

Timișoara

Overview

Timișoara is located in the Banat region of Western Romania and as one of country's largest cities, is home to an estimated 312,000 people. Lying on the picturesque northern bank of the Bega River, Timișoara's dramatic history and stunning architecture attracts thousands of visitors each year. Widely regarded as a "Little Vienna", the city's vibrant cultural life has transformed Timișoara into one of Romania's most developed and cosmopolitan cities.

Culture lovers can enjoy some of the city's numerous museums and art galleries that illustrate Romania's rich heritage, whilst shopaholics indulge themselves at one of its many shopping destinations. Bega shopping centre is the city's largest and home to hundreds of well known brands, while the Timișoara Market provides a great place to sample local produce. Perfect for souvenir hunting, downtown Timișoara is full of shops selling an array of traditional handicrafts including embroidered textiles, lacework and painted glass.

There are accommodation options to suit all budgets, from simple hostels and family run guesthouses to more luxurious hotels. Visitors searching for extravagance will enjoy staying at the Hotel Elysee, Timișoara's first five star hotel. Located ten minutes drive from the city centre, the hotel has an incredible collection of restored antiques, chandeliers and regal rooms. In spring and summer guests can enjoy al fresco dining in landscaped gardens, complete with a small lakes and fountain.

Timișoara has a number of dining options to suit all tastes. Romanian cuisine tends to be meat heavy with a blend of flavours from Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian and Austrian cultures. Those wanting to sample the best of local food should wet their appetites with a glass of Țuică, a type of strong plum brandy. Stomachs can then be warmed by a bowl of perișoare or traditional meatball soup, schnitzel or musaca, which is eggplant based and similar to Moussaka. One of the most common dishes is mămăligă, a cornmeal dish that is often used as a bread substitute. Meals can be washed down with one of Romanian's fine wines or beers which are produced throughout the region.

The city is also known for its excellent Italian restaurants alongside a variety of other establishments serving up Indian, French, Turkish and American cuisine.

The city has a temperate-continental climate, with cold snowy winters and warm summers. Summer generally lasts from May until September, when temperatures hover around the mid-twenties and visitors can enjoy long hours of sunlight. Winters can be extremely cold, with temperatures dropping well below zero with heavy snowfall, so be sure to pack warm clothes.

Timișoara has all the modern facilities required to guarantee a stress free visit, including numerous ATM machines dotted around the city centre, car rental companies and a Tourist Information Office where helpful staff can assist with any queries. The currency used is the Romanian Leu.

Places to Visit

Victory Square

Timișoara's Victory Square or Piata Victoriei provides a lasting symbol of the Romanian Revolution. Prior to the dramatic events of 1989 it was known as Opera Square, in honour of the Romanian Opera House. To commemorate the tens of thousands of people who joined mass political demonstrations it was renamed, and is still a place where residents converge to celebrate modern day victories or contemplate the past. Surrounding the

square are some of the cities most elegant buildings, the focal point of which is the impressive Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral. Built between 1937 and 1949, the towering 97 meter high structure is home to a number of valuable religious objects and ornate mosaics.

Considered Timișoara's cultural hub, Victory Square is also home to three of the city's main theatres and its regal Opera house.

Union Square

The picturesque Union Square or Piata Unirii lies at the heart of Timișoara. Originally the city's commercial centre, the square is today a vibrant blend of historic culture and modern leisure. The square is home to some of the city's most stunning examples of Baroque architecture, including the Serbian and Roman Catholic Cathedrals. Also notable is the Nicolas Lenau College, located on the north side of the square and having been built in 1761, was the city's earliest theatre.

Recently transformed by numerous cafes and bars, Union Square now enjoys a flourishing social scene where visitors can relax and enjoy the stunning surroundings.

The Roman Catholic Cathedral

Found on the East side of Union Square and opposite the equally impressive Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, St George's or "The Dome" is one of Timișoara's most renowned buildings. Built between 1736 and 1754 to the designs of Austrian architect Fisher Von Erlach, the cathedral features rich Baroque architecture and impressive interior paintings.

Botanical Park

Known throughout Romania as the *City of Parks or City of Flowers*, Timișoara is also famous for its lush green spaces. Visitors can enjoy strolling through a chain of parks that surround the historic town centre including Rose Park, Central Park and the Children's Park. The Botanical Park located near Union Square is one of the most beautiful, featuring an abundance of landscaped gardens, trees and flowers.

Banat Ethnographic Museum

Located in the city's oldest fortress close to Union Square, the Banat Ethnographic Museum offers visitors a heady dose of Romanian culture. The museum houses over 2,000 exhibits that range from traditional folk costumes, crafts, furniture and religious items. Throughout the year the museum also hosts a number of special exhibitions and shows.

Museum of Fine Arts

Timișoara has a flourishing art scene with a number of galleries to be enjoyed throughout the city. The most renowned venue is the Museum of Fine Arts, housed in a spectacular 18th Century Baroque Palace that was once the residence of the city's governor. Located on the south side of Union Square, the museum hosts a large permanent collection of works by Italian, German and Flemish artists, plus a number of short term exhibitions.

