



# RIDE WORLD WIDE

## Romania - Transylvania 2018

### Ride Information Sheet

These rides take place in Transylvania, central Romania, not far from the town of Brasov. They are organised from stables in Sepsikorospatak, which was the centre of the country estate of the Kálnoky family, by Count Tibor Kálnoky and his wife Anna and are a trip back into the past, to a wonderfully unspoilt horse-drawn rural society that has scarcely changed in generations. The region you visit is Sekler country, an area settled by the Hungarian army centuries ago, where Hungarian is still the most widely spoken language. 6 night trips are run from set dates between April and October - for 2018 there are two different itineraries, one with 5 days riding a progressive route and the other with riding on 3 days and 2 days with other activities in the area. Extra nights at Miklósvár, the Kálnoky's lovely guesthouse and / or visits to Bucharest or historic towns such as Brasov and Sighisoara are easily arranged. Please see set departure dates below and contact Ride World Wide to check availability.

**The Horses** The horses used for these rides are locally bred and characteristic of the area. They include Hungarian Gidrans, Arabs, Semigreu (a Lipizzaner-Ardenne cross), some locally bred Lipizzaners, and Huzul crosses, a historic and robust breed unique to the Carpathian mountains. They range from around 14.2hh to 16.2hh. They are forward going, adaptable and well suited to the going, which can get rough and is steep in places. They are also of calm temperament and sensible to handle. English style tack, with general purpose and endurance saddles, are used with saddle bags provided. There is a rider weight limit of 90kgs (14 stone) in riding clothes - if you are close to this please contact us before booking to ensure a suitable horse is available.



**Riding** The Transylvania Ride itinerary includes 5 full days riding; the Combined Riding & Culture includes 3 days riding (and 2 days with other activities). On riding days, there is generally between 4 and 6 hours in the saddle, with breaks to rest and for lunch. When moving accommodation at night, luggage is transported for you by back up vehicle. Rides are led by an English speaking guide, usually with a back-up helper and groups are generally limited to a maximum of 8 riders.

**Pace** The rides are at a moderate pace overall, with routes taking you through forests and up and down mountain tracks. There are lots of opportunities for trots and canters each day as much of the riding is across open grassland. There is a little road work each day (some on tar roads) in the vicinity of the villages you pass through, but roads are generally very quiet with little motorised traffic.

**Riding Experience** To participate in these rides you should have a reasonable amount of previous riding experience. The terrain is varied and you cover about 120km during the course of the week on the Transylvania Ride. The minimum requirement is that you are comfortable and secure in the saddle at a walk, trot and canter and are used to riding in open country and over different types of terrain. The horses used are sensible and well mannered to ride so they are well suited to people of intermediate riding ability and above. You should also be reasonably riding fit to take part and we recommend you ride regularly at home before you go to accustom yourself to the hours you will spend in the saddle.

**Terrain, flora & fauna** The area you ride through is very unspoilt and little touched by tourism. Some of the riding is through beech woods and there are one or two places where riders might need to dismount to walk over rough ground, depending on conditions - a good chance to stretch your legs! However overall the area is excellent for riding, with plenty of space, open mountain pastures full of wild flowers in the spring, varied scenery and many wonderful views. There are bears, deer and wild boar in the forests - though you are unlikely to see them while riding but it is sometimes possible to arrange a visit to a bear hide (extra charge). The birdlife is interesting too with storks, eagles and woodpeckers often seen. There is also much cultural interest, you may visit churches and watermills and witness local people living in conditions that have changed little for hundreds of years - horses are still widely used for ploughing fields and pulling carts.

**Accommodation** Accommodation on these rides is quite varied. You will experience life as the locals live in the villages and at traditional guesthouses. On the Transylvania Ride, the first and fourth nights are usually spent at Miklósvár in houses which your host, Tibor, has re-built with great care and attention to detail. Each room in the guesthouse at Miklósvár is different with lovely antique furniture and woodburning stoves, typical of the region, which may be lit in the winter. The last two nights are usually spent in a typical Transylvanian farmhouse in Zalănpatak belonging to HRH the Prince of Wales, which has been restored in similar fashion to the guesthouse at Miklósvár. Other nights are spent in rural guesthouses in villages, equivalent to 'B&Bs', usually staying with a family - the group may not all stay in the same house but may be split between 2 or 3 families. They are simple but clean and well maintained, with inside plumbing, bathrooms and loos, hot water and central heating. Bathrooms are often shared and may be along a corridor, through the kitchen or downstairs. Most bathrooms have showers rather than baths but are clean, and there is usually plenty of hot water. On the Combined Riding & Culture itinerary 3 nights are spent at the guesthouse in Miklósvár, with the other 2 nights spent at Zalănpatak (Prince Charles' farmhouse). Accommodation on both itineraries is generally twin bedded - if you would like a single room then this is sometimes possible, at extra cost, although cannot be guaranteed (please see rates below).



