



TOUR PACKAGE - Stăuceni proposal

Stăuceni commune is located at 3 km north the capital of Moldova and is a relatively young town with about 9000 citizens. It appears in 1867 as a small settlement with large vineyards, of “Coarna Neagră”, “Muscat de Hamburg” and other local sort of grapes. As yet, the cellar of a local boyar, the winemaker Suruceanu, has been preserved, now used for wine storage by the National College of Viticulture and Vinification. In 1963, the oldest School of Viticulture and Vinification in Moldova moved from the capital, to Stăuceni, where it merged with "Grătiești" farm. Local citizens were engaged in growing the grapes, fruits, vegetables, grapes processing and quality wines production.

Today the institution remains one of the most prestigious vocational technical institutions in the Republic of Moldova. Being founded in 1842, it has a rich history. Here, over the years, were trained and educated more than 25 thousand professionals in winemaking and vine growing. Currently, the Center of Excellence of Viticulture and Vinification in Chisinau (CEVVC) is the most important economic entity in Stăuceni. The Center trains its disciples through hands-on experience, resulting in high-quality wines, awarded with over 20 medals and honorary diplomas. The most notable wines, which brought honor and glory to the winemakers from Stăuceni are: the wine "Aligoté", appreciated with diplomas and gold medals at exhibitions in 1907, 1910, 1912. After the second world war, here were developed new wines: "Grătiești", "Nectar", "Floare", "Mărgăritar", "Primavera", "Pinot Franc", highly appreciated at various international contests in Sofia, Budapest, Yalta, Tbilisi a.o.

Currently, Stăuceni is one of the most arranged and modern communes in the area, between the rivers Prut and the Dniester. Here are two churches: the Orthodox Church of St. Mary and the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In the center of the commune is located the theoretical lyceum "Dragoș - Vodă", founded in 1962.

Also the Stauceni commune hosts two great business entities: the bakery factory IDEA PRIM, which serves and delivers food to all shopping centres in Chisinau, all Moldova and abroad, as well one of the largest meat and sausage producers in the Republic of Moldova - ROGOB.

There are several accommodation options in Stăuceni commune: two hotels and some guesthouses. Also, here guests can dine in one of the local restaurants, which present traditional Moldovan cuisine, as well European. In the nearest future several local winegrowers, plan to arrange tourist facilities.



TOUR TITLE: THE ROUTE OF LEGENDARY WINES AND GLORIOUS WINEMAKERS

Theme: Wine culture, local gastronomy, rural and heritage

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS:

- * Visit the world-famous wineries and taste award winning wines of Moldova
- * Participate in guided wine tastings with international certified sommeliers
- * Revel in cooking activities and traditional handicraft activities
- * Learn about the struggling history of Moldova on various walking tours through the capital and other historical sites.
- * Discover the charm of Moldova's countryside, where centuries-old traditions are still kept alive. Meet locals and visit their houses.
- * Recall about the organic and fresh taste of nature, through local cuisine

ACTIVITIES:

Food & Wine / Local Food / Wine Tasting / Villages / Walking Tours / Nature / Cultural Activities / Historical Sites / Museum /

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

Visits to historic and cultural sites, two wine tastings, two lunches, two traditional master-classes, transport and guide services as per itinerary, group airport transfers, shared accommodation in DBL/TWIN rooms in a Stăuceni or Chişinău hotel, breakfast included.

NOT INCLUDED:

international flights, medical insurance, dinners and other beverages not included in set menu.

TOUR PRICE:

EUR 145 per person in a group of 18 pax.

***This program can be customized according to flight schedule, guest preferences or preferred budget.



ITINERARY AND TIMING

DAY 1.

Guest arrival at Chisinau Airport / Central Train Station or Central Bus Station. Boarding to the minibus and transfer to the hotel. Room check-in.

10.00 - 11.00 - visit to the **Center of Excellence in Viticulture and Vinification in Stăuceni**, the local Wine Factory and the Wine Museum. Guided tour and presentation. Here guests will learn about the first and oldest wine school in Moldova, which has educated world-renowned wine specialists.

11.40 - 13.30 - visit of a **small winemaker from Stăuceni**. Here guests will be welcomed by the winemaker's family, will be guided through the family vineyard, will be treated with home-made wine, produced according to traditional technology. As well guests will enjoy some traditional Moldovan snacks (vegetables, brynza and traditional sausages) at the terrace of the family castle, that offers a magnificent panoramic view. The place aims to become a local attraction for tourists eager for quality wines, for wine escapes, harmoniously inscribed in a setting of nature.

