Cruise Details

Name:	Eastern Europe & Balkans Unveiled with Transylvania & Budapest
Reference:	SCENICBBTR050528-2
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Crystal
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	05 May 28
Departs From:	Bucharest
Arrives On:	19 May 28
Arrives At:	Budapest
Cruise Nights:	14
Total Vacation Days:	15

Itinerary

Day 1: Bucharest (Romania)

Welcome to Bucharest, the capital of Romania. It has a complex – and sometimes confronting – past, having spent more than four decades under Communist rule. But today, it’s a dynamic, modern and energetic city with a thriving café culture, excellent museums and pockets of glorious Belle Epoque architecture. Check into your hotel for an overnight stay.

Arrives On: 05 May 28

Day 2: Bucharest (Romania)

This morning, you’ll begin your journey into Transylvania by travelling from Bucharest to the medieval town of Sibiu. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant with your
fellow travellers after checking into your luxury hotel.

Arrives On: 06 May 28

Day 2: Sibiu, Transylvania (Romania)

Arrives On: 06 May 28

Day 3: Sibiu, Transylvania (Romania)

Today you'll wake in Sibiu. The fortified town is a historian's delight, filled with museums, cathedrals and palaces to discover. This afternoon, travel to the village of Sighisoara, the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler. It's also one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Europe, with cobblestone lanes and colourful buildings that have remained largely unchanged since the 12th century. Scenic Freechoice:
Today you can choose from the following Scenic Freechoice:

Explore the walled city: The World Heritage-listed walled city at the centre of Sighisoara was built by the Saxons between the 12th and 17th centuries and much of it still stands today. A local guide will show you the highlights.

Hike the hill: If you're feeling more active, hike up the covered stairway to the 14th century Church on the Hill. It's a spectacular example of Gothic Transylvanian architecture and has been restored many times throughout history. The climb rewards you with superb views over the city. Afterwards you'll travel to Brasov, a colourful town that brings together Gothic spires, medieval watchtowers, sprawling squares and Soviet-era concrete. Here, check into your hotel for a two-night stay.

Arrives On: 07 May 28

Day 3: Sighișoara, Transylvania (Romania)

Arrives On: 07 May 28

Day 3: Brasov (Romania)

Arrives On: 07 May 28

Day 4: Brasov (Romania)

This morning, your guide will show you the sights of Brasov, a charming town that brings together Gothic spires, medieval watchtowers, sprawling squares and Soviet-era concrete.

Dracula is Transylvania's most famous figure. Though author Bram Stoker never visited Romania, he is said to have been inspired by the place you'll visit this afternoon – Bran Castle. Perched dramatically on a clifftop, this white stone fortress was built in the 14th century and is a maze of narrow passageways, hidden rooms and sunny courtyards.

Tonight, join your fellow travellers and enjoy a delicious dinner in one of Brasov's finest restaurants.

Arrives On: 08 May 28

Day 5: Brasov (Romania)

After breakfast, a local guide will take you to Peles Castle, a Neo-Classical masterpiece built in the 1870s by the first king of Romania as a summer residence. Inside, the rooms are exquisitely decorated with paintings, carved wood and stained glass. Nearby, Sinaia Monastery is the oldest monastery in the region and is home to two churches, one from the 17th century and one built by the royal family in the 19th century.

This afternoon, you'll begin the journey back to Bucharest, where you'll check into your hotel for the night. Enjoy dinner at the hotel this evening.

Arrives On: 09 May 28

Day 5: Bucharest (Romania)

Arrives On: 09 May 28

Day 6: Bucharest (Romania)

Wake in Bucharest. After a turbulent past, the city is now a unique mix of Art Nouveau remnants and Brutalist-era architecture sit alongside wide, tree lined boulevards and leafy squares, hidden street art and thriving nightlife.

Take an orientation tour of the city by coach, from the south of Bucharest to Primaverii Palace stopping to see its squares, including Union, University, Roman, Victoryand Charles de Gaulle squares. Scenic Freechoice:
After the city tour, personalise the rest of your morning with the following Scenic Freechoice activities.

Ceausescu's Spring Palace: Located in one of the wealthiest districts in Bucharest, this 1960s residence is made up of 80 distinctive and elegant rooms decorated with silk wallpaper, wood panels, paintings by famous Romanian painters, mosaics, marble, chandeliers and mirrors made of Murano glass.

Village Open Air Museum: Explore the ethnography exhibits depicting Romanian heritage and culture at the Village Open Air Museum. The museum depicts authentic houses, barns, churches and more, rebuilt by craftsmen using traditional techniques. Afterwards, transfer to Giurgiu to board your luxurious Scenic Space-Ship.

