DANCE LIKE MOLDOVANS

DAY 1

Day 1: Arrival day

Chisinau

On arrival at Chisinau International Airport, you will be transferred to your accommodation in Chisinau. After settling in, you can have a walk through downtown and explore the city centre on your own.

In the evening, you will have **dinner at a traditional restaurant with traditional meals and dances**.

DAY 2

Day 2: First traditional dance class and Chisinau city tour

Chisinau

In the morning, you will walk to the dance studio where you will enjoy the **first traditional dance class with a folk dance ensemble**.

After the class you will have a lunch break, after which you will enjoy a **guided tour of Chisinau city**. Chisinau is the main administrative, scientific and cultural centre of Moldova. During the tour, you will discover pieces of history and culture of the city such as the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, the Bell Tower, the Arch of Triumph, the Monument of Stephen the Great, etc. In Chisinau you will find a lot of places where you can purchase some souvenirs about Moldova. You will make a stop at “Mihai Eminescu” Theatre Square, where you will be amazed by the souvenir market with many handicrafts and handmade souvenirs.

HIGHLIGHTS: Traditional dance class in Chisinau, Chisinau city,

DAY 3

Day 3: Dance class and visit to Cricova winery

Chisinau – Cricova – Chisinau

The day will begin with the **second traditional dance class** at the dance studio.

In the afternoon, you will have a lunch break.

After the break, you will be transferred from Chisinau to Cricova where you will visit **Cricova winery**. During the excursion at Cricova winery in the tourist train, at a depth of 80 m, you will discover the wonders

of this place. Cricova underground galleries are formed by over seventy streets covering an area of nearly 120 km, each bearing Bacchic names: Sauvignon, Cabernet, Cahors, etc. The jewel of the underground treasure is the National Collection, including over 600 types of wine totalling about 1 million bottles. Here you will admire the oldest bottle of wine - "Jewish Easter Wine", dating from 1902. You will also visit the unique production of sparkling wine, where a professional guide will tell you about all the process of producing sparkling wines using the famous French-style Méthode Champenoise. In one of the tasting rooms, the sommelier will explain the rules of wine tasting and help you better reveal the taste and bouquet of each type of wine.

In the evening, you will be transferred to the hotel in Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Cricova Underground Wine Galleries,

DAY 4

Day 4: Dance class and visit to the Cultural, Natural and Landscape Reserve Orheiul Vechi

Chisinau – Orheiul Vechi – Butuceni – Chisinau

In the morning, you will enjoy a **traditional dance class with a folk dance ensemble** at the dance studio.

The class will be followed by a lunch break, after which you will be transferred to Orheiul Vechi - a natural amphitheater revealing a territory which was first inhabited 40 000 years ago. The **Cultural, Natural and Landscape Reserve Orheiul Vechi** includes a series of historical and cultural monuments as well as natural landscapes in the gorge of the Raut River. Ancient fortifications, cave monasteries, monks and hermits – here you can follow the history of this region. The remnants of the first human settlements were found in the stone caverns from here. On the rocky hill, you will find the ruins of a strong Geto-Dacian fortification, which acted as a sanctuary for celebrating religious holidays and rituals in this prehistoric community. The originality of Orheiul Vechi landscape is due to the gorge of the Raut River, dug under the form of a canyon in the limestone layers of the former Sarmatian Sea, about 14 million years ago.

The day will continue at **Butuceni guesthouse**, where you will enjoy a **culinary masterclass** during which you will learn how to cook traditional “placinte” (pies). At lunch you will taste traditional Moldovan dishes such as “zeama” (chicken soup with homemade egg noodles), “mamaliga” and placinte made during the masterclass.

After lunch, you will be transferred to the hotel in Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Orheiul Vechi - a 40 thousand years-old natural amphitheater, Traditional dishes at Butuceni guesthouse ,

DAY 5

Day 5: Traditional dance class with a folk dance ensemble

Chisinau

This first half of the day will be dedicated to dances.

After the dance class, you will have free time and you will be able to make your own plans.

DAY 6

Day 6: Last dance class and discovery of Arta Rustica Handicraft Complex

Chisinau – Clisova Noua – Chisinau

The day will begin with the **last dance class with the folk dance ensemble (during the last class you will wear traditional clothes)**.

In the afternoon, you will have free time for lunch.

The day will begin with the visit of **Arta Rustica Handicraft Complex** in Clisova Noua village. The handmade carpets in Clisova Noua are of amazing interest and beauty. The traditional Moldovan carpets have been included in UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage. The creation of only one canvas takes several months. Every carpet is a work of art. The craftsmen of Clisova Noua village put their whole soul and free time into their craft. They restore unique carpets according to old photographs. They use only natural materials and authentic technique during the weaving process.

HIGHLIGHTS: "Rustic Art" Crafts Complex,

DAY 7

Day 7: Time travel in Tiraspol - Back in the USSR

Chisinau - Tighina - Tirnauca - Tiraspol - Puhoi - Chisinau

In the morning, you will discover **Tighina Fortress** located in Tighina town and built in the 15th century by the prince of Moldova, Stephen the Great. Originally built as a small wooden fort, it was later fortified in stone by the prince of Moldova, Petru Rares. Occupied by the Ottomans in 1538 (in a campaign lead by the sultan Suleiman the Magnificent), the fort was strengthened in 1541 and became the center of an Ottoman "raya" (in which were included the surrounding Moldavian villages). In the 18th century, the fort was strengthened by Moldovan craftsmen under the direct supervision of Dimitrie Cantemir. Tighina Fortress is an architectural ensemble of irregular quadrilateral plan, surrounded by wide walls, 2-3 meters thick, made of limestone and brick.

In the afternoon, you will have lunch at Casa Karaman guesthouse.

After lunch, you will enjoy a **city tour of Tiraspol** and you will discover Vladimir Lenin's monument and

the tank left from the Second World War. The city seems to be a vestige of the Soviet past. Nevertheless, you will be amazed by the contrasts, one of which is the football complex “Sheriff” - a pearl of contemporary architecture.

The journey will continue at **Asconi winery** founded in 1994 and located in Puhoi village. The winery achieved a lot due to modern wine making technologies. Nowadays at Asconi estate European varieties are grown, but special attention is paid to indigenous varieties such as Rara Neagra, Feteasca, etc. One of the features of Asconi winery is that they pick up the grapes mechanically at night when the grapes are still cold. During the excursion and wine tasting at the winery you will be able to discover the wonders of this place, whereas during dinner you will enjoy local cuisine dishes.

After dinner, you will be transferred to the hotel in Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Tighina Fortress, Tiraspol city, Asconi winery,

DAY 8

Day 8: Departure day

Chisinau

On departure day, you will be transferred from the hotel to Chisinau International Airport. If your flight is in the afternoon, you will have the option to explore Chisinau for a while on your own in the morning and buy some souvenirs.