EASTER HOLIDAY IN MOLDOVA

DAY 1

Day 1: Arrival day

Chisinau

On arrival at Chisinau International Airport, you will arrange on your own the transfer to the hotel 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 in Chisinau (not included in the price).

DAY 2

Day 2: Tasting of traditional Easter dishes at Butuceni guesthouse

Chisinau – Orheiul Vechi – Butuceni – Cricova – Chisinau

In the morning you will enjoy a **city tour of Chisinau** that 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.

After the city tour, you will set off on a time travel to Orheiul Vechi (Old Orhei) to see 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.

Next, you will have lunch at **Butuceni guesthouse**, where you will enjoy such local traditional dishes as “zeama” (chicken soup with homemade noodles), “mamaliga”, and “placinte” (pies) along with traditional Easter food, like eggs, traditional Easter bread, baked lamb.

The day will continue with an excursion and wine tasting at **Cricova winery** – the only wine enterprise that was awarded the highest state prize “The Order of the Republic” and has been declared by law a national cultural heritage. 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 totaling about 1 million bottles. Here you will admire the oldest bottle of wine - "Jewish Easter Wine", dating from 1902 and discover the tastes of Cricova wines.

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

HIGHLIGHTS: Chisinau city, Orheiul Vechi - a 40 thousand years-old natural amphitheater, Traditional dishes at Butuceni guesthouse , Cricova Underground Wine Galleries,

DAY 3

Day 3: “Pasca” baking masterclass at Hanul lui Hanganu guesthouse

Chisinau – Clisova Noua – Lalova – Orhei – Chisinau

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.

Next, you will travel to Lalova village, where you will participate in a **“pasca” baking masterclass** at Hanul lui Hanganu guesthouse. Pasca is a traditional Easter bread made from leavened dough that is stuffed in the center mainly with cheese. The loaves often resemble braided wreaths and are ornately decorated, commonly with images of the cross.

You will have lunch at this guesthouse that is the perfect choice for a quiet and full of emotions stay. Here, you will surely fall in love with some of the most popular dishes in Moldova. During lunch, you will discover the taste of delicious traditional dishes including “sarmale” (vine or cabbage leaves stuffed with rice and vegetables). The specificity of “sarmale” made here consists in the fact that they are known for being the smallest ones in the country.

After lunch, you will visit the **Roman Catholic Church** in Orhei town, which is a century-old religious house with unique architecture in Moldova dedicated to „Assumption of Virgin Mary”. The church is enigmatic and attractive, especially when the organ is heard from inside.

In the evening, you will be transferred to the hotel in Chisinau. Additionally, you can attend the Easter Sunday celebrations at the Roman Catholic Diocese of Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: "Rustic Art" Crafts Complex, "Pasca" baking masterclass , Hanul lui Hanganu guesthouse, Roman Catholic Church ,

DAY 4

Day 4: Departure day

Chisinau

On departure day, you will arrange on your own the transfer 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.