

THE PRUT CLIFFS



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VALLEY OF THE MIDDLE PRUT

VALLEY OF THE MIDDLE PRUT - CHANCE FOR THE FUTURE

Valley of the Middle Prut, one of the most picturesque places in Europe, is located in the north-west of the Republic of Moldova and stretches along the Prut River from Kriva (Briceni) to Ungheni. The eastern border corresponds to the water ridge of the Middle Prut. Orographically, the territory borders to the east with the Moldovan Plateau and the Middle Prut Plain. The main geographical contact between these units is not always clearly defined and is unique for all aspects of the complex geographical conditions, so the term «Middle Prut» often implies parts of neighboring formations.

The surface of the Middle Prut Valley is part of a large stage of plateaus and hills in front of the Carpathians, bearing the imprint of a long and complex evolution, diverse conditions where geographical factors manifested in their modern dynamics. Harmoniously integrated into the territorial ensemble of the Carpathian-Dan-

ubian space, the Middle Prut is characterized by a landscape with its own features, giving it a bright „individuality”. Dominant features of its natural environment largely express its position in the Danube space. From a physico-geographical point of view, the Middle Prut Valley is part of the overall landscape of northern Moldova, determined by its geographical location in the form of steps from north to south and from east to west, with a landscape corresponding to steppe and forest-steppe regions. To the east, it is largely bounded by the dam of the coral reef, and towards the riverbed, Prut terraces form a swampy territory.

The Middle Prut Plain is crossed by numerous dead branches of the Prut River and its tributaries. Since ancient times, this territory has been the focus of naturalists. In 1421, Prince Alexander the Good, at the suggestion of the researcher Gilbert de Lannoy, cre-



ated the Tsutsora Forest Reserve in the Middle Prut Valley, which included partially preserved meadow forests of centuries-old oaks. Dimitrie Cantemir, in his work «Description of Moldova» (Descrierea Moldovei), mentions the unique relief of coral reefs and the natural complex « Hundred Mounds », («O sută de mov-

ile»), giving it the name „Centum monticuli”.

In the 19th century, S. Stamat-Churya, in his work „The Smugler”, artistically describes caves penetrating the coral reefs in the Lopatnik River valley. In the early 20th century, the relief of this territory was described by I. Simionescu, 1901; T. Poruchik, 1927;









I. Makovei; I. Atanasiu, 1930; D. Iliescu, 1936; G. Nastase, 1936. A comprehensive and systematic description of monuments was first made in 1976 by Kravchuk, Verina, and Sukhov in the work „Reserves and Monuments of Nature of Moldova”.

During the period of independence of the Republic of Moldova,

a legal framework was developed to regulate the conservation status of natural complexes, which were divided into the following categories: scientific reserves, natural reserves, landscape reserves, resource reserves, and natural monuments. In the Briceni district, near the village of Kriva, there is the Emil Racovita Natural Re-



serve - one of the largest gypsum caves in the world, with a total length of over 100 km. This cave has a developed system of labyrinths, spacious halls, lakes, and wells and is an extremely important object from a scientific, tourist, and resort point of view. Undoubtedly, this cave belongs not only to the national but also to the world heritage.

Another extremely important object is the belt of coral reefs „Toltrele Prutului”, which is located parallel to the Prut, in the territories of the Briceni, Edinet, Rishkani and Glodeni districts. South of the coral belt is a special geomorphological complex - the natural reserve „Suta de movile”, the origin of which is still surrounded by myths and legends. According to legend, in ancient times, this place was called «Hundred Mirrors» (Suta de Oglinzi) because of the many natural lakes reflecting sunlight in the evening. This reserve is part of the Prut terraces covering an area of more than 1070 hectares, covered with mounds of various shapes, up to 30 meters high and ranging from tens to hundreds of meters in

length. The territory between the mounds is complemented by dozens of picturesque lakes. Further to the south is one of the oldest meadow forests - the „Pădurea Domnească” reserve, covering an area of over 6000 hectares. In this reserve, there is a unique sector of century-old oaks covering an area of over 100 hectares. Here, wild grapevines, wild cats, otters, and colonies of waterfowl have been preserved. In 2005, European bison Bonasos were settled here. One male and two females were brought from Poland and placed in a 30-hectare enclosure.

Although most natural objects have the status of protected areas, they still suffer from anthropogenic pressure and are systematically destroyed by the local population and interested organizations. The Emil Racovita Cave is gradually being destroyed due to gypsum mining. Coral reefs are destroyed due to limestone extraction. The „Suta de movile” complex is annually plowed, causing many mounds to disappear. Land plots are also distributed here for villagers. After the construction of the Costești-Stâncă dam, the chemi-







cal composition and hydrological regime of the Prut plain changed, leading to the mass degradation of meadow vegetation, microflora, and aquatic fauna. All these karst, geological, hydrological, geomorphological, and silvicultural monuments represent the recreational potential of the Middle Prut. These natural relics, being relatively close, contribute

to the possibility of creating and organizing tourist routes, allowing to perceive the environment in its historical-evolutionary entirety, form an image, and create a sense of a tourist paradise. Valeriu Țarigradski, Pădurea Domnească Natural Reserve (from the collection „The Impact of Climate Change on the Environment and Society”).



VIIȘOARA



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE VIIȘOARA



*The tourist logo of the
commune Viișoara*

Viișoara village is situated in the northwest of the Republic of Moldova, along the Prut River, at the foot of the Pădurea Domnească forest reserve.

Viișoara appeared on the map of Moldova in 1840, making it a relatively young village. Its origin can be traced back to another village called Viișoara in the Edinets district. At that time, an epidemic broke out in that village, resulting in the loss of many lives and due to this, the settlement relocated. Initially, it was located on the banks of the Prut River and was named

Drăgușeni after a local landowner. This landowner had a vineyard on a hill, a little further away from the village, approximately 2 km. When the epidemic struck, some residents left the village, but the majority stayed.

The old settlement, where the epidemic occurred, was burned down, and the residents moved to live on the hill where the vineyard was located. According to local tradition, if a person experiences a chain of misfortunes, they should change their name to avoid further calamities. Therefore, the residents of the former Drăgușeni village renamed it Viișoara.

Moreover, local historian Boris Nemerenco, based on documents, established a connection between the village Drăgușeni in Bessarabia and a village with the same name near Dorohoi (Romania). People with identical surnames lived in these villages.

Local inhabitants claim that the initial settlers of the village





wanted to establish their settlement between the villages of Moara-Domnească and Ketiș, on the slope of a hill called „U ovrag” (By the ravine).

This location offers a beautiful and picturesque landscape, with a nearby pond covering an area of about 400 hectares. To the north of the village, there are also forested areas with various

tree species such as oak, juniper, ash, elm, acacia, and willow. The village owns about 5 hectares of the forest, part of the Pădurea Domnească reserve.

Just 5 km away from the village, there is a tourist attraction called „Zimbrăria Pădurea Domnească” (Bison Reserve). It is the only place in the country where everyone can admire bison.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

*Bison Reservation*

Near Moara Domneasca village, you'll find „Zimbrăria”, a wooded area enclosed by a fence covering an area of 32 hectares. This location is home of bison, making it a fantastic tourist attraction. The bison were brought to Moldova on August 19, 2005, through an interstate agreement with Poland. Currently, seven bison inhabit the area. Bison, the only species of wild cattle still existing, have been a symbol

of these lands for centuries. They can reach a height of 1.85 meters, and male bison can weigh from 440 to 920 kg, sometimes even more than a ton. The females are smaller, weighing between 360 and 640 kg. Visitors can observe these magnificent creatures actively grazing until sunrise.

