

# brasov



## I. Geographic location



Brasov is located in central-eastern Romania, at the crossroads of trade routes linking Europe to the rest of the Balkans. It lies in the curvature of the Carpathian basin and the hills of Transylvania. The main stream running through the county is the river Olt. Brasov is the largest city in the county. The city is situated at 25°30' east longitude and 40°45' north latitude, at a height of 500-600 m to the south-east of Brasov Depression, at the bottom of Tampa mountain.



## II. Physical-geographical description

Braşov Depression is the largest of Romanian Carpathians, with a relief of three steps:

- first step, which has the highest altitude, 500-600m, consisting of knolls and hills;
- the middle step, consists of fertile plains crossed by rivers;
- lowest step, represented by marshy meadows from Harman-Prejmer.



Braşov Depression delimits the northern and western rims of Postavarul Mountains, whose lap is embraced to the north by the city of Brasov. Postăvarul Mountain includes Tampa Reservation and Natural Park, with an area of 150 ha. Tampa Mountain rises about 400 meters above the city of Brasov, representing the only reservation within a single city and the only one within a county landscape.

Brasov has a temperate climate with four seasons. The relief determines the county Brasov to have cool mountain weather with high rainfalls, short summers, cold and wet, long autumns and harsh winters. The city of Brasov, located in intra-mountainous depressions, has a warmer and safely climate, with light winds and high rainfalls. Within the intra-mountainous depression of Brasov, the average annual temperature is higher: 7.6° in Brasov, while in the smaller mountains the

average annual temperature is between 0° and 6°, and in the high mountains of 1,800 m altitude, the annual average temperature is 0° Celsius. During winter, cold air, that is heavier, falls onto the top of mountains, and hot air, which is lighter, rises. It produces a thermal inversion, i.e. onto the sunny peaks of mountains there are higher temperatures than at their feet, into the depression. Brasov County has high rainfalls. Precipitations as snow are abundant in the mountains during winter. The snow layer lasts around 70-80 days a year in Brasov. The highest temperature recorded so far in Brasov was 37.1°C.

### III. Population

According to the National Institute of Statistics, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2010 the resident population of Brasov totaled 277,569 people, including 131,883 males and 145,686 females. Within the city of Brasov, together with Romanians, representing 90.6% of the total population, national minorities also live: Hungarians (8.5%), Germans (0.6%), Roms (0.2%). In terms of confessional population, Brasov is structured as follows: 30% Orthodox, Roman Catholics 22.3%, Lutherans 22%, Protestants 13%, and other religions. The main occupations of the inhabitants of Brasov include industrial and economic activities.

### III. Administrative-territorial description

Brasov county, was first mentioned in 1235, under the name of Corona. Local Germans built the medieval city of Brasov. Starting with Bartholomew area, where was initially built, the city was rebuilt between Tampa and Warthe, following its destruction



caused by the Mongol invasion in 1241. It was built as other cities of the country (Sibiu, Sighisoara, Medias), like a burgh, with all of its characteristics. In the city center there were the City Hall, the school, the church, and all city streets led to this place. It was a city of crafts, a center of trade, allowing trade links with other Romanian medieval regions. Brasov became a strong industrial center during the communist period. Regarding the use of land, they were destined especially to construction (housing,

industrial plants, retail, etc.) With a high degree of urbanization, within the city of Brasov there are numerous factories, commercial establishments, firms, banks, schools, colleges, museums, hospitals. The city was divided into several districts: Tractorul, Scriitorilor, Florilor, Gării, Blumăna, Astra, Uzina 2, Stupini, Valea Cetății, Noua, Bartolomeu, Triaj, Craiter.

#### **IV. Economic activities**

Regarding agriculture, Brasov is not very representative. However, in Brasov Depression, called "The Land of Potatoes", potatoes, sugar beet, barley, oats, wheat, and rye are grown, apple orchards being also present. Animals' growth is an ancient occupation for the county's residents.

