts of Kopački rit Nature Park, both on land and water.





Introduction to the Specific Natural Highlights

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Nature at its most stunning

As the second largest and best preserved wetland habitat on the European continent, the **Danube Delta** has received three important international designations: as Ramsar Site, UNESCO World Heritage Site, and inclusion in UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB). The Danube Delta and the Lower Prut have been declared protected areas and boast remarkably diverse flora and fauna. The region is of particular interest for birdwatchers, as it is where typical wetland avian species meet their counterparts from steppe landscapes. In addition to local native species, many migratory birds stop make a stop in the Danube Delta on their way to and from Central and Northern Europe.

The best time for a visit to the Danube Delta and Lower Prut region is during bird migration in spring and autumn, when over 20,000 birds can be recorded. In fact, of the approximately 500 European bird species overall, an impressive 340 species inhabit the site for breeding, nesting, wintering or during migration.

The best way to explore the Danube Delta and the Lower Prut is by boat. Day trips on large modern ships or small private boats are recommended for visitors with only limited time. For more extensive tours, trips of 6-12 days on modern floating hotels towed along the river are ideal. Alternatively, private boats may be rented to design one's own personal itinerary for exploring the Danube Delta.

One large and several smaller islands are scattered across the Danube's 16-km stretch in Bulgaria, forming the Belene Islands Complex now protected by the **Persina Nature Park**. The natural flooded forests and marshes of the Belene Island Complex are the sole breeding grounds for rare and threatened species such as the Spoonbill, Cormorant, Corncrake, Ferruginous Duck, and various types of herons and terns.

The park's Visitor Centre in the town of Belene is the ideal starting point for a tour along the hiking trails through Persina Nature Park. Several birdwatching spots offer spectacular views. Another great option is to rent a kayak or motorboat to explore Persina's numerous and varied waterways.

Duna-Dráva National Park is home to a wide range of animal species, including rare reptiles like the European Pond Turtle. Hungarian Grey cattle graze on the plains and steppes, and the Gemenc and Béda-Karapancsa regions of the Park are vital European habitats for the White-tailed Eagle. Wildlife in Duna-Dráva may be best explored on a canoe tour starting in Béda-Karapancsa. Another option is to simply take a walk through the wetlands and forests.

The stunning beauty of the adjacent Kopački rit Nature Park makes it one of the most important tourist destinations on mainland Croatia. It is also a habitat of great ecological significance for wildlife: tens of thousands of birds, lakes and channels filled with fish, and herds of deer and numerous wild boars



on dry land. Wetland meadows in full bloom are among the beautiful sights to be experienced and treasured in **Kopački rit**.

Originating at the main entrance of the Mali Sakadaš Visitor Centre are numerous different walking and nature trails. A variety of boat and canoe tours are also offered. Kopački rit is also well known for the international bicycle routes "Pannonian Peace Route" and "Danube Route" which run through the park.



Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve

A vast complex of reed beds, willow forests and wetlands, all crisscrossed by a network of waterways: an exciting range of habitats is waiting to be explored, either on foot or by boat – or both! The Danube Delta is an established and popular tourist destination thanks to the region's unique character. A fascinating combination of natural beauty and wildlife, recreational opportunities such as fishing and beaches, and ethnic/cultural attractions that come alive in folk traditions, customs, architecture, and of course, cuisine.

There is an increasing number of accommodation facilities available, including hotels, bed & breakfasts, holiday villas, floating hotels and campsites. There are many ways to visit and experience the Danube Delta depending on the desired trip duration and individual visitor requirements.

For more information:

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (Romania)

34A PORTULUI Street
820243 - Tulcea, Romania

Tel: +40 240 51 89 24, +40 240 51 89 25

Fax: +40 240 51 89 75

E-mail: arbdd@ddbba.ro

Web: www.ddbba.ro

Danube Delta for Families (Ukraine)

Spend an unforgettable day in the extraordinary **Danube Delta**. Visit the historic town of **Vilkovo**, founded by Russian Orthodox "Old Believers" (Lipovans) and Ukrainian Cossacks. Explore the youngest landform in Europe: the Kiliya part of the Delta is only 300 years old, and continues to extend by a meter or more each year into the Black Sea. Watch the clouds of birds, or take a swim in the river. Enjoy a traditional lunch of fish caught fresh from the Danube and cooked especially for visitors in an own Delta garden. Fresh seasonal fruit is also available: strawberries, apples, pears, peaches, and grapes, all grown locally.