Alongside the bison, tourists can enjoy various sculptures dedicated to this proud and powerful animal. These sculptures, created by sculptor Alexei Vidrașcu, are made of oak. Among the sculptures, gazebos, an exhibition of exotic birds,



and an unusual stage for cultural events, you'll find the largest wooden artwork in the country – a five-meter-high, seven-meter-long, and approximately four-ton wooden bison sculpture. It serves as a tribute to this endangered species, and visitors can climb onto the giant sculpture.

Secular Oaks

Not far from Moara Domneasca village, green chronicles of history grow—secular oaks that are more than 200-250 years old, with some reaching heights of 30-35 meters and diameters of 2 meters. This group of old trees, covering an area of 108 hectares, testifies eloquently to the history of the region's nature and the former glory of its forests. These oaks are located on the highest parts of the meadow, at an altitude of 53-60 meters. At the entrance to the village stands a giant secular oak with an age exceeding 200 years and a diameter of 130 cm. This oak, possibly once part of a group, has become a focal point as houses were built around it to pro-

tect it. The shade of this evergreen oak has witnessed the joys and sorrows of the local residents from time immemorial. It symbolizes the heart of the village and hosts village festivals and craft fairs.

Grandfather Ion's Spring

Situated 1.5 km from the village, on the right side of the Glodeni - Moara Domneasca road, «Grandfather Ion's Spring» provides pure



and crystal-clear water. The spring has a fascinating history. It belonged to Ion Melentie Nemerenco, born in 1898, who had around 8 hectares of land, a pond with tasty fish, a shop where he sold various delicacies, and, of course, a well with crystal-clear water. In 1941, Soviet authorities ordered him to leave his property and the village. Over time, the well was abandoned, and the pond turned into a swamp. It was only in the 1980s, initiated by Boris Lebedyuk, the head of the agricultural farm „Viișoara”, that the spring was restored and transformed into a beautiful and powerful water source. In the 1990s, thanks to the efforts of former Minister of Agriculture Anatol Gorodenko, a native of Viișoara, a gazebo and a Holy Crucifix were raised near the spring. Travelers passing along the Glodeni - Moara Domneasca route can stop and quench their thirst at Grandfather Ion Melentie Nemerenco's spring a man who left his mark on the village's history through the well he dug, perhaps even by his father. The details remain shrouded in time.



*„Domnesc” (Lordly)
Pond – a village jewel*

The pond, formerly known as Iazul „Domnesc” („Lordly Pond”) is a beautiful place for recreation and entertainment, fed by the Caldarușsha River. In the past, this pond was the largest in Moldova, covering an area of 400 hectares. Locals recall an incident in 1852 when the

pond, then covering 300 hectares, overflowed, flooding a significant part of the village's houses. Landowner Buznya allocated about 200 bundles of wool to construct a drain for the pond to maintain water levels. Subsequently, the pond dried up and was only restored in 1956-1957. After reconstruction in 1970, only 180 hectares remained. On the right bank of the pond stretches a line of spruces that attract tourists with their shade. The smooth and crystal-clear water from the spring called „At the stork” (La Co-

costârc) quenches thirst. The spring is adorned with a zinc-plated crane sculpture holding a cup in its beak, a gift from Physics teacher Georgy Bichek in 1983. The right bank also features a hill named „Dealul Morii” (Mill Hill), which earned its name from a mill that once stood there, owned by the noble Buznya. Legend has it that after heavy rains, water penetrated the base of the hill, causing it to roll down with the mill. From the „Dealul mori” there is a magnificent view of the village and its surroundings.





Crucifix at the Village Entrance

At the entrance to Vișoara stands a beautiful crucifix beside a neat well surrounded by flowers. This crucifix commemorates Bishop Dormidon of Edinet and Briceni, who passed away on December 31, 2006, due to an accident. Being a native of the village of Petrunya, Bishop Dormidon often visited Vișoara, a village of faithful people.

Church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel

From the village's foundation for several decades, residents attended the church in the neighboring village of Chuchulya. The construction date of the current church varies, with sources mentioning the 1920s and 1915. The locals claim that construction began in 1921, led by master builders invited from Khotin. The church was completed around 1928 and consecrated in the same year.

„Porozhan” Well and „Poiana Lupului” (Wolf’s Glade)

At the foot of the forest, brothers Vasile and Nicolae Zaporozhanu, along with other family members, decided to dig a well. They provided water to the thirsty and initiated a tradition: every Thursday after Easter, grandchildren clean the well, take care of it, and enjoy the surroundings. In Vișoara, nobody works in the fields on the Thursday after Easter; instead, they clean the wells. The well, known locally as „Porozhan”, remains a village landmark due to its cold, crystal-clear water. It is also associated with the enchanting glade named „Poiana Lupului”. This glade got its name because hungry wolves used to frequent it, especially during winter nights when the cold penetrated to the bones. The howls of the pack frightened the locals and their animals. Today, this glade is a little piece of paradise where you can find rare plant species, including the spotted tulip, white snowdrop, veynik, and the bihor melafira, found only in Romania and Hungary.







*Useful Information***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the village library.
Opening hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00. Contact person:
Angela Gorodenko. Tel. +37360331675.

Accommodation places:

Nemerenco Nadejda's residence, Viișoara village.
Tel. +373068360618.

Hostel, Chuchulya village (4 km). Contact person:
Ilie Calistru. Tel. +37369298679.

Dining places:

„Valdelan” Store: Open daily 8:00-21:00; Tel. +37324957490.

„Irina Nemerenco” Store: Open daily 7:30-20:00;
Tel. +37324957282.

„Market” Store: Open 8:00-21:00; Tel. +37368269800.

„API” Store: Open 10:00-15:00. Contact person:
Veclaslav Ailoai. Tel. +37368040684.

Strungari Roman Farm: Production and sale of sheep cottage
cheese and meat. Open 7:30-20:00; Tel. +37362106001

Dogotari Georgiy's Farm: Poultry farm.
Open 10:00-16:00; Tel. +3736271962.

Health Center, opening hours: 8:00-16:00.
Tel. +37324957232



BALATINA



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE BALATINA



*Turistic logo
Balatina village*

Balatina Village was officially documented on June 19, 1429. In Vladimir Nicu's publication „Localities of Moldova in Documents and Old Books”, Volume I, it is stated that Balatina Village was previously known as Demeanouți, and also had the names Zădureni, Tomești, and Bălteni.

Origin of the name Balatina. According to the historical account of Anatol Eremia, a specialist in toponymy, it is considered that the etymology of the toponym comes from the Ukrainian word „boloto”, meaning swamp or marsh.

It is noteworthy that the spelling of the village's name varies slightly in existing documents from its

initial attestation until today, and three variants can be observed: Balotina, Bolotina, and the current variant, Balatina

In most documents from the first half of the 19th century, it is written as Balotina, but there are sources that note the current variant of the name - Balatina.

Undoubtedly, we can say that the settlements of the village occurred much earlier, over 14,000 years ago, according to archaeological researches. The first permanent human settlements in the area of present-day Balatina date back to the Roman period when the inhabitants cultivated the land, grew vineyards, practiced various domestic crafts and raised livestock. They built large wooden houses coated with clay.

