

## Retezat National Park

**Tags:** natural wonders, lakes, gorges, caves, wildlife, by car, hiking, Retezat National Park, Parcul Național Retezat

### *Useful information*

- 235 km, 4h /drive from the Raven's Nest
- Access Fee: At the park entrance you'll need to pay 7 lei per person and 10 lei per car.
- Campfire: You can only build a fire in Poiana Pelegii (at least that was the rule thus far) but not at Bucura lake.
- Water sources are in great number. Permanent sources can be found at Bucura lake and at Poiana Pelegii. Keep in mind that bathing is strictly prohibited.
- Retezat National Park includes a protected area Gemenele Scientific Reservation. The area protects endemic and extremely rare flowers and vegetation, therefore, a special permit from Romanian Academy is requested for passing through.
- Average temperatures: July and August - 16 - 26°C. Above 1800 meters, 10 - 15°C. At about 2000 m, temperatures can hit close to 0°C.

### *Description*

If you are a wilderness lover and a passionate bird watcher, this is the best place to hike in Romania. Retezat National Park is the most visited sightseeing objective on a national scale. Located in the southwestern part of Romania, in Hunedoara County, the Retezat National Park is one of the best conserved wild areas in the Carpathians.

The park contains 19 peaks of over 2,300 meters (7,500 ft) and approx. 50 crystal clear glacier lakes, among which, worth mentioning are Lake Zănoaga – the deepest glacial lake in Romania, Tăul Porții – the highest lake in Retezat (2269m) and Lake Bucura – the biggest glacial lake in Romania.

The maximum altitude of 2,509 meters on Peleaga Peak, the sixth highest in Romania. Its name derives from 'peleag' which means 'bald, naked' in Romanian.

This UNESCO protected area also shelters 120 bird species like the song thrush, the ring ouzel, the red-breasted flycatcher, the chiffchaff, nutcracker, and the rare and magnificent golden eagle. That's why Retezat National Park was included in the Important Bird Areas Network.

The park was founded in 1935 on a 100 square km area of the ex-hunting domain of the Royal House. The area shelters one of Europe's last remaining intact old-growth forests and the continent's largest single area of pristine mixed forest as well as 80 glacier lakes, almost 40% of the glacial lakes that exist in Romania.

### *Flora & Fauna*

Retezat National Park includes two areas, from which one has a scientific nature. Any form of exploitation such as grazing, hunting, fishing, fruit picking, tourism camping, is forbidden. The second area is less restrictive, as grazing is allowed two months per year.

### ***Good to know***

Camping is restricted to designated areas. A great place to enjoy camping is the campsite at Poiana Pelegii. Another great camping place is up at Bucura Lake (starting point for many hiking routes). It is strongly recommended to camp in designated areas because of the bear population.