Arrives On: 10 May 28

Day 6: Giurgiu (Romania)

Arrives On: 10 May 28

Day 7: Silistra (Bulgaria)

Arrive in Silistra today. This Bulgarian town has changed hands many times over the centuries. A major Turkish fortress and trade centre in the 15th century, it played a significant role

in the Russo-Turkish wars of the 1870s, briefly became part of Romania after the Second Balkan War and finally reverted to Bulgaria in 1940. The town is dotted with historic sites stretching back to late Roman times. To learn more about local culture, you can choose to visit a local village and school, an experience available only to Scenic guests. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from the following Scenic Freechoice activities:

Active walk to Silistra Fort: Take an active guided walking tour of the 19th century fort and learn about its history. It is the best preserved of the six points of the Turkish fortification system.

Visit Alfatar village: This exclusive excursion takes you to the small village of Alfatar, located just outside of Silistra. Visit the ethnographic museum featuring a typical country house, see customary attire and visit the Alfatar school to meet local children with a charming choir performance and learn about daily life for young Bulgarians.

Sveshtari Thracian secrets and local delights: Discover the rich heritage and flavours of Bulgaria on this unique guided tour. Explore the ancient Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari, a World Heritage site dating back to the 3rd century BC, then visit local producers of exquisite brandy for a tasting.

Arrives On: 11 May 28

Day 8: Ruse (Bulgaria)

Your Scenic Space-Ship will arrive in the Bulgarian town of Rousse today, which has been described as ‘Little Vienna’. Here you will have the choice to disembark and take a walking tour of the city. Alternatively, join a full-day excursion to Veliko Tarnovo, known as the ‘City of the Kings’ Scenic Freechoice:
Discover more on one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Walking tour of Rousse: Join a local guide for a sightseeing tour of this opulent town where you will learn about traditional Bulgarian handicrafts, sample some delicious local wine and delight in a short piano recital.

Excursion to Veliko Tarnovo and Arbanassi: Take a full day excursion from Svishtov to Veliko Tarnovo, one of Bulgaria’s oldest towns. Enjoy the panoramic views of the old town and see the Asenevtsi Brothers Monument. You will then venture to the nearby leafy village of Arbanassi.

Arrives On: 12 May 28

Day 8: Svishtov (Bulgaria)

Arrives On: 12 May 28

Day 10: Belgrade (Serbia)

The capital of Serbia, Belgrade is known as the ‘Door to Central Europe’ and lies at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. This eclectic city is steeped in history, Brutalist and Art Nouveau buildings and a bohemian vibe. It’s one of the oldest capitals in Europe and has stood at the crossroads between the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires for centuries. Thanks to these

centuries of conflict, Belgrade has been rebuilt almost 40 times. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore the city today one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions.

Tour of Belgrade: Explore the iconic sites of the city with a local guide. You will explore the city's highlights such as cobbled streets of the Bohemian Quarter and Kalemegdan Fortress. Afterwards, enjoy free time to explore Belgrade on your own.

Panoramic tour of Belgrade with Tito's Memorial: Join a panoramic tour of Belgrade with a local guide. See and learn about the major sites of the city including the Ottoman heritage of the Old Town and visit the memorial dedicated to Tito, the former ruler of Yugoslavia.

Cycling tour along the Danube: Choose this active excursion to trace the banks of the Danube on two wheels with a guided cycling tour. During the 16km ride, you'll learn about the history of Yugoslavia and Belgrade, and see the Belgrade Waterfront, the fomer concentration camp Staro Sajmiste, and Ada Island.

Central Belgrade stroll with coffee and cake: Starting from the historic Kalemegdan Fortress, wander down Knez Mihailova Street, Belgrade's bustling pedestrian boulevard, lined with charming shops and cafes. Pause to enjoy a cup of expertly brewed coffee paired with a signature cake from one of the city's beloved bakeries. This afternoon, you're free to explore Belgrade further. You might like to soak up the bohemian culture with a wander along the cobblestoned Skardalija Street, a district once frequented by writers and artists and other creative souls, now home to traditional restaurants, local stores and galleries. Scenic Enrich
Concert in the Crypt of St. Sava Church: Visit St. Sava Temple, the largest orthodox temple in the Balkans. Admire the fresco-lined walls of the cathedral's crypt where the church choir will perform some of the most beautiful hymns just for you. The crypt's remarkable acoustics make this a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, as white marble adorns the remarkable ceilings.