Custom tours and visits

For more information and bookings:

Salix Ecotours (Odessa, Ukraine)

Tel./Fax: +380 487 289 737 or +380 487 289 738

E-mail: natasha.goriup@salix.od.ua, 4salix@salix.od.ua

Web: <http://www.salix.od.ua/>

Organized tours in the Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Park (Romania)

The idyllic countryside of the Prut valley is best explored on an organized bike tour. Guided tours take visitors to the out-of-the-way places where the river's restless power can be felt up close and hands on. These tours are appropriate for all ages, physical fitness levels and personal interests. An impressive Prut nature tour may be topped off by a visit to the Natural Sciences Museum Complex in Galați.

For more information and bookings:

Natural Sciences Museum Complex, Galați

Str. Regiment 11 - Siret, no. 6A
800340 Galați, Romania

Tel.: +40 236 411 898; Fax: +40 236 414 475

Web: <http://www.cmsngl.ro>

Danube Delta and Lower Prut

Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and Lower Prut Protected Areas

"Centre for Resource Development Association 2020" Association

Str. Vamii, no. 5
800023 Galați, Romania

Tel.: +40 741 254 447

E-mail: centrulderesurse2020@gmail.com

Lower Prut Nature Reserve (Republic of Moldova)

The Lower Prut Nature Reserve is a genuine pearl among the many natural tourist attractions of the Cahul district, with its "old" Lake Beleu, reed beds, surrounding wetland forests, and rich flora and fauna. Always recommended is a stop at the "Casa Dorului" located in the vicinity of the reserve on the bank of the Prut River. There is something for visitors from near or far: outdoor recreational activities in nature, boating and nature trail tours, visits to local craftsmen, folklore programmes, and tastings of traditional and/or local foods and culinary specialties.

Lower Prut Nature Reserve (Republic of Moldova)

Address: MD 5361 r-nul Cahul, s. Slobozia

Tel.: +37 367433882

E-mail: rezervatie@gmail.com ; prutuldejos@moldasilva.gov.md

Ecological Counselling Centre Cahul (Republic of Moldova)

Address: st. Alexei Mateevici 21, MD-3907, Cahul

Tel./Fax: + 37 3299 21478

E-mail: cce_cahul@yahoo.com



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Persina Nature Park



Persina Nature Park Visitor Centre

The Persina Nature Park Visitor Centre is located on the banks of the Danube. Built in 2006, the building has an unusual exterior reminiscent of a docked ship. The centre houses a variety of travelling exhibitions and interactive models. All tourist routes start at the Visitor Centre in the town of Belene.

Location: 25°07'45"E/ 43°39'08"N

For more information and bookings:

Persina Nature Park Directorate

5 Persin Str.

Belene 5930, Bulgaria

Tel.: +35965832684

E-mail: persina@abv.bg, www.persina.bg

Natural Landmark of Skalna Tzarkva

The natural landmark of Skalna Tzarkva, a rock-hewn church, may be found in the Plavala area in the territory of Nikopol. The church is carved in the limestone and its walls are full of old inscriptions and paintings from early Christian times. During most parts of the year, high Danube waters and flooding make access to the church difficult.

Location: 24°54'42"E/43°42'34"N

For more information and bookings:

Persina Nature Park Directorate

5 Persin Str.

Belene 5930, Bulgaria

Tel.: +35965832684

E-mail: persina@abv.bg, www.persina.bg

Persin Island

Persin Island is the largest Bulgarian Danube Island and the most important area of the Belene Islands Complex.

Its large number of bird species makes it a paradise for bird-watchers. The island encompasses three different Protected Areas: the marshes supported reserve, the Persin East Protected Area, and the Belene Protected area.

