

OUTSMARTING THE URBAN LIFE



Survival Guide



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WELCOME

Hello there, avid explorer!

Welcome to the Survival Guide of our BEST Course in Summer, where you'll find all you need to know in order to get the most out of this experience in Bucharest. Make sure you read it carefully and don't hesitate to contact us for any extra information you may need. Get ready 'cause between 22th of June - 2nd of July you will meet awesome people, acquire knowledge in this futuristic field and have fun in an authentic Romanian style!



about BUCHAREST



Bucharest (Romanian: Bucureşti) is Romania's capital and largest city, as well as the most important industrial and commercial center of the country. With around 2 million inhabitants in the city proper, Bucharest is one of the largest cities in Southeastern Europe.

In the Middle Ages, the Greeks called it Hilaropolis (The city of joy), fully living up to the name — for everything the city represented back then. Today there is no exaggeration to say that Bucharest is indeed a modern, dynamic, energetic and quite a fun place to visit.

The Palace of Parliament is the world's second-largest administrative building (after the Pentagon). In terms of weight, the Palace of the Parliament is the heaviest building in the world. A colossal parliament building known for its ornate interior, it houses the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, three museums and an international conference center.



Herăstrău Park is the largest park of Bucharest. Quite simply, this glorious park, spread around Herăstrău lake is one of the jewels in Bucharest's crown. Fear not though, for so big is Herăstrău that it never gives the impression of being crowded, and even on the busiest of days, you will always be able to find a quiet, shady corner somewhere. More than that, the well-known Hard Rock Cafe and the biggest beer-house from Southeastern Europe, Berăria H, are both located in Herăstrău Park



Bucharest's Old Town is a mix of history, local culture and lifestyle, a trendy entertainment district and a favorite hangout for the locals. According to legend, this is where Bucharest was founded, back in the 1400s.



The Village Museum (Romanian: Muzeul Satului) is an open-air ethnographic museum located in the Herăstrău Park, showcasing the traditional Romanian village life. The museum contains 272 authentic rural farms and houses from all over Romania.

The Romanian Athenaeum a concert hall in the city center, and a landmark for the capital. It is famous for being the home of "George Enescu" Philharmonic and of the "George Enescu" annual International Music Festival.



transport in BUCHAREST



Let's just say you want to travel alone, in a comfy chair, or you've just missed the last bus/subway. Bucharest got you covered! There are lots of options to choose from, just a click away on your phone

Uber / Bolt / Yango

Also luckily for you, taxis are quite cheap in Bucharest. The average price is around 1,7 Lei /km. You will also pay around 1,7 Lei for the start of the trip. (1,7 Lei = 0.4 €)

To avoid having unpleasant experiences, we recommend that you always have some Lei on you and that you also have some change so you can pay the exact price.

Below are some taxi companies in case you want to go for this option:

Taxi Meridian: +4021 9444 / +4021 9888

Cobalcescu: +4021 9451

Cristaxi: +4021 9466 / +4021 9455

Sometimes it's better to be less adventurous and go for the safe way, which we think is "Uber", "Bolt", "Yango"

The company which operates the surface public transportation in Bucharest is called **STB**.

To use the buses/trams/trolleys you need to buy an electronic card called "**Card Activ**", which costs 3,7 lei (no trips included).

You need to put money on the card depending on how many trips you need, and a trip costs 1.3 lei. For example, if you believe you need 5 trips for your stay, you should pay 6.5 lei (5 x 1.3 lei). You can buy the tickets at the bus stations called "**Centru Reîncarcare**".

An alternative would be to pay by SMS. You just have to type a message to 7458: type "E780" or "E783" if you will travel by bus from the airport to Bucharest (0.65EUR+VAT) and type "U"+ the number of the bus line if you travel within Bucharest e.g. "U105" (0.30EUR+VAT).