After the houses of the initial settlement, which was right on the bank of the Prut River, suffered significant damage due to severe floods, the village changed its location slightly uphill (to its current location), where the fear of floods no longer persisted



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

*„Herons’s Land”*

„Herons’s Land” is a unique colony of over 2000 waterfowl birds nesting on oak trees, forming part of the „Pădurea Domnească” nature reserve. The oak forest area where grey herons nest is not very large, covering about 1 hectare. Nowhere else in Moldova can you

find such a dense population of birds in such a small arrea. These birds are notable because if their chicks fail to fly on their first attempt, they are abandoned.

It is the most atypical and humid area within the Reserve, being a forest habitat of the oak forest in the Prut Valley. It is located 3 km from Balatina village and 0.8 km from the Prut River. This place has





become home to three species of water birds: the grey heron (*Ardea Cinerea*), the little egret (*Egretta garzeta*), and the night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), which nest on trees. The grey heron is used to nest in trees, if it doesn't like the reeds, as evidenced by the large number of nesting pairs in the colony. The same can be said for the little egret and night heron, which prefer to nest in mixed colonies. However, the fact that a large number of pairs prefer this habitat (oak forest) makes „Herons' Land” a unique phenomenon for Moldova. Of the approximate-

ly 1000 pairs, the grey heron dominates, leaving only a few pairs of little egret and night heron. Up to 18 nests are located on each tree at a height of 15-20 m, creating the impression of a suspended nursery. A total of 332 nests have been recorded. The birds are present from late March to early October. The colony covers an area of 3000 m², plot nr 17 of the reserve and is strictly protected, with limited access to avoid disturbing the birds during the nesting period. Before the construction of the Costești-Stânca dam, „Herons' Land” was annually flooded by

the waters of the Prut River. After regulating the riverbed, floods became rarer, and bird droppings contributed to soil acidification, leading to the drying of trees over time. As the trees dry out, the nests move, so „Herons' Land” changes its location and boundaries slightly each year.

Wooden Church at the Balatina Village Cemetery

The wooden ship-shaped church in Balatina village, dedicated

to the „Entrance of the Virgin Mary”, was built in 1814-1815 on the initiative of locals. This initiative arose after a severe flood in the Prut Valley in 1813, where the initial sacred place was situated at that time. The flood swept it away together with other houses of the first village settlement due to a massive collapse of the riverbank. Within two years, the villagers managed to build the current wooden church with a stone foundation (sanctified in 1815). At the entrance, four columns with Ionic capitals and a staircase on the southern side were construct-



ed. The iconostasis features nine wooden columns adorned with royal icons and saints from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. All icons are bear Romanian inscriptions. The church's altar consists of an apse covered with shingles and clad with boards, having three side windows in the nave, and a bell tower on the narthex. Hence, the locals established a new settlement on the current territory, moving to the hillside of the new rural settlement where there was no longer a risk of flooding.

Above the entrance door, there is a small inscription in Russian: „By the will of Mikhail Ivanovich Bodarev, the year 1849”. The church was founded by the then owner of the surrounding land, Mikhail Ivanovich Bodarev, indicating that repairs were carried out in 1849. Inside the church, it has been preserved an icon of the Virgin Mary with a child in her arms covered in silver and precious stones, with the inscription «Dumitrașco Săcără 1778 / Mihail Bodarev 1832.» In the church's altar, there is a 1m by 0.7m icon depicting



the Virgin Mary in royal attire, holding the Savior in her arms. The predominant color is red. The Savior, in gilded garments, holds a scroll in his left hand and blesses with his right hand. Below is the inscription: „1815. This icon was painted by Constantin Soroceanu, for the forgiveness of sins. December 16”.

These elements can still be seen today as the church building has been well-preserved, situated in the cemetery area in the village Balatina, Glodeni. Mihail Bodarev was buried in the churchyard. After his death, the landowner Rozalia Clococeva arrived from Moscow and contributed to the church's restoration, but also initiated the construction of a new church.

The wooden church underwent its last repairs at the initiative of Archpriest Damian Junghina. In recent years, cosmetic repairs to the exterior have been done to preserve the church as a historical monument for the local population and tourists.

The stone church was founded in 1909 with the funds of Rosalia (Rallu) Klokocheva, the widow

Stone Church „Assumption of the Virgin Mary”

of General Klokochev from Moscow. Stone for construction was brought by locals on oxen-drawn wagons from the village of Pochiumbeni, Ryshkani district. The exterior of the church was completed in 1918, when the church's founder, Mihail Bodarev, had already passed away.

Shortly thereafter, the Russian founder Rosalia Klokocheva also died, mourned by all for her kindness and great deeds left in this corner of the Balatina plain. After some delay, probably due to financial constraints, the work continued with parishioners' of that difficult time great effort and dedication.

Construction of the Church continued after the transfer of the priest Vasily Skaletsky (1881-1917), being appointed by the new priest Andrey Antonovich (1917-1926), whose Christian obedience ensured the continuation of the construction works.

For the first time the church was consecrated only in 1924 by Bishop Visarion Puyu (1879-1964),





works, it is worth noting the ancient icon «Mother of Jesus,» preserved to this day.

Monument to Romanian Heroes Fallen for the Reintegration of the Country in the First World War

The monument to Romanian heroes who sacrificed their lives in the First World War was erected during the interwar period and initially placed in Balatina Public Garden. This memorial was raised at the initiative of Nicolae Bălcescu, head of the Cultural Center in 1937 «in memory of the heroes who sacrificed themselves the Country, Nation, Throne, and Faith». (Inscription on the front side of the monument).

Another text is engraved slightly below on the front side: „Rest, rest in peace, immortal heroes! ...from your sacrifice, a new life will be born, as drops of your blood, like dew drops, will revive people who raised you, brave fallen warriors, immortal heroes!...”

On the left, right, and back sides of the monument, names of heroes fallen in the First World War are inscribed. After the establishment of Soviet power in 1940, to prevent its destruction, at the initia-

tive of a group of faithful people, the monument was relocated to the current Church «Assumption of the Virgin Mary» in Balatina, where it remained until 2021. In 2021, at citizens' request and Decision No. 2/17 of Balatina Local Council, the monument to the fallen heroes of the First World War was repositioned to the village center. The original wooden cross, initially resembling a tree trunk, symbolizing the tree of life with profound spiritual meaning that expresses the harmony between the Divine and the earthly, Heaven and earth, Creator and Creation. The symbol that best conveys the phrase „on earth as it is in heaven”. Due to the deterioration of the wooden Cross over the years, the upper part of the «hat» and the Cross were replaced with stone elements from the Cosauti. The monument, consisting of five stone blocks, was relocated to its

current location. The project for the monument restoration was developed by architect Mihail Andriesh and approved by the Monument Commission of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research with approval No. 03 dated May 28, 2021. The restoration process was completed according to the decision of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic Moldova on August 7, 2021.

Old Stone Quarry

The old stone quarry is located near the village, on the Balatina-Lipovăț road. Inside the location where stone was extracted from 1956 to 1991, an aquatic basin formed, which is currently drying up, due to limited rainfall.