Brasov City has had an important tradition in the aviation industry. The Aircraft factory, founded in 1925, specialized in the production of aircraft, and was closed in 1947. It was replaced in 1948 by "Tractorul" Brasov factory, which soon was to become a landmark of Brasov's industry.

Although rated as industrial city, there are many cultural institutions: "Sica Alexandrescu" Drama Theatre, "Arlequin" Lyric Theatre, "Reduta" Cultural Centre, "George Baritiu" County Library, hosting a variety of cultural events. The many tourist attractions: the Black Church, Brasov Scheii Museum Complex, Museum of Art, and St. Bartholomew's Church have urged tourists to visit the city of Brasov.



Please, also visit:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bra%C8%99ov>

<http://www.romaniatourism.com/brasov.html>

<http://www.ghid-brasov.ro/>

## Exchanging currency

### Currency

Romania's currency is the **leu** (usually appears in the plural form **lei**). It comes in Polymer notes

1 (green) 5 (purple) 10 (Reddish Brown) 50 (Yellow) 100 (Blue) (200 and 500 lei notes are rarely used).

The leu's subdivision is the ban (plural form **bani**), 1 leu = 100 bani), which comes in 1 (brass), 5 (copper) 10 (steel) and 50 (brass) bani coins.

Euros are often accepted (especially for larger and legal transactions and you may frequently see prices quoted in euros). Other Foreign currencies are usually not accepted; some hotels and tourist shops do take major international currencies (EUR, GBP CHF DKK SEK NOK USD etc.), but the exchange rates they offer are frequently lower than the normal rates.

### Exchanging money

If you want to change some money, the primary option is to use ATMs. Using ATM cards is very convenient and safe. You get a better exchange rate at exchange offices but take care as some (very rare) charge a % which subtract from value received (just look for word COMISION which have to be 0%). **Prior** to make the exchange **they have to give you a receipt which you have to sign** so if anything is fishy you may say you don't want to exchange anymore, just ask for you money and leave. The big advantage of using ATM machines is that they eliminate the need to carry large amounts of cash as traveller's checks are virtually useless in shops.

If you use exchange offices **always check the commision percentage**, usually it is zero except in the airport.

The ATM works fine and you can find them almost in all big shops locations, sometimes near public institutions and ofcourse at banks external wall. Also the big shops accept Visa and Mastercard.

## Transport services

Public transport in Braşov is very extensive, around 40 lines that run **within** the whole city in a convenient way. Here are some pictures followed by information.

- **Operated by:** Regia Autonoma de Transport Brasov - RAT Brasov (The Public Transportation Company of Brasov).
  - **Schedule:** Weekdays: 5.30 - 23.30/24; Weekends: 6.30 - 22.30/23; Night: no service.
  - **Tickets/fares:**
    - Tickets valid for all lines, *except* line 20: 1 trip - ticket/1.5 lei; 2 trip - ticket/3 lei.
    - Tickets valid for line 20: 1 trip - ticket/3.5 lei;
    - Passes: 1 day nominal pass valid for all lines, *except* line 20: 5 lei; 1 week nominal pass valid for all lines, *except* line 20: 25 lei; 10 days nominal pass valid for all lines, *except* line 20: 35 lei. Please always have ID with when using these passes.
- Notes:** These are the most important tickets. There are also other types, please check the link at the bottom of the page. Tickets must be punched when getting on the bus.

Passes must always be accompanied by ID, since they are nominal. You have to buy the ticket before and validate it on board. Travelling without tickets/passes, or with the wrong tickets/passes, is liable for paying a fine between 100-200 lei.

- **Ticket sales:** There are special kiosks with the sign **Bilete si abonamente transport public** (Public transport tickets) which are also accompanied by the sign **RAT**. However they are not present in all bus stops and their opening hours might be different. Then, you must look for the nearest super/mini market, or newspaper vending kiosk, since they will most likely sell tickets too. If they do, they usually have a sign saying "bilete" (tickets). The most important ticket vending kiosk is in the Gara (Train Station) bus stop, which is open from 5.00-24.00.