Romania & Bulgaria
Suitcase Seminar

Medieval Castles and Majestic Cathedrals

August 17 to September 2, 2011

a program of the stanford alumni association
Traveling from Bucharest to Sofia, explore two of the most fascinating countries in Eastern Europe. Strategically located on the Black Sea, Romania and Bulgaria were once a vital part of the Roman, Byzantine and Turkish Ottoman empires and are now home to seven World Heritage sites. See firsthand how this region of the world has persevered throughout the millennia, while also appreciating the beauty of the hilltop castles, fresco-filled monasteries, lush forests, snow-capped mountains and resilient communities that have managed to retain their authentic way of life for centuries. Along the way, we’ve arranged many private performances of the arts so that you can learn about all aspects of this intriguing region.

BRETT S. THOMPSON, ’83, DIRECTOR, STANFORD TRAVEL/STUDY

Highlights

SAVOR local specialties and sample fine Bulgarian wines at dinner with the owner of Todoroff Winery

OBSERVE the art form of Romania’s traditional “Black Pottery” and see the handiwork of a master egg painter in the forested countryside

ATTEND a private performance of the Bulgarian folk choir in Sofia’s elegant National Art Gallery
Itinerary

**Wednesday & Thursday, August 17 & 18**
**Depart U.S. / Bucharest, Romania**
Depart the U.S. for Bucharest, and upon arrival on Thursday, transfer to our hotel. Tonight, enjoy a welcome reception and dinner. ATHENEE PALACE HILTON (B/L/D)

**Friday, August 19**
**Bucharest**
Discover Romania’s capital, once known as “Little Paris,” on a city tour. Explore the heart of the city, including Piata Revolutiei, site of the old Royal Palace. ATHENEE PALACE HILTON (B,L,D)

**Saturday, August 20**
**Bucharest / Sinaia / Brasov**
Drive to Brasov, stopping en route at Sinaia, a gateway to the Bucegi Mountains. In 1870, King Carol I built his summer residence, Peles Castle, here, and it is now one of Romania’s most important museums. Continue to Brasov. ARS PALACE (B,L,D)

**Sunday, August 21**
**Brasov / Bran**
Tour Brasov’s Black Church, Council Square and the First Romanian School Museum. Explore nearby Bran Castle, famous for its association with author Bram Stoker’s legendary vampire. The castle houses a museum of feudal art with collections of furniture, weapons and armor dating from the 14th century. ARS PALACE (B,L,D)

**Monday, August 22**
**Brasov / Sighisoara**
Tour Brasov’s Black Church, Council Square and the First Romanian School Museum. Explore nearby Bran Castle, famous for its association with author Bram Stoker’s legendary vampire. The castle houses a museum of feudal art with collections of furniture, weapons and armor dating from the 14th century. ARS PALACE (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, August 23**
**Sighisoara / Bukovina / Gura Humorului**
Journey to Bukovina whose 13th- to 15th-century stone exteriors are frescoed with biblical scenes that served as a visual narration for illiterate peasants. Then hear a traditional male Orthodox choir perform at a local church. BEST WESTERN BUKOVINA-CLUB DE MUNTE (B,L,D)

**Wednesday, August 24**
**Gura Humorului / Iasi / Bucharest**
Begin the day at the village of Marginea, the last place in Romania producing Black Pottery. At the beginning of the 20th century, over a hundred families in Marginea knew the secret of making the characteristic black pottery. Visit a workshop to observe firsthand the age-old art of making Black Pottery, then stop at the home of a master of Romanian egg painting. This afternoon tour the painted monasteries of Bukovina whose 13th- to 15th-century stone exteriors are frescoed with biblical scenes that served as a visual narration for illiterate peasants. Then hear a traditional male Orthodox choir perform at a local church. BEST WESTERN BUKOVINA-CLUB DE MUNTE (B,L,D)

**Thursday, August 25**
**Bucharest**
Travel to Iasi to explore the Old Town center, including the 1905 neo-gothic Palace of Culture, the 17th-century Metropolitan Church and the Byzantine Three Hierarchs Church. This evening, fly back to Bucharest. ATHENEE PALACE HILTON (B,L,D)
FRIDAY, AUGUST 26
BUCHAREST
This afternoon learn about Romania’s heritage at the Museum of the Romanian Peasant. This museum displays over 100,000 objects representative of traditional Romanian peasant life and is notable for its textiles (especially costumes), icons and ceramics.
ATHENEE PALACE HILTON (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27
BUCHAREST / RUSE / VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA
Depart for Bulgaria, stopping in Ruse to visit the nearby Ivanovo Cave Monastery. Monks settled here from the 14th to the 16th centuries, digging cells, churches and chapels into the rock face 100 feet above the Ruse River. Arrive in Veliko Tarnovo late this afternoon.
RACHEV BOLYARSKI HOTEL (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 28
VELIKO TARNOVO / ARBANASSI VILLAGE
Explore historic Veliko Tarnovo this morning, then continue on to the nearby medieval village of Arbanassi. Seated on a plateau overlooking Veliko Tarnovo, Arbanassi boasts several well-preserved churches and monasteries all decorated with murals and icons at the end of the 16th century.
RACHEV BOLYARSKI HOTEL (B,L,D)