You have to put money on the card before getting in and validate it immediately after entering the bus/tram/trolley. Also, keep in mind that you may not find a ticket charging point in every bus station. You will need this card only before and after the event. During the days of the BEST event, transportation passes will be provided by the organizers. The fine for getting caught without having validated the card is 50 Lei.

A trip with bus no.780 and 783 (to/from the airport) has a different price (3.5 lei per trip). You can find maps of all STB routes here: http://stbsa.ro/v_trasee. There are also some night buses, but you have to wait at least 30 minutes at the station. Their map can be found here: stbsa.ro/maps1/Trasee_noapte.pdf.

We strongly recommend to let us know when you will arrive and by what means of transportation!



transport in BUCHAREST



Using the subway (in Romanian - 'metrou') is by far one of the fastest means of transport through Bucharest. However, in order to use it, you need to buy a travel card.

- A two-trip subway card costs 5 Lei - 1.05€
- A ten-trip subway card costs 20 Lei - 4.2€

A 24-hour subway card costs around 8 Lei - 1.7€ (really useful if you want to visit Bucharest all day long)
A 7 days subway card costs 25 lei - 5.25€

Note that, once you get past the barriers, you are allowed to take as many subways as you need and change between any lines without having to use your pass again as long as you don't go out through the barriers.

You can buy the cards from the entrance to any metro station (either from the register or from one of the ticket vending machines) and you need to validate it in order to pass.

There are 4 Metro lines (M1, M2, M3, M4) and several stations where you can transfer between the lines.

Important: Keep in mind that Metrorex operates between 5 AM and 11 PM (The last subway actually leaves somewhere a little bit after 11 PM from the head of the line so unless you want to risk sleeping outside, you might still catch it).



ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

During your stay, you'll spend the nights in a dorm situated on our campus. Rooms here come equipped with 2,3 or 4 beds and a bathroom. In order to reach university, you'll have to walk for about 10 minutes.

We will provide 3 meals per day (out of which at least one will be warm).

We will serve these meals close to the campus, except for the days when something else is planned, but that is our job. If you're on a special diet or have allergies, don't forget to mention it in the Private Area.

Romanian traditional dishes:



Mici - grilled minced meat rolls, roasted on a grill; Mămăligă - cornmeal mush, also known as Romanian-style polenta. It can be served as a side dish or form the basis of further dishes, such as bulz, mămăligă cu brânză și smântână;

Sarmale - Romanian stuffed cabbage rolls is a dish consisting of cooked cabbage leaves wrapped around meat fillings, traditionally served on Christmas and New Year's Eve;



Cozonac - a type of sweet leavened bread. The dough is essentially similar throughout the country; depending on the region, one may add to it any of the following: raisins, grated orange or lemon zest, walnuts or hazelnuts, and vanilla flavor. Cozonac may be sprinkled with poppy seeds on top;



Papanași - fried or boiled pastry resembling a small sphere, or a doughnut if you wish, usually filled with a soft cheese or any kind of sour jam.

CURRENCY & PRICES

The Romanian currency is the leu (singular), lei (plural), ("lei" is pronounced like the English 'lay'; "leu" in Romanian means "lion"). Please note that sometimes the "leu" is also referred to as RON.

Coins : 1 ban (0,01 lei), 5 bani (0,05 lei), 10 bani (0,1 lei), 50 bani (0,5 lei).

Bills: 1 leu, 5 leu, 10 leu, 50 leu, 100 leu, 200 leu and 500 leu.

The current exchange rates for Euro and USD are 1Euro ~ 4.79 lei and 1USD ~ 4,3 lei.

For updated information about exchange rates, you can visit <https://www.cursbnr.ro/>

There is a slight variation from one Exchange Office to another. You can find Exchange Offices (including traveler's checks) almost everywhere open all week. The safest exchange offices are the ones inside the banks.

The banks are open during weekdays from around 8 a.m to 4-5 pm.