14.00 - 16.00 - **lunch at the restaurant "Clanico" in Stăuceni**. Here guests will have lunch with traditional Moldovan meals: Zeama (traditional chicken soup with home made noodles), Mămăligă cu tocană (polenta with meat stew, served with sour cream, garlic sauce). Also here guests will take a part in a **traditional cooking masterclass** and will cook their dessert «colțunași cu vișine» (traditional Moldovan dumplings filled with sour cherries).

17.00 - 19.00 – **Chișinău Walking Tour**, is the best way to explore the capital of Moldova. During the tour guests will wander through the neighborhoods of the old town and the new town, will learn about the struggling history of the city.

Return to the hotel (Stăuceni hotel - Moonlight). Free time.

DAY 2.

Breakfast by the hotel . Room check-out. Boarding to the minibus.

10.00 -13.00 – visit of the **Cricova Winery**, which represents a unique underground city well-known all over the world by its huge labyrinths, and especially by its excellent sparkling wines. Guests will be taken into the Cricova wine tunnels by small electric trains. Cellars of Cricova are the house of a remarkable collection of wines – The National Oenotec. comprises a series of unique historical exhibits, for example the world's only bottle of the priceless "Jerusalem of Easter" vintage 1902. German Field Marshal Hermann Göring's private



collection of wine is also there. It was brought to Moldova by the general during WW II to be close to him at the Eastern front. Politicians, celebrities, and collectors from around the world have special collections here. Including, John Kerry, Vladimir Putin, and Angela Merkel. At this moment, the Collection is formed from about 1.3 mln. of bottles.

Cricova Cellars are a remarkable place of the world, where history, archaeology and art of winemaking are united into one, thus they gave birth to such miracle as Subterranean Galleries, a real Subterranean City. Avenues, streets, lanes...only the names they carry are unusual: Cabernet, Dionis, Feteasca, Chardonnay, Sauvignon...; according to the wine variety kept in oak casks found in the adjacent niches. These are situated at a depth of about 80m (90 yards) under the ground, with subterranean galleries that stretch out at a length of more than 70 km (43 miles). Cricova has been declared a national cultural patrimony by law.

14.00-15.00 Visit of the Moldavian village - **Butuceni** with typical 19th cent. houses, most transformed today into guesthouses. In one of them guests will serve lunch with traditional dishes. Lunch will include simple and healthy meals, prepared from natural ingredients, many grown in the pension's garden. Guests can visit the cellar of the house, taste wines by the jug (home-made). Optional horse carriage on the narrow street of the village.

15.00-16.00 After the lunch guests will **meet a local artisan**, which specializes in traditional plant fibre weaving. Guest will learn how to prepare fibres out of corn husk and will make own souvenirs.

16.00-17.00 Visit of the touristic site "**Orheiul Vechi**", Orheiul Vechi is a museum complex in the open air, formed of natural and man-made sites. Here guests will witness the unique 13th cent cave Orthodox monastery, run by a single monk. The tour will also include the visit to a peasant households from Butuceni village, that keep intact the archaic architectural forms specific to the 19th-20th centuries. The Orheiul Vechi Monastery, museum, and archeological complex together form the most famous tourist attraction in Orhei and possibly Moldova. The complex is situation at an "S" shaped bend in the Raut River with dramatic rocky bluffs into which are carved many caves and cave monasteries that offer picturesque views of the river, and the fields and villages that surround it.

17.30-18.00 On the way back to Chişinău, guests will make a short stop at the Brăneşti Winery. Will visit the underground restaurant "**Epoca de Piatră**" build in an old limestone mine, over 400 years old, whose galleries stretch over 75 km. The entire construction is at least 60 metres deep, ensuring a constant temperature of 12-14 degrees throughout the year and a humidity level of 90-92%, ideal for ageing wine. The winery is pioneering the first underground hotel in Moldova and is developing a unique "Stone Age" tourist complex. This will offer visitors an opportunity to experience life in a cave, as it would have been in the Stone Age, with small touches of the modern epoch. Here you can enjoy cave life away from the noise of modern civilisation and everyday worries. Underground there is no internet or mobile connection, though you can reach the mobile network at the main entrance to the complex. A special place is the underground



concert hall with special acoustics, where poetry recitals, concerts and other cultural events take place. Also, here, is planned to open a Wine Spa, where special wine tubs will be placed to pamper tourists.