This place attracts people who enjoy spending leisure time in nature, engaging in extreme sports. Across the road, there is a forest on the hilly side of Balatina village, leading to the village of Cahzba.







*Useful information:***Useful information:****Dining facilities:**

„Orhideea” restaurant - village Balatina, tel. +37368474627

„Coriana prim”, Grocery shop, tel. +37324941157

„Moscalenco Galina”, Grocery shop - Balatina village,
tel. +37324942108

„Nicolai Odajiu”, Grocery shop -Balatina village,
tel. +37324942133

„Ticuxon” Bar – Balatina village, tel. +37324941532

Medical facilities:

Family Doctors Center, Balatina village, working hours -
8:00AM - 5:00PM (Monday-Friday), tel. +37324941486

Emergency Medical Assistance Station – Balatina village,
tel. +37324941403

„Glodeni pharmacy”, tel. +37324941241

Other services:

„Lukoil Moldova”, Gas Station, - Balatina village,
tel. +37324941348

Post Office, working hours - 8:00AM - 5:00PM (Monday-Friday)
tel. +37324941551



COBANI



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE COBANI



*Travel logo
Cobani village*

Officially considered founded in 1702, Cobani village has a history rooted in the migration of its inhabitants from another village, Zubrești, later renamed Vasileuții de Jos. In the first documented attestation, June 3, 1374, the village was known as Zubrești. In 1473, during the reign of Stephen the Great, we find it in documents with the name of Vasileuti. In another decree issued by Eremia Movila on May 24, 1602, the village was called -Vasileutii pe Prut. In the same document it is mentioned that, in May 1600, the fourth column of Mihai Viteazul's army, formed by Baba Novac's haiducs, had set up camp near Vasileutii pe

Prut, not far from the market town of Ștefănești. After Mihai Viteazul's triumphant entry in Iasi and his declaration as ruler of Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldova, and Eremia Movila's flight with the Polish army to Hotin, the fourth column, led by Baba Novac, set out in pursuit of the enemy. One of the trade roads connecting Iasi with Hotin passed near the village of Vasileuții pe Prut. The locals called this road – Hotin Trail.

Near the village, the Prut River was crossed through Vadul Scruntari, which meaning a sanctified place. Here the riverbanks are gentler and seem to show a crossing point. After crossing the river through the ford, Baba Novac, following a long and forced march, decided to halt for rest and army regrouping. For this purpose, he chose a field near the village of Vasileuti, as the field is dominated by two high mounds from which the surroundings can be overseen for miles. The western side of the field is bordered by bridges on the Prut River banks.





On the border between the forest and the field are the „La fontal” springs with a high water flow, which in turn, feed a lake, once large and rich in fish. The eastern part of the field is bordered by the Prut tributary, the Camenca stream, where horses could drink and in the nearby meadows they could graze. Baba Novac’s column was a cavalry corps. It is for these reasons that this field was chosen, which bears his name to this day.

Due to the floods caused by repeated Prut River overflow, a large part of the village’s inhabitants relocated to the current location of Cobani village. The relocation was due to the fact that the old village was located too close to the Prut River and was constantly flooded during periods when the river overflowed its banks. As a result, the villagers founded a new village 2 km away from the Prut River’s bank, on the right bank of

the Camenca stream, at the foot of the steep cliffs, which was named Stânca Mare (Big Rock). The old hearth continued to be called Vasileuții de Jos, and the new village Vasileuții Mari. Until the mid-19th century, the locality was also called Cubani. One of the most credible legends about the village explains why it is called Cubani. It is said that the ancestors of today's inhabitants lived in Vasileuți village on the Prut River. And to cross the river, people had to pay money to the boatman. These Vasileuți began to be called Vasileuți cu bani (Vasileuti with money). The name Cubani persisted through history until 1974 when Soviet authorities, for unclear reasons, changed the name to Cobani by government decree. Documents, substantiating this government decision, were found neither in the national nor in the party archives.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

*Big Rock*

The ridge of cliffs near the village consists of three parts, with the one directly overlooking the village and the valley of the Camenca River is called Big Rock, measuring over 1000 m in length, 100 m in width and with a relative height of 40 m. The Camenca stream embraces the

reef from three sides. This natural fortress was inhabited by people in the Stone Age. Nowadays, it serves as a refuge for primary steppe plants. Since ancient times, it is believed that Big Rock is the protector of the village, shielding it from natural disasters. For this reason, our ancestors also placed a Cross on the rock, pointing towards the village church, with the mission of protecting the village.

*Natural monument
„One hundred mounds”*

The natural monument „One hundred mounds” is located between the villages of Cobani and Braniște. It represents a hilly relief along the Prut River and occupies six terraces near the Prut. It is the only place in Europe where there is a concentration of sediments from ancient seas that once bathed this territory - the Tortonian and Sarmatian Sea. Thus, according to one version, this relief was formed 10-20 million years

ago. Other scholars argue that this natural phenomenon formed due to landslides and land collapses, which tore pieces from the rocks that made up the hill, as well as due to floods, which gave the hills their shape.

Actual studies began to be published after 1927, but the first mention of this phenomenon was made by Dimitrie Cantemir reported on this phenomenon in his work „Description of Moldova” (1716), calling this area „Centum Monticuli”. In general, this valley has given birth to many legends and myths, believed by locals to this day. Ac-



cording to some of them, these places are the burial sites of the Getae-Dacians. These hills resemble the mounds raised by the ancient inhabitants of these places, burying their soldiers there.

Despite being called «One hundred mounds» there are actually many more. According to some estimates, their number is over 3 500. All mounds are located in a sector with a length of more than 8 km and a width of 1.7 to 2.3 km.

The height of the mounds ranges from 3-5 to 60 m. The area between the mounds is filled with dozens of picturesque lakes and springs with crystal-clear water. In general, the represents a lunar landscape covered with rich steppe vegetation.

The highest mound is located at the intersection of three roads and is 60 m high. It is called the 'Gypsy Mound', where, according to legend, a jug with gold coins is buried. This location provides the best view of this natural monument, especially in the afternoon or evening when the sun is not glaring and does not interfere with photography.



La Fontal Lake

Lake La Fontal is one of the largest lakes in the country, with an area of 24 ha, which was formed by the overflow of the Prut River. The specificity of this lake lies in the fact that it is fed by several ascending springs, rare in the Republic of Moldova as being with highly

mineralized water. The name of the lake comes from the springs on its shore, „Fontal” being synonymous with the word „Fountain”. Presently its surface is more reduced and is supplied with water from smaller springs.

Museum of History and Ethnography

The museum is the business card and Casa Mare (Grand House - a particular room that is decorated in the most beautiful and pleasant way) of the locality, having a rich and varied collection of exhibits. The museum reflects events from 1939 to the present day. The exhibits, totaling 2003, were collected from the villagers, including 28 items from the Cucuteni-Tripolye culture discovered and restored during archaeological excavations in the locality.

Working hours: Tuesday - Saturday from 08:00 – to 16:00, Saturday - Sunday from 09:00 – to 15:00, Lupuşor Tamara, tel.+37379606354

Wooden church of St. Archangel Michael and Gabriel

Built in 1838, it is one of the oldest churches in the country, with preserved foundations, surrounded by a stone wall. It was recently externally renovated.

Priest - Sobuleac Grigore.

The church can be visited every day.