Important:

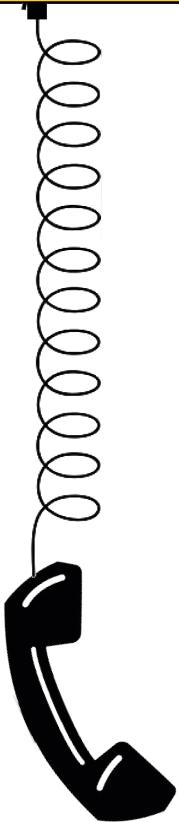
In Romania, you can only use "lei". If someone is accepting Euro as payment, most probably he will try to deceive you. Always remember to exchange money as specified above, pay with "lei" and eventually ask for the receipt. If you know that your currency is rarely accepted for exchange, you might want to consider exchanging your money in Euro before coming here.

- Do not exchange money from people on the street! Always go to an exchange office.
- Do not exchange money from the airport or from the railway station.
- Do not take money from strangers.
- Do not leave your money/wallet unattended.

Here are a few of the prices you'll encounter here in Bucharest:

- Sparkling water 3 Lei / 0.63 € (2 liters)
- Sandwich 5-6 Lei / 1.20 €
- Pizza 25 Lei / 5.20 €
- A Big-Mac Menu 15 Lei / 3.15 €
- An ice cream 3-4 Lei / 0.70 €
- Coffee 2 Lei / 0.42 € (if you buy it from service vending machine)
- Entrance at Disco can reach 30 Lei / 6.30 € but most of them are free
- Pack of cigarettes 16-19 Lei / 4.00€
- A movie ticket 14 - 20 Lei / 4.00 €
- Beer in stores 3 Lei (1/2 liter) and 7-8 lei (2 liter) / 1.50 €
- Beer in bars 6-12 Lei (1/2 liter) / 2.50 €

TELEPHONE



You can use your own GSM mobile phone in Romania via roaming service.

While using the roaming service, you are also paying for the calls you receive.

If you plan on using the phone a lot in Romania, we recommend you buy a prepaid SIM card from a Romanian operator. The SIM cards are quite cheap and you will be given initial credit for calls. Just make sure your phone is not SIM-locked on your home operator. You can choose from the following Romanian operators:

www.vodafone.ro www.orange.ro www.telekom.ro

The phone prefix of Romania is +40. To call from Romania you can omit the +4.

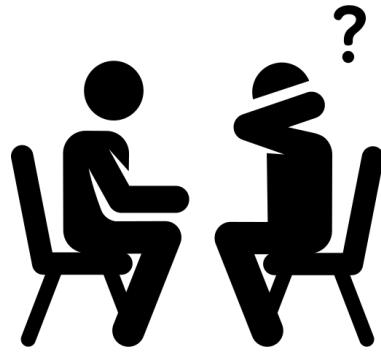
Important phone numbers

Emergency 112 - most important one - it covers them all

Police 955

Fire brigade 981

how to speak ROMANIAN



Let's start with some ground rules. In Romanian, you pronounce as you read.

Forget about all the troubles English put you through when realizing that every "c" in the "Pacific Ocean" is spelled differently.

In Romanian it's plain and simple - you see a group of letters, you take it for granted and read them as it is.

However, there's always a catch. We have a few letters and groups of letters that are written and pronounced a little bit different than perhaps what you've seen in English.

Ă/ă - /ə/ - pronounced as the "a" in "above" (â)- it doesn't really have an English equivalent but here's a French one - the letter "e" in "attendre" î/î - identical to , see above, used in the beginning and at the end of the word

ex. "to learn" = "a învăța"; "to kill" = "a omorî" ř/ș - pronounced as "sh" in "shopping"

Ț/t̪ - /ts/ - pronounced as "zz" in "pizza"

Ce - is pronounced like the "che" in "check"

Ci - is pronounced like the "chi" in "chipmunk"

Ge - is pronounced like the "ge" in "general"

Gi - is pronounced like the "ji" in "jinx" **Ghe** - is pronounced like the "ge" in "get"

Ghi - is pronounced like the "gi" in "give".