Location: 25°12'30"E/ 43°40'07"N

For more information and bookings:

Persina Nature Park Directorate

5 Persin Str.

Belene 5930, Bulgaria

Tel.: +35965832684

E-mail: persina@abv.bg, www.persina.bg

Kaykusha Protected Area

The Kaykusha Protected Area contains the Kaykusha marsh, located along the southern border of Persina Nature Park. The marsh is home to many rare waterfowl and plants, making it a very interesting spot for birdwatching and ideal for short week-end excursions. There is a nature trail leading visitors to the edge of the Kaykusha marsh.

Location: 25°12'03"E/43°35'46"N

For more information and bookings:

Persina Nature Park Directorate

5 Persin Str.

Belene 5930, Bulgaria

Tel.: +35965832684

E-mail: persina@abv.bg, www.persina.bg



Birdwatching in Kopački rit

A visit to the Kopački rit Nature Park is an absolute must for bird lovers and ornithologists! The park is particularly known for its rich bird life, including the Ferruginous Duck, black storks, egrets, buzzards, Saker, and the largest number of nesting sites of the White-Tailed Eagle in this part of Europe. It also boasts the most populous colonies of cormorants and grey herons in Croatia. Birdwatching on site can be arranged 2-3 days in advance and by appointment only. Please note that birdwatching groups are limited to 10 people per guide.

Contact:
Kopački rit Nature Park
E-mail: prijemni.centar@pp-kopacki-rit.hr
Web: www.pp-kopacki-rit.com

Fishing presentation in Boki-Duna

Centuries ago, these beautiful wetlands were actually a river bend. Now grown over, the bend has become an oxbow lake, still full of life. A special presentation on fishing takes us back 500 years in time, providing valuable insights into this ancient



**Kopački rit Nature Park and
Duna-Drava National Park**

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water world: the traditional way of life on the floodplain, including farming and beekeeping. Age-old fishing methods and tools will also be demonstrated, giving visitors the opportunity to try out these traditional techniques themselves.

Programme duration: 3-4 hours
Location: **Boki-Duna**
Mode of travel: individual, by car (from Kólked on the Erdőfű road, 1.5 km after Erdőfű), or bicycle
GPS: **N45.900006 E18.779894**

Guided canoe tour on the Külső-Béda (Outer-Béda)

Accompanied by a professional guide, participants in this special canoe tour will explore the Outer-Béda, a side arm of the Danube in the Béda-Karapanca wetlands region. With some luck, well-known and colourful wetland bird specimens may be sighted, including grey herons, kingfishers and black kites. This exciting programme offers participants a wealth of information about the wetlands habitat and its fascinating flora and fauna.

Programme duration: 2 hours
Tour length: 7 km
Location: **Kólked, White Stork Museum**
Mode of travel: individual, by car or bicycle

Guided tour of the Nagypartosi Trail

This marked nature trail leads along the edge of the strictly protected Nagy-rét (“Great-meadow”), right up to the Danube. Guides and information boards along the way offer interesting insights into how wetlands function, the significance of floods for farming on the floodplains, and ancestral ways of life. The route passes the now-reconstructed Belestye-fok, leading across the restored stone bridge over the Ásás. The protected Hungarian Grey cattle may be observed grazing on one of Hungary’s largest wetland pastures bordering this trail. Visitors may take this tour on foot, or ride in a horse-drawn cart.

Programme duration: 2.5 hours
Tour length: 5 km
Location: **Kólked, White Stork Museum**
Mode of travel: individual, by car or bicycle



The history of the Lower Danube reflects the essence of European history. World-changing events, long-established places of historic note, incredibly diverse natural landscapes, and a multitude of ethnicities and communities. The Lower Danube story itself offers many lessons in tolerance and the importance of multicultural dialogue.

The more than 14 different ethnic groups sharing the Danube Delta region are examples of how to live in harmony, with mutual tolerance and respect. The characteristic natural features of the Danube Delta have favoured the development of human settlements since ancient times and the spread of peoples across the region. Both archaeological vestiges and today's villages are testament to the economic development and cultivation of rich traditions. The natural attractions of the Danube Delta are complemented by the cultural ones: the churches and monasteries, archaeological sites, museums, and vernacular architecture.