Also, while driving through the villages near the Răut river guests will watch the decoration of houses, cellars, gates, that is very original and decorative. They are beautifully decorated with stylized geometric plant motifs. The most common ornamental motifs are different geometric figures and vegetal motifs (especially grape vine).

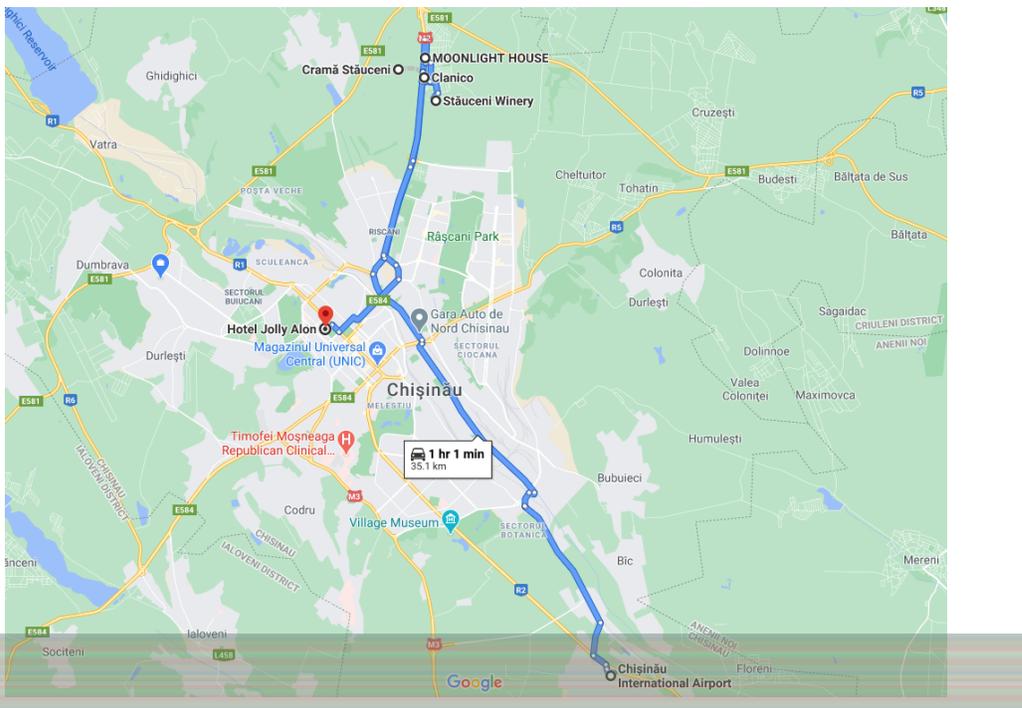
Return to Chişinău. Drop off at the Chisinau Airport / Central Train Station or Central Bus Station.

The touristic experience can be enriched by visiting local popular festivals & events, included in the official country cultural agenda (depending on the timing of the tour):

- International Sculpture Art Camp in Stăuceni (in process of elaboration)
- Underground WineRun, Mileştii Mici (January)
- Underland Wine & Music Festival, Mileştii Mici (February)
- Mărţişor, Chişinău (March)
- Mai Dulce, Chişinău (May)
- Sparkling Party, Cricova (May)
- Velohora, Chişinău (May)
- Street & Wine Fest, Chişinău (May)
- May Day, Asconi Winery (May)
- Aerobis - Hot Air Balloon Festival, Butuceni (May)
- Wine Vernissage (May / December)
- Folk Costume Day, Chişinău (June)
- Rose Day, Castel Mimi (June)
- Strawberry Day, Chateau Vartely (June)
- Desopera Open Air Music Festival, Butuceni (June)
- Stăuceni City Day (August)
- Ethno Jazz Festival, Chişinău (September)
- Bostaniada, Criuleni (September)
- Cricova Must Fest (September)
- Purcari Wine Run (September)
- Urban Vibes, Urban Winery (September)
- VinOpera, Castel Mimi (September)
- Chisinau City Day (October)
- Chişinău International Marathon (October)
- Moldova Wine Day (October)
- Christmas Fair (December)



Day 1. 9 hrs - 35 km to the destination and return (Chisinau - Stauceni - Chisinau)



Day 1. 9 hrs - 119 km to the destination and return (Stauceni - Cricova – Butuceni – Brănești - Chișinău)