how to speak ROMANIAN



The basics: greetings, goodbyes and more

Hi, Hello.....	Bună, Salut
Good bye.....	La revedere
Good morning/Good afternoon.....	Bună dimineața/Bună ziua
Good evening/Good night.....	Bună seara/Noapte bună
Thank you/You're welcome.....	Mulțumesc/Cu plăcere
Please.....	Vă rog(polite or plural), Te rog(singular)
Help.....	Ajutor
Yes/No/Maybe.....	Da/Nu/Poate
My name is	Numele meu este
I don't know/I don't understand.....	Nu știu/Nu înțeleg
What/Why/How/When.....	Ce/De ce/Cum/Când
One/Two/Three/Four/Five/Ten.....	Unu/Doi/Trei/Patru/Cinci/Zeci
Bus/Trolley/Tram/Subway.....	Autobuz/Troleu/Tramvai/Metrou

Romanian sayings vs what it actually means

Sell you dough.....	Lie to you
At the devil's mother.....	Far away
Rubbing the mint.....	Wasting time
Take him/her out of his watermelons.....	Drive a Romanian nuts
I'm cabbage.....	Mulțumesc/Cu plăcere
Your face has fallen off.....	You're surprised
Mustard will jump off.....	Lose temper
Coin drops.....	Suddenly get it

how to reach **BUCHAREST**



BY PLANE

Bucharest (Romanian: Bucureşti) is Romania's capital and the fastest way to reach Bucharest is definitely by plane. There are a lot of low-cost flights to and from Bucharest and if you book your tickets early you might get them way cheaper.

Here you have a list of low-cost airlines with flights to Bucharest:

- www.blueairweb.com
- www.wizzair.com
- www.germanwings.com
- www.ryanair.com
- www.flypgs.com

You will arrive at Hendri Coandă International Airport (Otopeni Airport).

and the Chamber of Deputies, three museums and an international conference center.

BY TRAIN

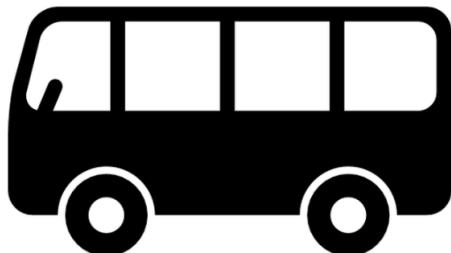


There are many direct trains to Bucharest, especially from the Balkans. If you want to connect other trains/flights with a direct train to Bucharest you should consider these cities: Budapest (14 hours), Vienna (17 hours), Belgrade (13 hours), Sofia (9 hours) and Chișinău (13 hours). By far the best link is with Budapest (4 trains/day).

If you need to check the timetable of ALL international trains, we recommend you to use: www.bahn.de. You can check the Romanian trains timetable, including prices (in our currency) at www.cfrcalatori.ro/en/ - you can get a discount for buying your ticket in advance. Your arrival point will be Bucureşti Nord (Bucharest North RAILWAY Station).

how to reach **BUCHAREST**

BY BUS



Although it may take longer to reach Bucharest by bus, it can sometimes be a good way of saving money especially if you come from some of our neighbour countries.

However, if you are coming from a farther positioned country, and still hope on saving some money by using the bus, you should keep in mind that the rides can be long and tiring, so be prepared!

You can check some bus travel options here: www.eurolines.ro/index.php?lang=en which will probably take you to one of the following bus terminals (in Romanian: autogară):

- ***Autogara Filaret***
- ***Autogara Păcii***
- ***Autogara IDM Basarab Kennedy***

BY CAR



If you want to consider this option, you should know that the average driving time from the western border (with Hungary) to Bucharest is 12 hours. Please don't forget to check if your driving license is valid in Romania. If you still want to come by car please ask the organizers for more information and keep in mind that you will not use your car during the course.