Regular Events

January - New Year

On New Years Eve thousands revelers gather in Piata Victoriei, the city's main square to celebrate the coming of the New Year. Visitors can listen to live music from Romanian stars and watch a spectacular fireworks display at the stroke of midnight.

February - Martisor Fair

The end of February brings the Martisor Fair to Piata Victoriei. Artisans flock to the square to sell their collections of charming trinkets, cards, paper flowers and decorative pins. Traditionally these Martisor items are purchased by men, and given on March 1st to their loved ones.

March - World Theatre Day

February brings World Theatre Day, marked by a number of events across Timișoara. Culture lovers can catch a number of theatrical performances, readings and discussions at venues throughout the city.

April - Easter Market

Easter in Timișoara is a big celebration full of festivities that showcase the best of the city's traditional food and handicrafts. Visitors can enjoy browsing one of numerous markets, the most famous of which is located at the Piata Victoriei.

May - Timishort Film Festival

In May, Timișoara hosts the acclaimed Timishort Film Festival. Film buffs flock to this week long event that showcases an eclectic mix of avant garde short films by international and Romanian directors. The festival includes an awards ceremony, galas and discussion forums.

June - Bega Boulevard

One of the most popular events in Timișoara's events calendar is the Bega Boulevard. Residents and tourists gather on the banks of the Bega River to enjoy a range of events including live music, theatre and dance. The festival culminates in the famous Rubber Duck contest, when thousands of ducks are floated down the river.

July - International Romani Art Festival

July brings the annual Romani Arts Festival that celebrates all aspects of Roma folk art. The event showcases the talent of local and international artists, illustrating traditional and contemporary gypsy culture. Visitors have the chance to see a unique blend of contemporary music, film, theatre, crafts and photography.

August - Opera Festival

Held over a number of days at the end of August, the Timișoara Opera Festival has become a valuable part of the city's cultural calendar. Music lovers can choose from a series of breath taking performances of some of the world's best loved Opera's.

September - Plai

Timișoara's colourful Plai festival celebrates an array of multi cultural arts. The vibrant event, set in lush

surroundings, brings together the best of world, jazz and contemporary music. Held at the outdoor Banat Village Museum, events include art workshops, drama and dance.

October - TM Base

Join thousands of electronic music fans, producers and DJ's who come to party at the annual three day TM Base Festival. TM Base provides a platform for up-and-coming talent as well as featuring live performances from some of the most famous names in urban music.

November - International Jazz Festival

Timișoara's International Jazz Festival features an eclectic mix of jazz music from trios, soloists and big bands. A must for jazz lovers, the event showcases an impressive line up of established and emerging artists.

December - Theatre Week

Each December Timișoara commemorates its 1989 revolution with a series of theatrical performances and exhibitions. Visitors can watch moving and informative re-enactments of the events that led up to the fall of communism.

Getting Around

Train

Trains are maintained and operated by the Romanian Railways and depart from the northern train station (Gară Timișoara-Nord). The station offers daily services to all other Romanian cities including Bucharest, Arad, Brasov, Sibiu and Oradea. There are also frequent trains to Vienna and Budapest, where connecting transport to other European destinations can be found. Train schedule and advance bookings can be made via the Agenție de Voiaj CFR's advance booking office. Tickets for same day travel have to be purchased at the station.

Bus

Timișoara's main bus station or Autogara Autotim is located close to the northern train station, and runs a daily service to other Romanian cities. International buses to a number of European destinations such as Sweden and Spain can be caught from the eastern bus station (Autogară Est).

To get around Timișoara city, local buses operate on 20 routes throughout the city centre and the suburbs. Tickets can be purchased via vending machines, kiosks and must be stamped upon boarding.

Tram and Trolley Bus

Trams provide a convenient and economical way to see the sights, with single fares starting from just €0.30. Operated by the Regia Autonomă de Transport (RATT) the city has 11 tram lines and 9 trolley bus routes that traverse the city. Services run between 4.45am and 11.15pm, and all tickets need to be purchased kiosks next to the stops. Daily, weekly and monthly passes are also available.

Taxi

There are many official taxis that operate in the city centre, which can be hailed in the street or pre-booked by

telephone. Taxis licensed by City Hall are marked by a distinctive black oval sticker, whilst unlicensed vehicles tend to only have a “Taxi” sign on their roof. Always check the company is registered – There are a number of the reputable companies running in the city and visitors should be able to get to any destination in Timișoara for around €3-6.

On Foot

Many of Timișoara’s attractions are located within walking distance from one another and they can be explored on foot. Visitors will particularly enjoy strolling through one of the city’s leafy parks or the historic old centre.

Local Services

Dentists

Dentartisti

The concept "Dentartisti" is based on quality and a special care for details.

Our professionally trained personnel care about you and your desires so the treatment plan will be decided together (doctor and patient) in order to help you have a beautiful smile and offer you full satisfaction.

We particularly emphasize the importance of aesthetic dentistry, doing prosthetic reconstructions at the highest level of European standards using zirconia and ceramic materials. We also provide a wide range of service: orthodontics, endodontics (root canal therapy), periodontology, implantology and pediatric dentistry.

Our team speaks several languages and our relaxing environment will make you feel more confident and ready to visit our beautiful city.

Our dental clinic is situated in the historical part of the city, very close to Perla hotel.

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