**Meals** Food in rural Romania is generally organic and full of flavour and you will have the chance to sample some traditional dishes although the choice can be limited by what vegetables, etc. are in season. Breakfast is eaten at your guesthouse and is typically a selection of eggs, cheese or cold meats, bread or toast and butter and jam, with perhaps a choice of tea or coffee to drink. Tea (chai) in Romania is not always black, PG Tips style - but can be green or herbal. Lunch is generally a very simple picnic out riding - ham or cheese sandwiches, or bread with cold chicken or pork, with fruit for pudding. Dinner, which is eaten at your guesthouse or hotel, is often soup (a strong point of Romanian cooking!), then a main course which will sometimes include regional specialities such as wild boar or venison stew, stuffed peppers, different types of sausage, seasoned minced-meat wrapped in cabbage or vine leaves or perhaps spicy meatballs, followed by a cold pudding or fruit. Food is locally grown and fresh, however usually only one menu is prepared at guesthouses and there is limited choice. Vegetarians can of course be catered for, but please let us know in advance by filling in the dietary requirements on the booking form. Dinner includes mineral water, tea or coffee and usually half a bottle of wine or a bottle of beer per person. Drinks at hotel bars are not included. Mineral water, tea and coffee are carried in saddle bags for lunch while riding (soft drinks and alcohol are not usually available). You will also be offered 'Komeny' the local caraway seed brandy quite regularly - be warned that it can be very strong! (It is perfectly acceptable to decline!)

**Weather** Most rides are run from set dates between April and October when the weather in the area is best. In spring and early summer the ground is scattered with wild flowers; in August and September the hay fields are harvested and the countryside is busy with horse drawn carts; later in September and in October the forests are full of colour with the changing leaves. Average daytime temperatures between April and October are roughly as follows - April 11°C; May 16°C; June 19°C; July 21°C; August 21°C; September 18°C; October 13°C - though it may be about 5 degrees hotter at midday and about 5 degrees colder at nightfall. Rain is possible at any time so you need to be prepared for this (we will send you a clothing list when you book).

**What to bring** We will send you a list of things to bring when you make your booking.



### Dates 2018

#### Transylvania Ride (Sunday to Saturday)

15th to 21st April	1st to 8th July	9th to 15th September
29th April to 5th May	15th to 21st July	23rd to 29th September
13th to 19th May	29th July to 4th August	7th to 13th October
3rd to 9th June	12th to 18th August	21st to 27th October
17th to 23rd June	26th August to 1st September	

#### Combined Riding & Culture (Sunday to Saturday)

8th to 14th April	24th to 30th June	2nd to 8th September
22nd to 28th April	8th to 14th July	16th to 22nd September
6th to 12th May	22nd to 28th July	30th September to 6th October
20th to 26th May	5th to 11th August	14th to 20th October
10th to 16th June	19th to 25th August	

### RATES 2018

**Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in euros. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the euro/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.**

**Transylvania Ride (6 nights) - 1380 Euros per person**

**Combined Riding & Culture (6 nights) - 1140 Euros per person**  
(Single supplement on all rides 30 euros per night, payable locally)

**Rates INCLUDE** 6 nights shared accommodation, all riding (5 days on Transylvania Ride; 3 days on short ride), guiding and equipment, meals (from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 7), wine with dinner and return group transfers at set times from / to Bucharest at current rate.

**Rates EXCLUDE** international flights / travel to Romania, any visa fees, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), extra drinks / bar bill, personal extras, telephone calls etc, and any tips you may wish to leave.

**Single supplements** - Please note that rates quoted above assume shared **twin** accommodation. If you are travelling alone and are happy to share with another guest of the same sex, the supplement is not charged. If you would like to guarantee a single room the single supplement is payable (you will be billed for this in Romania).

**NB** - Extra nights at Miklósvár, Zalănpatak, in Bucharest or in the towns of Brasov or Sighisoara, can easily be arranged either before or after the riding.

**Travel arrangements** - You need to fly to Bucharest for these rides. Transfers from / to Bucharest Otopeni airport are included in the rates above assuming 2 or more guests travelling together. Ideally you should arrive before 16.30 on the first day, as it is about a 4 to 5 hour drive to the start point. Tarom Romanian Airlines or British Airways both fly daily direct from London Heathrow to Bucharest Otopeni with fares from around £300 per person return including tax. Ryan Air, Blue Air and Wizz Air also operate flights from several UK airports to Bucharest Otopeni. KLM offer services between UK regional airports and Bucharest via Amsterdam. We can book British Airways flights and would be very happy to advise further on, and to book flights for you (our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213). Please ask if you would like a quote.