Contact person: Lupuşor Angela,
tel. +37369045904

Mihai Viteazul Monument

In 2021, a bronze bust of the Voivode Mihai Viteazul was raised commemorating his rest together with his soldiers here in the year 1600.

This fact prompted the authorities to honour the great voivode and the unifier of principalities in 1601, with a bronze bust placed in the park in front of the town hall.



*Melnic-Plută family
School Museum*

Alexandru Melnic worked as a teacher at the local gymnasium. He specialized in weaving plant fibers, such as: straw, papyrus, and rush and working with natural materials. For several years he expose

his works at various exhibitions in the country and abroad. In 2007 he received the honorary title of the best folk craftsman in Moldova. Livia Melnic, his wife, is engaged in embroidery, crocheting and artistic sewing with folk motifs: towels, broboade (large wool basses), tablecloths and lace bedspreads. In 2021, Mr. A. Melnic's death, an art gallery was inaugurated in the gymnasium.







*Useful information***Tourist Information Centre:**

The Tourist Information Centre is located in the village library.
Contact person: Toaca Viorica, tel. +37368524357, e-mail:
bibliotecacobani@gmail.com,

Accommodation places:

„Popas Regal”, agro-pension. Administrator - Olga Cogălniceanu. tel. +37368999263

„La Fontal”, Guests house.

Contact person - Țarigradschi Valeriu, tel. +37324924998

„Casa rurală Catinca”, Guests house.

Contact person – Zama Victor, tel. +37379400621

Food places:

Popas Turistic „Natali”,

Working hours 15:00 - 22:00,

Contact person: Grijuc Zoia, tel. +37369079450

Danila Vasile - apples, tel. +37360496651

Geceanu Iurie - cottage cheese and sheep cheese,
tel. +37368316073

Stichia Marchel - cottage cheese and sheep cheese,
tel. +37369873665

Zama Victor - honey, tel. +37379400621

Tsurcanu Radu - honey, tel. +37376731809



CAMENCA



HISTORY OF THE COMMUNE CAMENCA



*Turistic logo
Cobani village*

Camenca commune includes 4 localities: Camenca, Molești, Brînzani and Butești.

The village of Camenca was first documented in 1604. According to the legend, village's location is located was part of the Golia monastery estate from Iași, a property reportedly gifted by the Moldavian ruler Vasile Lupu. The initial settlement of Camenca was in a gorge formed by the Camenca River, a place currently known as „Among the rocks” and was originally named Lucăceni. As the village was far from the

water, the community relocated downstream, along the Camenca River, to its present place. Due to its proximity to the Camenca River, the settlement adopted the name Camenca. The original village center is still visible today, especially in spring when plowed fields reveal yellowish squares where houses once stood. The first families to settle to this place were Albot and Camerzan.

The village of Brînzani is documented in 1817 and was founded on the estates of the Ciugureanu and Bantoș boyars. According to elders, residents originated from the Brînzani village, Edineț district. They also mention that during the interwar period, most villagers were traveling to celebrate holidays in the Brînzani village in Edineț. This is confirmed by the shared surnames between families in both villages: Turchină, Morari, Gurău, Popescu, Rîmbu, Mașnicu. The village of Butești was first recorded on June 28, 1637. Situated along the Camenca River, it



is home to the state protected natural area „Cheile Butești” („Keys of Butești”) or „Cliffs” covering 110ha, characterised by a coral reef and through which the Camenca River carved a gorge. Within these cliffs there is a cave giving the village its name. Legend says that the Turks hid a chest of gold in the cave. Hearing this, a certain boyar named Butescu came later with a group of people, found the chest and shared the gold. Some

of people chose to stay in the area, hoping to find more gold. In honor of their leader they named the village Butești, a name that remained until to this day.

The village of Molești was founded in 1720 by the boyar Costache Molea. In 1923 the village had 27 households and 108 inhabitants. During the Soviet period, the Molești became part of the Brînzani collective farm, specialised in cattle breeding.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Rabin's Spring

In the center of the village stands a beautiful cliff with a cave, locally known as a natural monument. At the foot cliff is Rabin's Spring established by a Jew in 1700 within an oak trunk.

Also known as the Cold Spring at the foot of the rock, it is said that near this spring, there used to

be a Jewish market where artisans crafted clay objects. This fair was intersected by two main roads: one leading to Cernauti and the other to Botosani. Travelers were stopping at this spring to quench their thirst. It is said that those who drank from this spring remained living in the village. There was also a Jewish cemetery nearby, evidenced by tombstones with inscriptions that are still discernible.



At the initiative of the locals, a Crucifixion was built near the spring. The spring is known for having the clearest and best water in the locality.

Monument to the deported victims

Monument to the deported victims
On July 5, 2014, in the Camenca commune, Glodeni district, took place the inauguration of a monument in memory of the victims of deportations during the communist occupation regime. Between 1940-1951, almost all the households in the village, hard-working people and good housekeepers, who loved their land and their nation were deported.

In the middle of the night they were loaded onto wagons and taken far from home. Entire families - old people, women, children - were deported, with documents stating „deported for life”.

However, after years of suffering, some of them survived and returned home.

Butești Cave

Butești Cave is a very picturesque and interesting rock formation, about 2 km long and 60- 125m wide. On the side facing the village there is a cave about 9m deep and 2.5m high.

This area is full of legends and stories. Local people narrate that over two centuries ago, these places were covered by forests. Previously, a massive snake-shaped rock, with a cave at its edge once rested here.



It is said that the rock was once a Turkish garrison. The scent of gold attracted many treasure-seeking adventurers Boyar Butescu, an archaeologist by profession, gathered a large group of needy people and began searching for treasures. They worked hard, with enthusiasm, until the beginning of winter. Some of them could not endure, while others remained.

Finally, they found those treasures and shared the Turkish gold fraternally. Squire Boyar Butescu left, but his people remained to

live near the cave, believing they would find more gold. They established households and in honour of their leader they named their village - Butești. And it has remained Butești until today.

In the historical novel „Elena of Moldova”, authored anonymously, there is a mention of one of Stefan the Great’s battles with the Tatars: „Facing the enemy they set out at sunset. At the forefront of the army rode Stefan Voda and the henchman Boldur, protected on both sides by 24 fusiliers.





Towards morning, they reached Butești, a village where the Camenca stream splits a high rock in two. Vodă stopped the army and surveyed the surroundings, the steep, vertically split walls of the cliff. Vodă left the hatman with a

St. Mary Magdalene Parish

small detachment on the crest of the cliff, while he concealed the other part of the army in the forest. Seeing the army on the rock, the Tatars attacked but fell into the abyss, and Stephen Vodă with his army crushed them definitively.”

The church is a holy place with divine Godly grace, where Christians go to pray and give thanks to the Lord. The church is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. The church is located in the centre of the village and to this day Christians go there to pray. Located in the center of the village, it initially comprised two churches - one Orthodox and one Catholic.

The first church, built of wood in 1817 served as a boyar market due to the large population. On the initiative of the Christians, a new church was built between 1990 and 1993. The first Pastor of the Church was Father Victor . Since 1997, the church has been renovated and overseen by Priest Igor Soroceanu.



*Church of the Assumption of
the Virgin Mary in Butești*

Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Butești

The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was built in 1842, taking 12 years until its completion in 1854. It was built of stone in the shape of a ship. In 1957 it was restored by craftsmen from Cernauti. During the communist regime after 1972, it was closed. In 1988, with the support of the entire village, the church in Butești was repaired and

reopened when Holy Places were accessible again.