HOW TO REACH P19 DORMITORY

- **From “Gara de Nord” - Bucharest North Railway Station**

You will get off the train at the “Gara de Nord” station (Bucharest North Railway Station). It is Bucharest’s main railway station. From here on you have 3 alternatives:

By subway: You have to take the subway from “Gara de Nord” (M1) Station, in “Repubica” direction, to “Grozăvești” (M1) station (the 4th station).

By bus/trolley: For bus 105: go to “Pod Grozăvești” station (the 5th station), then follow the instructions in paragraph “From Grozăvești Subway Station”.

By taxi: You should ask to go to the “Regie Căminul P19” ([regia] [cah-meen-ool] [peh know-ash-peh]) on the Splaiul Independenței. You could always use a taxi app as well. See “Transportation in Bucharest”.

The fee shouldn’t be higher than 10-15 lei (2-3 €).

- **From “Hendri Coandă” International Airport (From Otopeni International Airport)**

Taxi/Uber/Bolt

An alternative would be by **taxis**, but we don’t recommend it, as there are cheaper means of transport.

However, if you wish to do so, you should ask to go to **Regie Căminul P19** ([regia] [cah-meen-ool] [peh know-ash-peh]) on the **Splaiul Independenței**.

We also recommend ordering taxi by phone or application, in order to avoid being scammed by taxi drivers who are in the habit of taking advantage of foreigners, unpleasant situations. **The fee shouldn’t be higher than 30-40 Lei.** Under ideal circumstances, you could travel from Otopeni Airport to the city center in about 20 minutes. However, due to traffic jams, real-time can vary between 30 and 90 minutes.

We suggest you use this method only if you have A LOT of luggage, if you want to have a comfortable ride alone, without other passengers or if your flight arrives late in the night as public transport after a certain hour isn’t very helpful. Sometimes it’s better to be less adventurous and go for a safe way, which we think is **“Uber” or “Bolt”**.

See “Transportation in Bucharest”.

HOW TO REACH P19 DORMITORY

Public Transportation

Here you need to take the **STB 780 or 783 bus**. In order to do this, you should buy a **one-way ride** ticket which costs around 3.5 lei.

You must get off at:

For 780: "Gara Basarab" - "Basarab Station" (the end of the line)

For 783: "Piața Victoriei"

The trip takes 40-90 minutes, depending on traffic.

Now as you've finished with the bus, you still got to take the subway for a few stations.

From the "Basarab" (M4) station, take the subway in the "Repubica" direction (M1), to the "Grozăvești" (M1) station (the 3rd station).

From the "Piața Victoriei" (M1) station, take the subway in the "Repubica" direction (M1), to the "Grozăvești" (M1) station (the 5th station).

After that, follow the instructions found in the paragraph "From Grozăvești subway station".

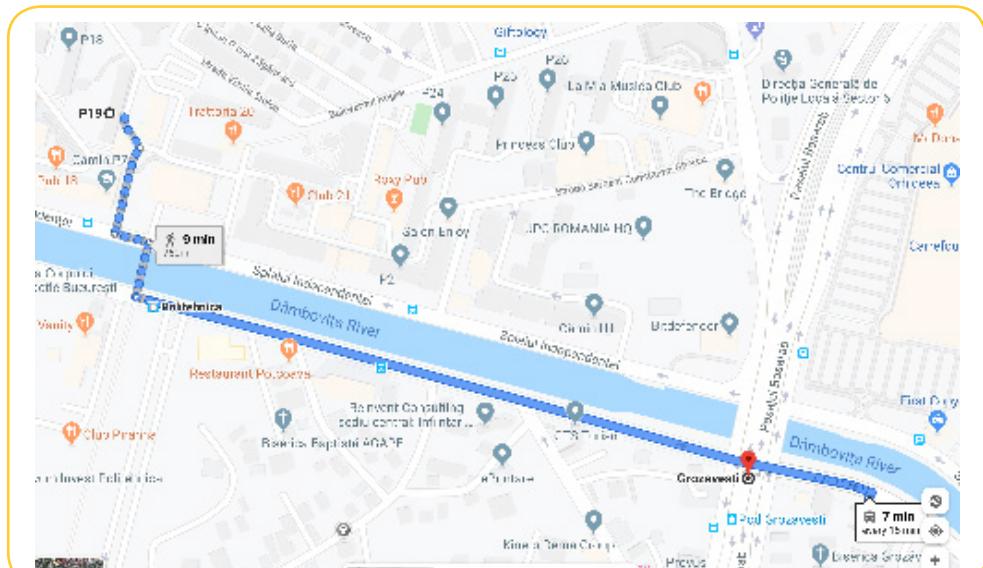
See "Transportation in Bucharest".