**Transfers** - As mentioned above the cost of these rides include transfers between Bucharest Otopeni airport and the start / end of the ride at Miklósvár / Zalănpatak, assuming 2 or more guests travelling together. If just one person is travelling, there will be an extra charge of 195 Euros. The exact time of the transfer is confirmed once we have all passengers' flight details but it is usually in the late afternoon. There is also the option of taking a train from Bucharest to Brasov. We can arrange meeting from Bucharest airport, transfer to the station, train tickets, meeting from Brasov train station and transfer to Miklósvár / Zalănpatak. The total cost is around 195 Euros each way for a single traveller. The journey by train takes quite a lot longer and is not usually possible if you arrive Bucharest after 13.00 but works well if you plan an extra night either in Bucharest or Brasov, which we can of course arrange too. **Transfer costs are subject to change** - please confirm these at the time of booking.



**Transylvania Ride Example Itinerary** The following is an example itinerary but please note that it is only an example of what is planned and your guide may change the day by day programme in his discretion if local conditions, the weather etc. require. Please contact us for the Combined Riding & Culture itinerary.

**Day 1 (Sunday)** - You will be collected from Bucharest Otopeni airport and transferred by private vehicle direct to Miklósvár (about 4 to 5 hour drive). The night is spent at your hosts guesthouse in Miklósvár. The village of Miklósvár was part of the Kálnoky family estate and the manor on the edge of the village is now a museum. The area was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire but became Romanian during the 1st World War. Several of the traditional houses in the village have been carefully restored in order to preserve their original Transylvanian charm and character and accommodation is in these guesthouses. The guesthouses are situated within spacious gardens, with storks nesting on nearby rooftops. Meet your guide or Countess Anna Kálnoky to discuss the week ahead, before dinner in the characterful wine cellar. Night at Miklósvár. (D)



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**Day 2 (Monday)** - Breakfast and transfer to the riding centre at Valea Crisului (Sepsikorospatak, “Round Brook”), by car (approximately 40 minutes). Meet the horses and a short familiarization, then the ride begins climbing slowly onto a ridge, heading north along high pastures with magnificent views stretching to the high Carpathian Range. Continue along the ridge, meeting shepherds and their flocks on the pastures. At the end of the day you descend through the forest to reach Malnas Bai (Malnasfurdo, “Raspberry Baths”), where you spend the night as guests of a local hunter’s family or with another family in the village. Accommodation is simple and bathrooms will have to be shared - the group may be split, staying in different houses but you will all have dinner together at one house. Once a thriving spa with plenty of mineral water springs (which are an acquired taste!), this village has typical wooden turn-of-the-century Transylvanian spa architecture, although now in a rather rickety shape. The small local spa can be opened for those who wish (additional charge). About 4 to 5 hours riding. Dinner and night at Malnas Bai. (B,L,D)



**Day 3 (Tuesday)** - Set off riding, climbing north-westerly into the deep forests of the Hatod region, where 6 villages share the same woods (hatod = “one sixth”). You will follow a quiet forest track, alongside which bear tracks are sometimes to be found. A picnic lunch en route. Descend on gentle grassy slopes to the Batanii villages (“Big Bacon and Little Bacon”) to reach the lovely “Little Bacon” where you will leave the horses at a farm. Accommodation is again simple, with families in the village, and bathrooms may have to be shared. The villagers here are known to be especially hospitable and friendly, and before dinner will take pride in showing you their still functioning watermill and traditional looms. Enjoy a delicious dinner with a local family before returning to the guest house for the night. About 5 hours riding. Dinner and night at Batanii Mici. (B,L,D)

**Day 4 (Wednesday)** - Breakfast and head south west along the gentler slopes, which offer good chances for canters, and into the valley of the river Olt to reach Miklósvár, your destination for the night. In the late afternoon / early evening visit the Kalnoky Castle and museum. About 6 hours riding. Dinner and night at Miklósvár (B,L,D)



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**Day 5 (Thursday)** - Ride from Miklósvár east through forested hills, crossing valleys and streams, to HRH the Prince of Wales' property at Zalánpatak. This part of the region is particularly rich in wildlife as there are no roads or villages for 25km. In the early evening (weather permitting) ride out to see if you can spot any wildlife. About 4 - 5 hours riding. Dinner and night at Zalánpatak. (B,L,D)

**Day 6 (Friday)** - After breakfast ride south-east back to the stables at tables Sepsikőröspatak. This route was very common for many generations of the Kálnoky family, who often had to ride between these two villages, where their two estates were situated. Arriving at Sepsikőröspatak you will be transferred back to Zalánpatak by car for your last night. Farewell dinner and night at Zalánpatak. (B,L,D)

**Day 7 (Saturday)** - Breakfast and then drive about 4 hours to Bucharest airport in time for your flight home. (B)

**General visa and health information** (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

**Visas** If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting Romania for a holiday only and staying less than a month you do not need to arrange a visa in advance.

**Health** No inoculations are legally required for Romania but Tetanus and Hepatitis A are recommended.

**(DRAFT 09/04/2018)**