Fishing dominates the economy of the Danube Delta. Until recently, many places could only be reached by boat. In some areas, vineyards dominate the landscape.

In the Moldovan part of the Lower Prut region, traditional folkloric dancing is highly treasured – not just for the dance, but for the folk music, costumes and art as well. Dancing has always been an integral part of cultural and social life. Dancing and folk songs play an important role, especially during the holidays. Moldovan cuisine is rich in traditional recipes with deep historical roots and a wide variety of ingredients. The wine region Cahul is the cradle of fine wine production, with wines made in accordance with age-old traditions, some of which are famous throughout the country and particularly abroad.

Culture and Tradition in Tune with Nature

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Apart from its natural beauty, the region of **Persina Nature Park** is well known for its colourful past. Around the town of Belene, 36 archaeological sites were discovered and identified as the remains of Roman, early medieval and medieval villages. The most attractive among them is the ancient castle Dimum, located on the Danube riverbank. In the past, it was a road and customs station.

Upstream, in the area of **Duna-Dráva National Park**, agriculture had always been the predominant economic factor. The inhabitants of the villages along the river were engaged mainly in stock farming, grazing cattle, horses, sheep and pigs. Some old traditional professions, such as wooden trough making and basket weaving, were practiced near the soft wood basks. The hardwood forests offered high-quality materials for the building of fortifications with defensive walls, or for making potassium carbonate. In some of the villages in the Ormánság region, such as Kórós, Drávaiványi, Adorjás or Kovácsida, painted coffers can be seen in churches.

Crossing the Croatian border, fishing villages such as Kopačevo are a common sight. Up until recently, fishermen from Kopačevo co-existed with nature in perfect harmony, maintaining their ancient fishing rituals. They preserved the traditional fishing tools not found in any other area as rich in fish, and

handed down their priceless fishing knowledge through the generations. One of the most interesting fishing techniques is fishing with the help of a cane barrier, set up as a labyrinth in dry parts of **Kopački rit**. With the arrival of the flood from the Dráva and Danube rivers, the fish would get caught in the trap. Every year in September, these old fishing tools are used in Kopačevo, and local fishermen prepare typical fish dishes. By earning a living from nature without destroying it, the Kopačevo fishermen are a great example of sustainability.



Cultural Highlights Museums

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Natural Sciences Museum Complex Galați (Romania)

The Natural Sciences Museum Complex is structured according to a variety of different large departments. One department frequently features new exhibitions which provide a content-rich and hands on, informal way of learning about science. The museum's aquarium has an impressive collection of fishes not only from the Lower Danube basin, but from the Mediterranean and tropical waters, too.

The 18-hectare botanical garden is located on the Danube's left bank in Galați. On display is a variety of plant collections from many of the world's geographical zones, with greenhouses containing tropical and subtropical plants, rose gardens,

and Japanese gardens.

The planetarium and astronomical observatory, the largest and most modern public observatory in Romania, offers educational programmes, shows about the planets, stars, and the universe, and also offers stargazing by night. This year, a brand new zoo opened its gates. A wide range of animal species from many geographic areas of the world, and especially mammals and birds, may be observed in large, modern spaces.

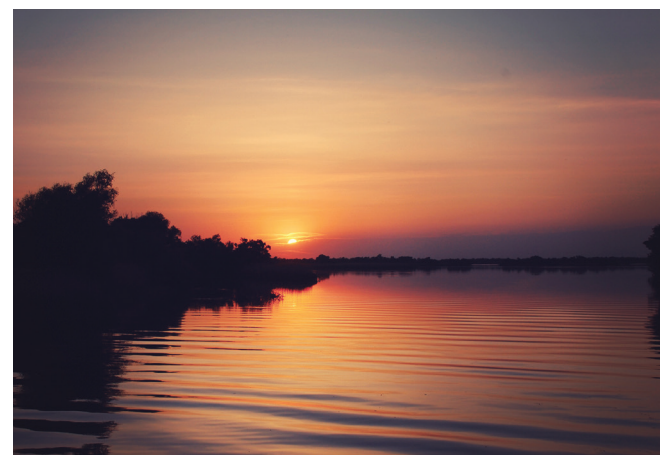
For more information:

Natural Sciences Museum Complex Galați

Str. Regiment 11 - Siret, no. 6A, cod. 800340, Galați, Romania

Tel.: +40 236 411 898; Fax: +40 236 414 475

Web: <http://www.cmsngl.ro>



White Stork Museum

The human population of Kölked has lived together with the storks for centuries. The settlement near the Hungarian Danube floodplain has always been a secure nesting and feeding place for the White Stork. At the end of winter, when the flowers begin to bloom, the storks return to Duna-Dráva National Park. Inhabiting the villages around the park, they are a common sight throughout spring and summer. In order to communicate how valuable these birds are to the inhabitants of Kölked, in terms of both nature and culture, a museum devoted solely to this majestic species has been established.

Guided museum tours offer insights into the life of the White Stork. Visitors learn interesting facts about their feeding, nesting and migration habits, and get to know the methods of stork-ringing. Depictions of the stork in literature and ethnography are also presented in the museum. Numerous outdoor and indoor activities, interactive tools and educational programmes enable a deeper understanding of the fascinating life of the White Stork in Duna-Dráva National Park.

The museum also offers bicycles to rent for other types of outdoor activities.

For more information:

White Stork Museum Kölked

Széchenyistr. 1, 7717 Kölked

Tel.: +36 69/384-208, 30/846-6020

E-mail: info@fehergolyamuzeum.hu

Web: <http://www.mohacs.hu/en/info/attractions/attractions-in-the-area/white-stork-museum-kolked.html>



Vinia Traian in Cahul (Republic of Moldova)

This winery is located 17 km from Cahul, in the village of Gavanoasa. Offering a wide range of dry and sweet wines, it was established in 1975. Its present name comes from the ancient Roman fortification, Trajan's wall, situated just 4 km from the winery. The remains of this wall are still visible today. There are many varieties of wine produced here, and all from grapes grown in the vineyards around the winery and produced using traditional techniques. The wine collection currently consists of many thousands of bottles of red, white and rosé. White wines such as Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Aligote and Muscat personify the elegance and pronounced aroma and characteristics of each variety. Red wines such as Cabernet, Merlot, Pinot, and Saperavi are characterized by a more pronounced taste and rich colours. There are ongoing efforts to preserve the old traditions of the area but also to extend the range of wines produced here. Visitors are invited to taste the wines in a tasting room and visit a wine cellar.

For more information:

Tel: +373-68-892711, Fax +373-299-57428

Web: <http://www.viniatraian.md>



Cultural Highlights

Festivals

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Poklade (Busó festivities) – Duna-Dráva National Park

The “Busójárás,” or Busó festivities at Mohács in southern Hungary are a six-day carnival in late February to mark the end of winter. The festival is named after the so-called busós, scary-looking people (traditionally men) wearing costumes with wooden masks and big woolly cloaks. There is a great variety of activities, including a children’s costume contest and arts and crafts exhibitions, including masks carved by craftspeople. Rituals include the arrival of more than 500 busós in rowboats on the Danube for a march through the city alongside horse-drawn and other decorated motor vehicles. The burning of a coffin around a bonfire in the central square symbolizes the end of winter, and there is feasting and music throughout the city. Although this tradition originated with Mohács’ Croatian minority, the busó has now become an emblem of the entire city, and a commemoration of the great events of its history. More than just a social event, the carnival is an expression of belonging: to the city, to a social group, and to a nation. The festival fulfils an important social function by offering a chance for self-expression in a communal setting. The arts underlying the festivities are preserved by self-organized groups of busós from all cultural backgrounds, many of whom pass on the techniques of mask carving and ritual celebration to younger generations.