*Folk craftsman
- Nicolae Popa*

Nicolae Popa, residing in the village of Butești, is a skilled craftsman in wood, metal, and stone. He enjoys crafting various ornaments and decorations, displaying an interest in old objects that he decorates his property with.





In addition to this activity, Nicolae Popa and his wife, Tatiana, own 3.5 hectares of land where they cultivate fruit trees, berries, and various varieties of table grapes organically, without the use of chemicals. The harvest, obtained fresh and flavorful, is sold

directly from the field. Tatiana is an excellent cook who welcomes guests with traditional local dishes and invites them to enjoy a glass of homemade wine. Every tourist visiting Butești Cave has the opportunity to make a stop at this household and taste the local delights.



*Useful information***Tourist Information Centre**

The Tourist Information Centre is located in the House of Culture. Opening hours are from 10:00 to 14:00.

Contact person - Mrs Zina Kamerzan. Tel. +37360653160

Food places:

„NAZREMAC” shop, Camenca village. Opening hours 8:00 - 21:00. Kamerzan Arkady, tel. +37369179300

„Alimentara” shop, Camenca village. Opening hours 8:00 - 13:00, 16:00 - 22:00. Contact person – Mrs Cibotar Oksana. Tel. +37361011355

„Alimentara” shop, Brînzeni village. Opening hours 8:00 - 13:00, 16:00 - 22:00. Contact person – Mrs Cibotar Oksana. Tel. +37361011355

Bar. Camenca village. Working hours 8:00 - 13:00, 16:00 - 22:00. Contact person – Mrs Larisa Mashniku. Tel. +37367413200



OLD DURUITO AREA



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



*Turistic logo
Old Duruitoarea village*

Legends say that the name of the village comes from the Duruita river, which for many centuries flowed into the Chuhur River, a tributary of the Prut.

The village was only documented in 1755, when a Polish ambassador made a stop here on his way to Constantinople.

In 1772 Duruitoarea appeared on the map of the Russian general Baner. In 1835 the estate of Duruitoarea village passed into the possession of Păscăuți Monastery, Botoșani district. At that time three families in the village held Austrian citizenship,

the number of peasant courts amounted to 50. Ioan Cuzmiță, a landowner, had large lands in the valley of the Duruita stream and beyond Chuhur.

Duruitoarea has preserved two century-old buildings. In one of them, an elementary school operated for many decades. In 1892, there was a single-room parish school here. It was owned by the nobleman Gheorghe Prekup. On December 1, 1901, the teacher appointed here was Gavril Hagachevski from Danu village. In 1933, in Duruitoarea, there was an elementary school with 90 students. The teachers were Eleonora and Evdochia Buzdugan, Gheorghe Seul, and Vasile Ketraru.

Two teachers who remained in the memory of many generations of Duruitoarea's children led a long and successful career: Vasile Mereuță, the school director, and teacher Eftim German (Haim Itzkovich).

The school building dates back to the 19th century. Thick walls, a massive oak floor, large doors, the high bridge... Everything as





before. Now the museum operates in this building.

Another building - the visiting card of Duruitoarea village is the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. It was built by the villagers in 1806. It was made of wood, coated with clay and covered with thatch. The stone church was built on the site of the old one in 1848 with the zeal of the priest Theodor Constantin

Onufrievich and the parishioners. The construction has the shape of a cross and was consecrated on November 8, 1848.

Among the cult objects in the church, it is worth mentioning the oak iconostasis, purchased by the parishioners and installed in 1921, and two ancient icons „Virgin Mary” (1935) and „Saint Archangel Michael” (1937).





TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Duruitoarea Veche Cave

At the confluence of the Chuhur and Prut rivers the pulse of beats back to the Lower Palaeolithic era, when people used tools made of carved stone. Here lies the earliest monument of human history in the territory of the Republic of Moldova –Duruitoarea Veche.

On the outskirts of the village

of Duruitoarea Veche village, in a limestone massif, a cave was discovered that extends for 49m along the ridge from north to south direction and consists of three chambers. The dome's height does not exceed 8m.

Remains of a Palaeolithic settlement have been identified here with traces various prehistoric human cultures: flint tools, bones of fossilized animals, fire pits, and more.





The site was discovered in 1958 by archaeologist Nicolae Chetaru. Over nearly two decades, it was studied by groups of archaeologists, geologists and palaeontologists. Three authentic levels of Palaeolithic human habitation (IV, III, and II) were found with numerous skeletal remains of mammals and birds from the Pleistocene epoch. The archaeological fragments and animal bones from

the IV and III levels date back to the Lower Paleolithic, Acheulean period, associated with the Taya culture. Their geological age is estimated at 160-100 thousand years, making the IV and III levels the oldest Paleolithic sites in the Republic of Moldova. The Upper Paleolithic settlement of a hunter-gatherer, discovered at level II, belongs to the local Middle Grave or Early Epigravettian culture, dating back approximately 20-18 thousand years BCE. Numerous flint, horn, and bone tools were collected from this level, along with about 10 thousand skeletal remains, representing 54 species of mammals and 29 species of birds. A lower jawbone with several molars of a Paleolithic Neanderthal physical type was also found here.

Most of the bones belong to mammals hunted for food: broad-hoofed horse, wild ass, bison, northern deer, gigantic deer, mammoth, hare, groundhog, etc. Other animals were hunted for their fur, such as: beaver, badger, wild cat, jaguar, common fox, marten, lynx, etc. And finally, animals that

posed a danger to the settlement's inhabitants were killed: wolf, wild boar, panther, woolly rhinoceros, cave hyena, etc. At the northern part of the reef, in 2004, bones of a Holarctic mammoth were excavated, very rare find in the current territory of the Republic of Moldova.

Duruitoarea gorge

Duruitoarea gorge is a geological or paleontological natural monument located in the eastern part of the village, on the left bank of the Chuhur River, a tributary of the Prut River. It covers an area of 6.63 ha.

The Duruitoarea reef, cave and gorge hold high scientific and educational value, representing an interest in studying the geological and faunal history of the late Neozoic era, as well as the history of human society at the national and European levels.

Costești-Stâncă reservoir

The Costești-Stâncă Reservoir is a lake covering an area of 590 square km, situated on the Prut River at the border between the Republic of Moldova and Romania. The Stâncă-Costesti Hydroelectric Power Station was built on the Prut River, near the village of Stâncă (Botoșani County, Romania), and the city of Costesti in the Republic of Moldova. Construction began in 1973, and the hydroelectric power station was officially opened on November 4, 1978, with its final acceptance in 1979. The construction site is located 576 km from the river's mouth, where the width of the main riverbed, about 3-4 km, is narrowed and reduced to approximately 400 meters by limestone reefs, practically forming a natural dam. The Costești Hydro-Energetic Node is a strategic object for our country's economy, producing electric power and mitigating floods. The hydroelectric power station is located on the territory of two countries: Republic of Moldova and Romania.

If it weren't for the Romanian shore in the distance, you might





think you're on a seaside. For centuries, the Prut River tried to break through the towering cliffs of Costesti-Stanca. Now, as far as the eye can see, it's continuous water. The view would truly amaze you if you didn't know that beneath this blue sea lie over 20 villages, including Costesti, Sharbaka, Dummen, and Old Kukoneshti Vechi.

