

BucharestCitywalk

3 hour guided walk - £20.00

Bucharest became the capital in 1862 and is the industrial and commercial centre of Romania. It is located in the south-east of the country on the banks of the Dambovitza River. Between the two World Wars, the city's elegant architecture and its sophisticated elite gave Bucharest the nickname of the 'Little Paris'.

We start in front of Unirea Shopping Centre and head towards the Old Historical Centre, seeing Manuc's Inn and The Old Royal Court - built during the ruling of Vlad Tepes in the 15th century. In the 16th century it was rebuilt completely and afterwards became the nucleus of Bucharest.

As we walk through The Old Historical Centre along Selari and Lipsicani streets, have a look at 'Curtea Sticlarilor' - The Glass Craftsmen Court, then crossing the most famous boulevard of Little Paris, Victory Boulevard to admire the buildings of the National History Museum and Headquarters of CEC - nicknamed 'The House of Poverty'. Have a short look and admire the Stavropoleos Church, then passing through an old passageway we reach The National Bank of Romania.

Walking along old small streets we come out in the middle of Piata Universitatii - University Square, famous as the resistance place in the 1989 revolution. A Memorial Cross witnesses the youngsters who died here for freedom in front of the National Theatre and Intercontinental Hotel. Walking along The Architecture Faculty we arrive in front of a master piece building The House of the Army pointing to The Palace Square to admire old and new architectural styles.

Now we see the former Communist Party building from where Ceausescu made his last public speech. Across from here stands the building of The Royal Palace, erected between 1812-1815 and rebuilt in 1935-1936 by King Carol II - a neo-classical styled palace having 5 floors, a central core and two lateral wings. The left wing was rebuilt after the Second World War and is now housing The National Art Museum of Romania and a music hall.

The same square hosts The Hilton Grand Hotel and The Romanian Athenaeum which was opened in 1888. The domed, circular building, neo-classical style with some romantic touches is the city symbol and the main concert hall, home of the 'George Enescu' Philharmonic Orchestra. Another grand building is The National Library, burnt down during the 1989 revolution and reconstructed soon after.

We now enter Cismigiu Park - on the right is Cretulescu Palace - currently housing cultural institutions including the European Centre for Higher Education. The park is the oldest in Bucharest with wide walkways and a lake, right in the heart of the city and just across from the Bucharest City Hall.

Crossing the Dambovitza River we come to The Palace of Parliament, reputed to be the largest building in Europe and probably the third largest building in the world. The construction of the palace and the Civic Centre required the demolition of about one-fifth of the historic districts of old Bucharest, destroying neighbourhoods and churches to make way for Ceausescu's hegemonic dream.

Walking along Unirii Boulevard with its famous fountains we have on right the Metropolitan Orthodox Church, we finish back at the Unirea Shopping Centre.



The Old Court



National Library



Romanian Athenaeum



Cismigiu Park



Palace of Parliament