

## CITY of BRAȘOV

Brașov is located in the middle of Romania and is one of the most important industrial, cultural and scientific centres of Transylvania and of the entire country. Situated 176 km north of the Romanian capital city Bucharest, Brașov is the capital of the county bearing the same name. The road connecting the two cities runs along the Prahova Valley, crossing Bucegi Mountains through the Pass of Predeal.

The earliest available documents testify to the existence of Brașov since 1234, under the name of "Corona" (Crown), hence its German name of "Kronstadt".

During feudalism the nucleus of the town, namely "the Citadel" was the centre of trades and cultural-administrative activities, looking similar to other European medieval towns. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries buildings bearing the hallmark of Baroque and Viennese Rococo styles began to mark the city's appearance. The oldest part of the town, Schei of Brașov, is dominated by the slim silhouette of St. Nicholas Church, a true cathedral of Orthodoxy, founded and restored over time by several princes from Wallachia and Moldavia. The still standing wooden gates and the roadside triptychs on the surrounding heights give the Schei a unique and special colour.

A visit to Brașov is an opportunity of direct contact with its cultural life. The statue of Johannes Honterus near the Black Church, by Finnish sculptor Haaro Magnusen shows the great humanist, deeply involved in the 16<sup>th</sup> century European movement of Enlightenment, who brought Protestantism to Brașov and authored notable pedagogical and geographical writings.

Brașov has one of the finest natural settings in Romania and Europe. The Southern part of the town is towered by 960 m high Mount Tâmpa, and about 10 km further begins the lovely winter and a summer resort Poiana Brașov.

Contemporary Brașov, with a population of about 300000, is a busy industrial, shopping, tourist and cultural centre, a permanent attraction for hundreds of thousands of tourists from Romania and abroad. Those who at one time live in Brașov come to miss it and wish to return.

The beginnings and development of higher education in Brașov root in the town's cultural tradition and intensive cultural climate. Technical and scientific creation, rich artistic activity in a wealth of fields, mass culture, as well as quality teaching and study in schools of all levels blend together in harmony.