

Ramble in Romania – Fagaras Mountains Trek - 14th – 23rd September 2018

Overview

The Fagaras Mountains, also known as "The Transylvanian Alps" are undoubtedly the most impressive mountains in Romania. They are in fact, "the loftiest, the highest, the iciest, the most alpine, and less horizontal" as one of the greatest geologists, Marcian Bleahu, stated. (according to Travelguide Romania).

The challenge is to trek the entire main ridge of the Mountain (87 km) in 6 days while raising funds to support the Daniel Centre, Blythswood Romania's flagship project.

Since 2000, the Daniel Centre, near Cluj-Napoca in Romania, has offered a home to more than 100 young men who have spent their lives in state care. This project fills many of the social, emotional and educational gaps in their lives and we help them with basic life skills, emotional support, professional ethics training and work skills. This equips them for full-time employment or further education.

Each participant is expected to cover all travel costs (around £350) and to raise a minimum of £300 for the Daniel Centre. All funds raised will go entirely to the Daniel Centre.

The plan is to trek the main ridge East to West. On the mountain we will have to carry all our gear, and you have to expect 7 to 10 hrs daily trekking time depending of the fitness of the group. Accommodation will be in tents or in high altitude refuges (shelters), depending on availability (these only have a capacity of 10-15 people, cannot be booked in advance are used on first arrival basis).

Every participant does so at their own risk. Although, we have reasonable mountain experience we are not qualified guides. However, professional mountain rescue is available (Salvamont) in case of emergency, team members are stationed at several points on the mountain. We are also planning to have local volunteers trekking with us, who can accompany any team members down the mountain if sick or wants to return to Cluj earlier. In this case we can provide transportation back to Cluj, accommodation and meals at the Daniel Centre.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Friday, 14th September

International departure from Dublin.

Arrival to Cluj-Napoca in the evening. Dinner will be provided at the Daniel Centre and you will have the opportunity to meet some of the current and former beneficiaries.

Depending on the size of the team accommodation will be provided at the Daniel Centre or at a nearby B&B.

Day 2 – Saturday, 15th September

We'll spend the morning with preparation, shopping (gas, food etc.). Breakfast and lunch will be provided at the DC.

After lunch we'll head to the base of the Mountain by minivan which is a 5hrs drive. Overnight we will camp in tents near Brasov at Cabana Plaiul Foi or Cantonul Silvic Rudarita.

Day 3 – Sunday, 16th September

Stage 1 – Cabana Plaiul Foi - Cantonul Silvic Rudarita – Saa Lerescului Mic - Curmatura Bratilei

Depending on the road conditions, possibly we can drive up to Rudarita which can shorten the trekking time by 2 hrs. The main ridge trek starts at Rudarita.

Day 4 – Monday, 17th September

Stage 2 – Curmatura Bratilei - Curmatura Zarnei - Curmatura Mogosului - Sub varful Cheia Bandei - Fereastră Mare a Sambetei - Portita Vistei

Day 5 – Tuesday, 18th September

Stage 3 – Portita Vistei - Varful Vistea Mare - Varful Moldoveanu (the highest peak in Romania) - Saa Orzanelei - Saa Podragului - Portita Arpasului (Fereastră Zmeilor)

Day 6 – Tuesday, 18th September

Stage 4 – Portita Arpasului - Saa Caprei - Saa Paltinului - Portita Caltunului

Alternatively we can descend to Balea Lake for a hot meal and supplies can also be arranged.

Day 7 – Wednesday, 19th September

Extra day in case of bad weather

Day 8 – Thursday, 20th September

Stage 5 - Portita Caltunului - Varful Negoiu - Varful Serbota - Saa Scarii - sub Varful Scara

Day 9 – Friday, 21th September

Stage 6 – sub Varful Scara - Lacul Avrig - Saa Surului - Chica Pietrilor - Valea Oltului or Turnu Rosu

In the evening we are going to be picked up by cars and drive back to Cluj (3 hrs drive). Depending on the time will have dinner in Cluj or will stop on the road.

Day 10 – Saturday, 22th September

Visit Cluj, Relax. Meals will be provided at the Daniel Centre.

Day 11 – Sunday, 23rd September

Depart for the UK

N.B. The itinerary is only there as a guide and may change due to bad weather, the strength of the group, and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

What is included

The expected cost of travel is £350. The followings are included: flights from Dublin or Belfast (if paid by the 15th of June (and within the total flight price of £240 per person return). It is still possible to

join the group at a later stage but flight prices may vary), meals at the Daniel Centre, airport transfers in Romania, transfer to and from the mountain.

What is NOT included

Travel insurance (please note that you have to be insured for trekking up to 2544 metres), meals that are not provided in the Daniel Centre, food on the mountain, any nights in Mountain Chalets if we decide to use these (around 50 lei / person / night, except Lake Balea which is around 150 lei / person / night). As at 9th may 2018 1 lei is worth 19p .

Personal fundraising

You to raise funds for the project on <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rambleinromania>
Here online donations can be made safely and securely and also gift aid can be claimed.

Other information

Useful "mountain words":

Cabana - Chalet

Saua - Saddle

Curmatura - Saddle

Varful - Peak

Portita – **to fall off a mountain and die and slow and painful death**

Valea - Valley

Lacul – Lake

More information on Blythswood Care, Blythswood Ireland and Blythswood Romania
www.blythswood.org, www.blythswoodireland.org , www.blythswood.ro or
www.facebook.com/Blythswood-Care , www.facebook.com/blythswoodireland/ ,
www.facebook.com/BlythswoodRomania/

More information on Fagaras Mountains:

www.travelguideromania.com/fagaras-mountains-the-highest-mountains-in-romania/

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