Arrives On: 14 May 28

Day 11: Vukovar (Croatia)

Cross the border into Croatia and dock in Vukovar, a historically significant city strategically positioned along the Danube River at the confluence with the Vuka River. Known as 'The Hero Town', it is famed for its historic resilience, especially its fierce defence during the Croatian War of Independence in the early 1990s, which left a lasting mark on its landscape and collective memory. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from the following Scenic Freechoice activities:

Walking tour of Osijek: Take a guided walking tour of nearby Osijek. This small city has a turbulent history and many of the grand Baroque buildings in the Old Town bear the scars of war. You'll also have the opportunity to hear some traditional and classical music popular in the region.

Baranja wine region: In this picturesque region straddling Croatia and Hungary, explore a rich wine-making tradition and picturesque vineyards. Enjoy a tasting experience blending bold notes, local culture and breathtaking landscapes.

Vukovar chronicles - A river town's tale of resilience: With roots dating back to medieval times, Vukovar was historically a vibrant trade and industrial centre.

Though heavily damaged by war, the city has been rebuit. On this tour, discover Vukovar’s spirit of resilience and stories of bravery that remain central to the city’s character, with museums and monuments preserving its legacy of sacrifice and hope. After this morning’s excursions, visit the home of a local Croatian family and have lunch. Immerse yourself in this cultural and culinary experience, and enjoy an authentic meal prepared with fresh vegetables from the host’s garden.

Arrives On: 15 May 28

Day 12: Mohács (Hungary)

Arrive in Mohács today. Straddling the Danube, this small Hungarian town holds an outsized position in Hungarian history. It was the site of the 16th century Battle of Mohács, which led to the destruction of the Hungarian monarchy and the rise of Ottoman and Habsburg rule. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with one of these excursions:

Guided tour of Pécs: Located close to the Croatian border, this guided tour will take you to the city’s first telephone exchange, which opened in 1885; the Turkish Bath of Pasha Memi, demolished in the late 19th century but unearthed in the 1970s, and more.

Villány wine stories: The region of Villány is known for its big, bold red wines. Learn about everyday life in Hungary, then proceed to a historic wine cellar where you can sample local drops.

Mohács traditions and flavours: Experience Mohács, a town where Hungarians, Croats, and Serbs live in unity, sharing rich traditions and multicultural heritage. Visit the Busóudvar Museum to learn about the World Heritage-listed Busójárás festival and taste authentic halászlé, a flavourful stew made with fresh Danube River fish and Hungarian paprika.

Arrives On: 16 May 28

Day 13: Budapest (Hungary)

Welcome to Budapest, the Hungarian capital and one of Europe’s most diverse and vibrant cities. Divided by the Danube, with Buda on one side and Pest on the other, it was united in 1873 when a newly built bridge connected the two. The city is an architectural treasure trove comprising styles from Gothic to Art Nouveau and everything in between. It is also well known for its hot springs and thermal baths, housed in colourful, ornate buildings.

Enjoy some free time to explore the city on your own or explore further afield with two excursions that are exclusive to Scenic. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover the region on one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Beethoven’s favourite getaway – Brunszvik Castle: The snow white Brunsvik Castle is a stunning example of 18th century neo-Gothic architecture surrounded by a sprawling English style park. Famous composer Ludwig van Beethoven, was a frequent visitor and today the castle houses a Beethoven Memorial Museum.

Etyek region wineries & vineyards: Often called the ‘vineyard of Budapest’, Etyek is renowned for its crisp, aromatic white wines and sparkling wines. Take a tour of a vineyard, learn

about the winemaking process and sample local vintages. You will be staying in a luxury hotel for the next two nights. This gives you plenty of opportunities to discover Budapest’s legendary nightlife.

Arrives On: 17 May 28

Day 14: Budapest (Hungary)

This morning, join a local guide to discover the flavours of Hungary on a Hungarian culinary market walk and tasting tour. This foodie tour in Budapest promises an unforgettable journey through the city’s culinary delights. Visit the bustling Grand Central Market and other locations for tasting the local delicacies, and hear fascinating stories about the city’s traditions. Enjoy free time this afternoon to explore the city at your leisure. You may like to bring your swimsuit and join the locals in one of the many thermal baths.

Arrives On: 18 May 28

Day 15: Budapest (Hungary)

Your journey concludes today. After breakfast, transfer to Budapest airport for your onward journey, taking with you a treasure trove of wonderful memories from this undiscovered corner of Europe. This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. As such, the cruise may operate altered from that stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions. Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 19 May 28

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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