Museum

Museum The building housing the museum was built in 1892 as a one-room church-parish school. Its patron was the nobleman George Prekup. In 2016-2017, based on a project funded



by the CHOICE/EU program, the public organization Moștenitorii (Balti) created the Duruitoarea Veche museum complex, including the museum, cave, and gorge. On June 11, 2017, the opening of the main exhibition of the History



Section of the museum took place, featuring archaeology (Paleolithic artifacts and tools of prehistoric humans, provided by the National Museum of Archaeology and the National History Museum); Cucuteni pottery pieces and household items from the Syntana-de-Mures culture, donated by private individuals; an ethnography collection gathered for almost 20 years from the villages in northern Moldova, including wooden objects, ceramics and household items. Additionally, the museum presents a collection of icons and glass paintings created in a rural painting circle launched in 2018.

„Rock of Love”

A rock, towering over 50 meters in height, is situated on the left bank of the Chuhur River within the village's territory.

The name „The Rock of Love” originates from an ancient legend about two young lovers. He was the handsome son of a landowner,

the only child of his parents and the future heir to the entire family estate and she was a beautiful but poor girl from a peasant family. As they belonged to different social classes, they met secretly in the evenings among large stones familiar to them since childhood. After several months of meetings, the young man went to talk to his father and seek his parents' blessing for their marriage. However, the father did not allow him to marry the poor girl, saying, „It's better to remain unmarried than to bring shame upon the entire village". Devastated, by his father's

words, the young man agreed with his beloved to continue meeting in the same places during the full moon. They climbed the highest peak, removed the grass rings they had given each other the night before, placed them on a rock, kissed and... jumped into the abyss. According to the legend, they remained inseparable for ever: she turned into a rock, and he - into the river at its foot.

From this rock a wide panorama of rare beauty unfolds over 10-15km: the Chuhur river with hundreds of fishermen on the bank, nearby villages, plains beyond the





Prut River in Romania, thousands of wildflowers, butterflies of different colours and „Dubrava”, an oak forest, the most loved and desired place for tourists.

Legend of the Duruitoarea Village

It is said that thousands of years ago, this land was a place of meadows and clearings, where animals freely roamed – boars, rhinocer-

oses, deer, wild boars, herds of horses, and so on. The only occupation of the tribes living here was hunting. Having an abundance of food, they felt safe and secure. However, over time, the scarcity of food resources led to increased hostility and aggression among people. Deadly clashes between tribes became frequent. To protect themselves they began to build defensive walls of stone and forest logs and made their paths to the village through mountain ranges with sharp-peaked rocks laby-





rinths, steep banks and deep crevices. They also had watchtowers created in caves or towers, where guards day and night ensured the security and peace of the tribe. It was precisely during this time that two young people from opposing tribes, somehow, met and

fell in love. The girl's name was Duruita, and the boy's name – Chuhur. She, tender and playful like a fawn, with blue eyes like the spring sky, always smiling and laughing as birds stopped flying to listen to her. Her heart was always joyful and tender. He, calm

and thoughtful, tall and strong, not very talkative, loved to listen to her voice, looking at her with great love.

Sneaking away from their villages, coming through paths unknown to anyone, they met on the Cigleu -the peak of the rock, where looking up the entire universe opened. Here, in the high cool grass, they were gazing at the deep sky and the dance of the stars and in the morning eagerly anticipating the next night, they ran back to their villages. But once the young couple fell asleep, and at dawn, they were noticed and captured by the guards. Bound in chains, they were condemned to eternal separation.

Chuhur was taken far away, to the north-north, into an open field and tied to oak stakes driven into the ground, exposed to the sun without food or water. He became prey to crows, scorched by the sun, tormented by winds and rains. But he did not feel such pain. The thought that he would never see his beloved again tormented his

soul. Men do not cry. Only a tear of deep sorrow fell to the ground and in that place, a stream formed. Thinking only of his beloved, the stream flowed farther and deeper, bypassing obstacles and overcoming the rocky ridge, striving to reach the place of Chigleu.

Duruita was bound not far from the village, in a place hidden from prying eyes. Day after day, Duruita cried until her pure and innocent tears turned into a stream, splitting the rock and forming a gorge. Like Chihur's stream, it also aimed for Chigleu. If you listen attentively on quiet nights, at the bottom of the gorge, you can hear Duruita's whisper: «Chihur - Chihur - Chihur.» And to this day, Chihur and Duruita meet at the foot of their beloved Chigleu, where the stars and the moon come close to the earth, illuminating their path.

And even today, on summer nights, those who carry True Love in their hearts, can hear Duruita's whispers and see, on the water's surface, the light in Chihur's sad, but happy eyes.





*Useful information:***Tourist Information Centre**

Tourist Information Centre is located in the museum.

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10:00-17:00,

tel. +37379848077, +37367348211

Lodgings:

„Hanul cu noroc”, guest house - c. Duruitoarea, contact person Nicolae Moskalu. tel. +37379848077, +37379000526.

„La hanul lui Gheorghe”, guest house - v. Duruitoarea, contact person Nicolae Moskalu. Duruitoarea, contact person Gheorghe Rusu tel. +373 69133362,

„Lago Vista”, guest house - Costești, tel +37367487909, contact person Alina Melinteanu

Catering outlets:

„La hanul lui Gheorghe”, ceremonial hall - v. Duruitoarea, tel +373 69133362, contact person Gheorghe Rusu

Shop **„Safir Market”** - Costesti,

tel. +373 256 32 569, contact person Svetlana Katz.

Gheorghe Negru farm, peasant specialities, Duruitoarea village, tel +373076881983

Folk craftsmen:

Sergiu Brichag - glass painting, Duruitoarea village, tel +37367348211

Gheorghe Negru - furniture (rustic style), Duruitoarea village, tel +373076881983



VĂRATIC



THE HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



Travel logo Veratic village

Veratic village is located in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, in the Ryshkan district, on the Chuhur River.

The village traces its origins back to the year 1613. The name of the village comes from the word „Vărat” (summer pasture for sheep) because this area was used as a pasture for the herds of cattle owned by the Stroescu landowner. His possessions extended from Lipcani to Glodeni, Tîrnova and Bălţi.

The initial dwellings were huts, later followed by dugouts. The first settlements were on the left bank of the Chuhur River, around

the old cemetery, as indicated by inscriptions on tombstones written in Slavic script in the Romanian language. The early inhabitants included the Gangur, Mihai and Savanu families. The village was destroyed after the Battle of Stălineşti on the Prut River in 1711.

At that time, residents began building houses on the right bank of Chuhur River, and for a while, the Turks lived in the yard of the village owner. The village acquired the Turkish name „Tărăbuşeni” during the Turkish raids and the oppression of landlords. Some Veratic villagers fled to a «better» landlord in the village of Hesneşti-Mare in the Bălţi district.

Around 1807-1808, the estate of the landlord Gavriil Galagan appeared in the village. There were about 100-130 small peasant straw houses in the village. In 1828-1830, more than half of the village's population died from plague and cholera.





1866 - 41 children were born in the village and 61 died, 41 of them from cholera and plague

1866 - The People's School of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment was opened in the village.

1875 - Peasants were required to go to the church built in 1822.

1892 - Landowner M. Ryshkan owned 520 desiatinas of land in Veratic. Boyar D. Galagan - 383 desiatinas.

