

Bran Castle

Tags: castles, medieval, historical sites, by car, Bran Castle, Castelul Bran, Bran-Moeciu, castle, Dracula

Helpful information

- ◆ From Raven's Nest: 5-hour drive/ 312 km
- ◆ Access fees: adults - 40 Lei (8.5€); seniors (65+) - 30 Lei (6.5€); students - 25 Lei (5.5€); pupils - 10 Lei (2 €); school groups (>20pax) - 5 Lei (1€)
- ◆ The amateur photo / video pass are both included in the basic ticket.
- ◆ Professional filming / photography requires a signed contract.
- ◆ Telephone: : +4 0268 237 700
- ◆ More information: <http://www.bran-castle.com/admission.html>

Description

Romanian history is immersed in myths, legends, and superstitions. Mix it all together and you can easily understand how Stoker compiled his horrific gothic tale about Count Dracula and his castle. However, the Bran castle has actually few connections with Vlad the Impaler.

Situated on a cliff at an elevation of 762 meters and surrounded not only by valleys and hills but also by an aura of mystery and fantasy, Bran Castle (Castelul Bran in Romanian) is a national monument.

The first documented mentioning of Bran Castle is the act issued by King Louis I of Hungary in 1377 when he authorized the Transylvanian Saxons of the Braşov region to build a fortress as a defense against a northward expansion of the Ottoman Empire. The fortress was completed by 1388.

In the early 15th century, King Sigismund of Hungary temporarily handed over possession of the fortress to Prince Mircea the Old of Wallachia. In 1498 the Transylvanian Saxons of Braşov bought the bulwark from King Vladislav II of Bohemia and Hungary, and they continued to hold it even after the conquest of the Hungarian capital by the Ottoman Empire. The House of Habsburg gained control of the region in 1687, but the fortress remained in Transylvanian hands.

It actually became a castle only in 1920 when the city of Braşov turned Bran Castle over to Queen Marie of Greater Romania. At that time the castle was abandoned and almost ruined. Queen Marie restored it as a royal summer residence and lived there both before and after the death, in 1927, of her husband, King Ferdinand I. The castle is now a museum open to tourists, displaying art and furniture collected by Queen Marie.

The medieval stronghold is situated along the border of the historic regions of Transylvania and Wallachia, in the Southern Carpathian Mountains, in Braşov county. Due to its lovely landscape and charming people, Bran-Moeciu is one of the most popular areas in Braşov county and the ideal place to spend a great weekend.

That nature has been generous with this area because it is surrounded by the impressive silhouettes of the Bucegi and Piatra Craiului massifs, two of the most important elements in the Romanian mountainous scenery.

Even though it is not haunted by vampires, the Bran Castle remains a mythical, majestic destination not only for its greatness but also for the wonderful surroundings.