MONDAY, AUGUST 29
VELIKO TARNOVO / PLOVDIV
Today’s journey includes a visit to Kazanluk in the “Valley of Roses,” once the source of 70% of the world’s supply of rose oil. Next, stop in Etura to tour the open-air ethnographic museum before continuing on to Plovdiv.
GRAND HOTEL PLOVDIV (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30
PLOVDIV
Explore Plovdiv’s Old Town and stop at the Ethnographical Museum. Visit the Todoroff Wine Cellars in the village of Brestovitsa and enjoy a dinner there hosted by the owner.
GRAND HOTEL PLOVDIV (B,D)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31
PLOVDIV / SOFIA
En route to Sofia, visit the Rila Monastery and see the five-domed St. Bogoroditsa Church. Continue to Sofia and enjoy a private performance of the Bulgarian folk choir, “Cosmic Voices,” at the National Art Gallery.
GRAND HOTEL SOFIA (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1
SOFIA
Explore Sofia’s 4th-century St. George Rotunda, the 6th-century St. Sofia Church and the 19th-century St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. At the National History Museum, view Bulgarian artifacts, jewelry, costumes and works of art. This afternoon visit the Boyana Church, a UNESCO World Heritage site located on the outskirts of Sofia. Return to the city for a festive farewell reception and dinner.
GRAND HOTEL SOFIA (B,D)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
DEPART SOFIA / U.S.
Transfer to the airport for return flights to the U.S. (B)
Information

DATES
August 17 to September 2, 2011
(17 days)

SIZE
Limited to 36 participants

COST*
$7,995 per person, double occupancy
$8,995 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $200 per person

INCLUDED
15 nights of deluxe hotel accommodations
- 15 breakfasts, 13 lunches and 13 dinners
- Welcome and farewell wine receptions
- Bottled water on excursions
- Gratuities to porters, guides and drivers for all group activities
- Internal flight from Iasi to Bucharest
- All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary
- Transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days
- Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance
- Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information
- Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

NOT INCLUDED
International and U.S. domestic airfare
- Passport and visa fees
- Immunization costs
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Independent and private transfers
- Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
- Excess-baggage charges
- Personal items such as email, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities

AIR ARRANGEMENTS
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on Lufthansa from San Francisco to Bucharest via Frankfurt and back from Sofia is approximately $1,400 as of October 2010 and is subject to change without notice. Information on recommended flight itineraries will be sent by our designated agent.

WHAT TO EXPECT
We consider this program to be moderately strenuous. Daily excursions involve one to three miles of walking, sometimes over cobblestones or on unpaved streets. In many instances, guided tours require climbing up and down several flights of stairs where steps may be steep, uneven and/or without handrails, and elevators are limited or unavailable. Some sites do not allow motorcoaches to pull directly in front, thus requiring a several minutes’ walk to reach the entrance. Accommodations are the best-available at each destination. Participants must be physically fit, active and in good health. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.
Deposit & Final Payment
A $1,000-per-person deposit is required to hold space for the Romania and Bulgaria Suitcase Seminar. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds
Deposits and any payments are fully refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply. We recommend trip-cancellation insurance; applications will be sent to you.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. We strongly recommend that you subscribe to optional baggage and trip-cancellation insurance. A brochure offering such insurance will be mailed with your confirmation about one week after we receive your deposit. The product offered in this brochure includes a special Waiver of Pre-Existing Conditions and coverage for Financial Insolvency and Terrorist Acts if you postmark your insurance payment within 15 days of the date listed on the confirmation letter.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $500 more than the members’ price. Stanford alumni may become Annual ($75) or Life ($495) Members. Stanford parents, faculty, staff, interns, residents and fellows may become Installment Members ($90 down, $115/year for four years) or Life Members ($495). Nonalumni may become Life Affiliates (one-time fee, $650). Parents and their children under 21 may travel on one membership. For more information or to purchase a membership, visit www.stanfordalumni.org/membership or call (650) 725-0692.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time that passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in October 2010 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50

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Faculty Leader

ROBERT SERVICE is a professor of Russian literature at Oxford University and is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford. His recent biography of Leon Trotsky won the 2009 Duff Cooper prize – a literary prize awarded for best work of history, biography, political science or poetry published in English or French. At the moment he is writing a book on the end of World War I, Agents and Commissars, in which Romanian gold and Bulgarian revolutionaries figure prominently. During our program, Professor Service will focus on the strange and troubled history of Eastern Europe in the 20th century as well as the glorious cultural and religious history of Romania and Bulgaria.

Referring to Romania and Bulgaria, Robert says, “These are two countries coming out of four decades of despotism. Things are far from perfect for their peoples. But there is something uplifting about their unquenchable cheerfulness and their rightful pride in a wonderful landscape, magnificent architecture and cultural achievement.”

- Professor, Russian literature at Oxford University
- Senior fellow at the Hoover Institution
- at Stanford University
- 2009 Duff Cooper Award recipient

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“Mr. / Mrs. / Ms.

Address

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Phone

I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for the program and agree to them.

Signature

If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate:

☐ I wish to have single accommodations.

OR ☐ I plan to share accommodations with:

OR ☐ I’d like to know about possible roommates.

Here is my deposit of $________ ($1,000 per person) for _____ space(s).

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to Stanford Alumni Association) OR

☐ Charge my deposit to my:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card #

Expiration Date

Cardholder Signature

Date

Mail completed form to address on mail panel or fax to (650) 725-8675 or place your deposit online at www.stanfordalumni.org/trip?romania2011. Please submit your reservation only once to avoid multiple charges to your account.
“The educational and historic aspects of a Stanford trip make it so much more than a sightseeing adventure.”

GEORGE MILLER, SOUTHERN AFRICA COLLEGE, 2001