Poklade is on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

For more information:
www.mohacsibusojaras.hu

Pranje (“Danube washing”) – Duna-Dráva National Park

The Pranje festival is held at the beginning of July in Mohács, at the Sokac ferry. Using traditional tools, women wash clothes at the river bank to commemorate the old days when washing in the Danube was the only way to do the laundry! This traditional event is followed by cooking, baking and other folklore programmes.

For more information:

Tourinform Mohács

E-mail: mohacs@tourinform.hu

Web: www.mohacs.hu

The Danube Delta Fish Soup Festival – Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Romania)

Each year in September, the Danube Delta Fish Soup Festival is held in the village of Crişan. The festival promotes local cultural and folkloric customs and traditions, including folk dancing and traditional dress/costume parades. There are also cooking contests featuring the Biosphere Reserve teams. These showcases of the region’s delicious culinary specialties are especially popular among festival guests! This event is the ideal opportunity to discover the various ethnic cultures and customs of the Danube Delta region.

For more information:

National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism - ANTREC Romania

Contact Person: Silviu GHEORGHE

34A Portului Street, Tulcea, Romania

Tel.: +40 0764.501.690

E-mail: tulcea@antrec.ro

St. Theodore’s Day

To honour the important Orthodox saint Theodore (Todorov) and the role played by horses in Bulgarian culture, Bulgarians host a horse race called “Kushii” each year on 28 February. The ancient roots of this folk festival lie in Thracian mythology. According to folk tradition, in Theodore’s honour, newly married women would bake a round loaf of bread decorated with a dough-modelled image of a horse’s head. For their part, men braid the tails and manes of horses, decorating them with beads, tassels and flowers before participating in the Kushii horse race. The horse is a symbol of the sun, while the horseman is known in the Bulgarian lands through the cult of the Thracian.

For more information and bookings:

“Hristo Botev - 97” Community Centre

Town Belene, square of “Bulgaria” N1

Tel. +359(0)65836996

E-mail: ic.belene@chitalishte.bg

Fishing Days in Kopačevo

The Fishing Days in Kopačevo (“Ribarski dani”) were originally conceived as a kind of local party. The aim was to bring local people together, socialize and enjoy the traditional fish specialties prepared with the region’s well-known peppers.

However, the popularity of this event continues to grow each year, turning the Kopačevo Fishing Days into a two-day weekend event.

Thousands of visitors flock to Kopačevo, eager to smell and taste the delicious local fish specialties.

Recipe

Baja Fish Soup

Ingredients: Selection of fish, mostly carp (½ kg per person) • Cooking onions (1 medium onion for each kg fish) • Water (1.2 litres for each kg fish) • Ground red pepper (1 tablespoonful for each kg fish) • Strap noodles

Important: Do not use pikeperch, grass carp or bighead carp for this type of fish soup!

Clean the fish. Cut into bite-sized piece and make incisions into the pieces. Season with salt and let stand 1-2 hours before cooking. Finely chop the onion and add to the pot together with the fish and water. Bring to a vigorous boil. Once soup has foamed for the first time, sprinkle the red pepper into the pot. Boil for another 20-25 minutes until ready.

Hot chillies may be added for extra flavour but serve separately (do not add them to the pot or individual bowls)! You might want to add a drop of red wine to the fish soup. Having eaten the fish, a sip of red wine is a must! Local wine experts recommend the Baja Kékfrankos.



Planning your trip

The local Protected Areas of the Lower Danube region look forward to welcoming you to this exciting region. Visit the fascinating place where nature, culture and tradition come together.

DANUBEPARKS – The Danube River Network of Protected Areas – and the Danube Competence Centre (DCC) would be happy to assist you in finding the right contacts when planning a trip to the Lower Danube region.

The incoming tour operators listed below can guide you to the natural sites and cultural events of your choice.

ROWMANIA ECOTOURISM CENTRE (Crişan, Romania)

This centre offers “slow” tours in the Danube Delta by canotca, a cross between the local lotca fishing boat and Patzaichin’s Olympic canoe. Experience absolute stillness, then wild canals, and even remote lakes teeming with fish and bird life. These tours may be augmented by an interpretative audio-visual guide offering precious insights into the area’s wildlife and cultural life.