From the international bus station

In Bucharest, there are no big bus terminals. Each company has its own arrival point. Wherever your bus leaves you, go to the nearest subway station, head for Grozăvești subway stations and then follow the instructions found in paragraph "From Grozăvești subway station".

From Grozăvești subway station

In Bucharest, there are no big bus terminals. Each company has its own arrival point. Wherever your bus leaves you, go to the nearest subway station, head for Grozăvești subway stations and then follow the instructions found in paragraph "From Grozăvești subway station".



WHAT TO BRING



Important Items

- Passport/visa/ID card***

*If you are an EU citizen, your **ID card** is all you need to enter Romania.*

Having the passport is optional but sometimes it helps avoid problems at the border.

*However, for **non-EU citizens**, a **passport is required**. Also, please check the visa requirements specific to your country and if you do need a visa please make sure you request it from the Romanian consulate in advance. BEST Bucharest will send you an invitation letter if you need it to obtain the visa. Sometimes, there might be reduced or even no visa fees if you participate in a student or cultural event, so check that option, as it might save you some money.*

!Please take into consideration that Romania is not part of the Schengen Agreement.

- Health insurance***

For EU citizens, the standard health insurance card is also valid in Romania.

Non-EU citizens need to buy travel health insurance for the duration of their stay in Romania.

- Student card (ISIC, Euro<26 or usual student card)***

This will grant you discounts in many places (such as museums, cinemas, theaters, etc.).

- Student ID card***

- Revolut***

Not only that is very popular in Romania, but also is super helpful when it comes to free fee currency exchange.

- Money(LEI)***

So you won't starve or get stuck on your way to us

- Typical food and drinks from your country***

It will be needed for an intercultural party.

- Backpack***

This is really important as you will need it for a weekend trip through Romania.

- Towels, toothbrush, etc.***

WHAT TO BRING



~Not so important things but something you should bring~

- Sleeping bag — It is usually not required during the BEST event itself. However, if you plan to travel before or after the event, a sleeping bag could be useful.
- Hiking boots — useful during the weekend trip
- Fancy clothes — for the official closing
- Comfortable shoes and leisurewear—You will have to do a lot of walking during some activities, like the city-rally, so please make sure your shoes and clothes are not only good-looking but also comfortable.
- Camera
- Also, you can always bring some of your favourite music with you, so we can play it during the parties
- Bathing suit - Just in case
- A musical instrument, maybe?
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- More money if you want to bring home some goodies that you found in Bucharest



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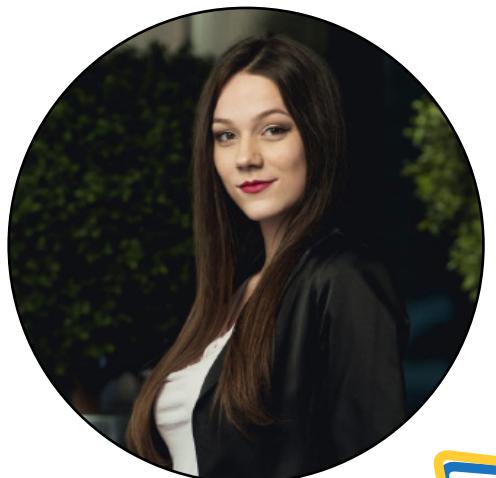


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