Tel.: +40 735 882 969

E-mail: crisan@turismlent.ro

Web: <http://www.turismlent.ro/>



IBIS TOURS - Wildlife Holidays and Tours in Romania’s Danube Delta, Dobrogea and Carpathians (Romania)

Specialized in wildlife tours and helping tourists to see lots of interesting wild “things” in a non-pressured, fun atmosphere. Ibis Tours guides are both passionate about wildlife and comfortable with people. Travelling with Ibis Tours is a rewarding experience for all, from the dedicated “twitcher” and wildlife enthusiast to those less familiar with wild things. Not only will a tour with Ibis be a great holiday, but it can also be a rewarding learning experience. Languages offered: English, German, French, Italian and Russian.

Address: 6 Dimitrie Sturza Street, Tulcea, Tulcea County code 820123, Romania

Tel./Fax: +40 240 512787

Mobile: +40 722 381 398

Web: www.ibis-tours.ro

List of Incoming tour-operators

danube.travel

DISCOVER THE DANUBE DELTA Association of Danube Delta Professional Guides (Romania)

Specialized in wildlife photography, birdwatching, kayaking, canoeing and discover tours. Special offers for families or groups, pairs; holidays and tours with fixed dates, or customized. Day trips, tours of 4 days/3 nights, 5 days/4 nights or a week-long stay, including boat trips on magnificent routes, with Danube Delta professional guides.

Contact person: Iliuță Goian

Mobile: +40 0763869400

E-mail: contact@descoperadeltadunarii.ro

Web: <http://www.discoverdanubedelta.com/>

INFORMATION AND TOURISM PROMOTION CENTRE (Tulcea, Romania) TULCEA NATIONAL INFORMATION AND TOURISM PROMOTION CENTRE

4 Gloriei Str, Tulcea

Tel./Fax: +40 0240 519055

E-mail: cnipttulcea@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.cnipttulcea.ro/>

TULCEA TOURISM INFORMATION CENTRE

Tulcea Municipality

26 Gării Str., Tulcea city (on Danube promenade)

Tel./Fax: +40 0240 519130

Web: <http://www.primariatulcea.ro/>

A.N.T.R.E.C. Tulcea

34 A Portului Str. (DDBRA building)

E-mail: tulcea@antrec.ro

TIOC NATUR- UND STUDIENREISEN

Offers nature tours for those fond of biology, bird watching, history, curiosity and sports. Live, explore and enjoy the unique moments of peaceful nature, meet the villagers of many generations who survive from fishing or shepherding, tap into the Romanian dream landscapes, discover on bike the virgin mountain routes. Observe closely the mysteries of nature under the careful guidance of specialized guides. Become a friend of nature! Contact person: Tiberiu Tioc

Office: Alea Genistilor nr 25, Sc. C, Ap 61, 550 355 - Sibiu Romania

Mobile: +40 743 025 154

Email: contact@tioc-reisen.ro

Web: www.tioc-reisen.ro



INVITATION ROMANIA TRAVEL (Romania)

Specialized in incoming travel services, Invitation Romania Travel has a professional team dedicated to permanently improving the quality of services provided to its clients.

Member of ANAT – National Association of Travel Agencies; CCIFR – The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry; ETOA – European Tour Operators Association. Awards: CCIFR – Excellence award 2008; Carlson Wagonlit Travel – award for 10 years of collaboration 2008; Vacante si Calatorii Magazine - award for excellent incoming activity.

Tours in Romania with extension trips to the Danube Delta: “the place where the Danube loses its name,” “Grand tour of Romania,” “Romania - land of wonders.”

Tel.: +40 21 313 6322

Fax: +40 21 313 6380

E-mail: gheorghe.fodoreanu@invitation-romania.ro, office@invitation-romania

Web: <http://www.invitation-romania.com/>

THE MAYOR OF VALENI VILLAGE, Cahul District (Republic of Moldova)

Local Tourism Services Provider

Mobile: +37 379017151

E-mail: pr.valeni@yahoo.com

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE CAHUL (Republic of Moldova)

Contact person: Valeriu AJDER

Mobile: +37 766451195

E-mail: vajder@yahoo.com

Web: <http://cahul.eu>

SALIX ECOTOURS (Odessa, Ukraine)

Salix aims to promote ecologically sustainable development and wise use of land and natural resources in Ukraine. The company is mainly focused on establishing an ecotourism infrastructure in the Lower Danube region. Salix has the following priority areas of business: ecotourism development, handicraft production and sales, biomass production from reeds, project design, and management for sustainable development. Odessa Office:

No. 14, Torgova Bld

Tel./Fax: +380 487 289 737 or +380 487 289 738

E-mail: natasha.goriup@salix.od.ua, 4salix@salix.od.ua

Web: <http://www.salix.od.ua/>

SOLEI TURISM TRAVEL AGENCY (Republic of Moldova)

Solei Turism is a Moldovan travel agency which continues to develop its programme of activities, occupying a significant position on today’s Moldovan travel market. Over the years it has amassed considerable experience and expertise, establishing relations with leading airlines, travel agencies, and associations of international renown.

Incoming Department Address:

Blv. Decebal, 64, of. 4 MD-2015, Chişinău

Tel.: +37 322 890-900, +37 360433133

E-mail: incoming@solei.md

Web: <http://solei.md/>

VILKOVO PELIKAN TOUR (Ukraine)

A Ukrainian Danube Delta local tour operator since 1990, Vilko-vo Pelikan Tour provides “green” nature tours, programmes and services such as green weekends and holidays, “photo hunting,” birdwatching, eco-education, sport fishing, regional cuisine (including local specialties like honey). It also offers excursions to the countryside and other special local and regional cultural tours, including cross-border programmes and various kinds of accommodation in the Ukrainian Danube Delta.

The company works primarily in the Ukrainian Danube Delta, including the Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and other Ukrainian nature areas. Has own tourism infrastructure in the Ukrainian Danube Delta near the small town of Vilko-vo, often called the “Ukrainian Venice.” Provides special tourist offers for Odessa City and surrounding areas through own office in Odessa on Gogol Str. no. 8 (+38 048 777 12 05).

Contacts:

Mobile: +38 067 48 35 208

Fax: +38 04843 3 25 88

Address: Vilko-vo Kiliya Distr. Odessa Reg. Ukraine UA-68355

E-mail: pelican_vilkovo@ukr.net or ddi.zhmud.m@gmail.com

Web: www.pelican-danube-tour.com.ua



DANUBEPARKS

Network

danube.travel

The DANUBEPARKS Network: working together on behalf of our shared natural heritage

Cooperation among the members of the DANUBEPARKS, the Network of Protected Areas along the Danube River, has taken place since 2009. The network currently consists of 17 Protected Areas from nine Danube countries, all of which are centres of biodiversity.

The Protected Areas along the Danube preserve and restore the most valuable habitats of this international river, thus safeguarding an important part of Europe's natural heritage for future generations. Because nature doesn't recognise state borders, cross-border and transnational cooperation is an indispensable part of nature conservation.

DANUBEPARKS helps ensure that nature conservation activities are consistent and aligned across the Network.

Together, we speak with one strong voice on a pan-European level. Our main fields of work include the restoration of dynamic river habitats, wetland forest and meadow management, and the protection and monitoring of rare species.

By promoting nature tourism, we put a spotlight on the fascinating and beautiful Danube Protected Areas and help raise awareness of the importance of nature conservation.

www.danubeparks.org



danube
competence
centre

Danube Competence Center (DCC)
Čika Ljubina 8, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia
+381 11 6557 114
office@danubecc.org
www.danubecc.org

The Danube Competence Center is a regional consortium of Tourism Stakeholders from public, private and non-governmental organizations of all 10 Danube countries, working together on the development of a unique Tourism Brand – The Destination Danube. The DCC fosters sustainable tourism through cross-border tourism products, joint marketing activities and capacity building. The entire network stands for high quality tourism services, promotes international cooperation and supports the improvement of the socio-economic environment along the Danube banks. DCC successfully cooperates with the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through its agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, but also with other national donor organisations and the European Commission.

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