1893 - Boyar Simion Miron built a house, later sold to monks for a school for 7,000 rubles. The school had 12-15 children from prosperous peasant families and priests from villages such as Veratic, Horodiște,

Cuconeștii Vechi, etc.

1896 - There were 9 horses at the post office.

1904 - The village had 158 houses and 1120 residents.

1909-1911 - Stolypin's reform. Many peasants went bankrupt, selling their land to the new «boyar» residents of the village - George Pleshka, Dumitru Motelika, Simion Miron, each of whom had 50-70 hectares of land.

1911 - The first construction of the telephone line Skulen-Brețușeni, which was supposed to pass through Veratic.

1913 - A one-class school with one teacher was functioning, funded by the monastery

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

*„Țâglău” (Cliff) - Veratic’s
Coat of Arms*

The cliff is surrounded by the waters of the Chuhur River on two sides, while a fairly deep cave, known as „Odaia” (Room), is nestled on the northern side. Until 1978, the Chuhur River followed its usual course around this cliff. The current view is a result of the construction of the Costești-Stîncă hydroelectric power station. A massive boulder was detached from the highest point of this cliff in 1946. Locals named this place «La bolohan» (At the boulder), a favorite spot for children who come here to swim.

When viewed from afar and at different angles, the «Boulder» takes on various peculiar forms: a lion next to a human skull, a turtle, a dog, or a flattened crocodile. Since there was once the Sarmatian Sea in this area in the distant past, various rock formations can still be found—this place is not fully explored by archaeologists. Numerous medic-



inal plants such as thyme, yarrow, chicory, and wild strawberries can also be found here. It’s a wonderful place for fishing, fresh air, and enjoying the beauty of nature.



„Snake Waterfall”

Many years ago, the villagers gave this name to the waterfall because many snakes were found in its water. The waterfall consists of three tiers: the first - the smallest, the second - larger, and the third - the largest. On both sides of the waterfall, two huge caves, one of which is called „Căsoaia” (The Lair), open wide.

„The Lair” Cave

Named so because to enter, you have to crawl on your stomach, after which you find yourself in a huge square-shaped space. The cave walls are black from smoke. Locals tell stories that during wars, residents of nearby villages hid in this cave. Few dare to enter this cave due to fear of darkness and snakes, and those who did come out dirty from ash. It is said that the deeper you go into the cave, the harder it is to breathe due to a lack of oxygen, and torches gradually dim until they go out.



Chuhur River

The Chuhur River flows through the villages of Drutse, Horodishte, Veratic and Duruitoarea, with its sources located north of Ocnitsa town. The Chuhur passes through Ocnitsa, Edinets and Ryshkan districts, eventually flowing into the Prut River north of the village of Duruitoarea. Its total length is 90 km.

The first document mentioning the river's name, „Ciuhuru”, dates back to April 17, 1429, and was found at the court of Prince Alexandru cel Bun. Scholars Anatol Eremia and Ion Dron believe that the Turanic hydronym „ciugur/ciuhur” means a pit (with water), ravine, hollow, depression in the Romanian language.

Monument „Holy Virgin Mary and Her Son Jesus Christ”

Built and raised in 2020-2021 by the initiative of the family of Ion and Lilia Rujină from Veratic, with financial support from all villagers and representatives of the diaspora

from European countries and the USA. The monument is located at the entrance to the village of Veratic, made of marble chips, and stands at a height of 7.5 meters.

Grandfather Luka's Well

One hundred years old, it is the oldest well in the village, named after Grandfather Luka, who dug it himself. Although the old man is long gone, the well remains a living memory of him. The well is located in the center of the village and was renovated in 2019. According to legend, any passerby who drinks from this well forever remains in



the village, as the water is enchanted, captivating the hearts of people and making them love the picturesque places of Veratic.

Memorial Plaque in Memory of Priest of the parish „St Hierarch Nicholas” Georg Benia and his wife Luba.

In 1941, these two individuals saved 26 Jews from neighboring villages sentenced to death by the Nazi army.

For this heroic act, on November 20, 2003, at the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, George and Lyuba Benya were posthumously honored with the title „Righteous Among the Nations”. In 2019, a memorial plaque was installed in the courtyard of the „Saint Hierarch Nicholas” church in Veratic, initiated by Ephim, the son of one of the saved Jews - Shapsa Royf.







*Tourist Information Centers***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the town hall. Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00-15:00. Contact persons: Tatiana Rusu, tel. 069044491; Nelly Adam, tel. 069017757.

Accommodation places**3-room apartment of the town hall of Veratic village,**

Contact: Dumitru Motelike, tel. 069754411.

„Casa Văratice” Guesthouse

Contact: Rodica and Viorel Kitik, tel. 068021409

„La Bunica” House in Văratice Village

Contact: Dina Brinza, tel. 078787020.

Ana Shkipor, Văratice Village

Contact: Ana Shkipor, tel. 060511386.

Liliana Plesca, Văratice Village

Contact: Liliana Plesca, tel. 060355674.

Nelly Adam, Văratice Village

Contact: Nelly Adam, tel. 069017757.

Andrei Miron, Văratice Village

Contact: Andrei Miron, tel. 069469376.

George Barîmb, contact: 069376584.**Dining Options:****„Kristina” Bar/Restaurant**

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday, 17:00-00:00. Contact: 069956743.

„Mironaş-Prosper” Store

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday, 8:00-22:00.

Contact: Andrei Miron, tel. 069469376.

„Benea Mihail” Store

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday, 8:00-22:00.

Contact: Tamara Benea, tel. 068658637.



HORODIȘTE



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



Travel logo Horodiste village

The village of Horodiste, documented on July 3, 1429, is located in the northwest of the Ryshkan district, on the right bank of the Chuhur River. In the northern part of the village, on the left bank,, there are picturesque rocks over 130m high called Kholm, with a huge cave called „Țiglău”, where local residents sought refuge in difficult times.

Archaeological excavations have proven that traces of human activity here appeared over 70,000 years ago when prehistoric people settled in a cave on the outskirts of the current village. During

the Neolithic era (10,000-12,000 years ago), several human settlements appeared in the vicinity. Residents built their houses from wicker and clay, were busy with cattle farming, agriculture, various domestic crafts, and more. At different times, nomadic shepherds wandered here...

On June 3, 1429, in one of the books of the princely court of Alexander the Good (Alexandru cel Bun), the village on Chuhur is mentioned with the name „Horodiște”.

The name of the village comes from the Slavic word „Gorodishche” (fortified settlement). During his second reign, Petru Rares distributed estates and villages to military leaders and brave soldiers „for righteous and faithful service”. In the 1541 document, it is stated, „By the grace of God, we, Petru Voivode, the ruler of the country of Moldova... and Oprya Unguryanu served us justly and faithfully. Therefore... we give the village on Chuhur,





namely, Horodiște, which is this village... and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren and their entire kin, whoever chooses, forever unshakable”.

On September 4, 1605, the ruler Jeremiah Movila handed over several villages, including Horodiște on Chuhur, to the Dragomirna Monastery...

In 1865, among the Russian estates owning large estates, there was landowner Georgy (Yegor) Ryshkanu. The settlements of Ryshkani, Okul Alb, Greneuts, Bretushen, Drutse, Moshen, and

Horodishche belonged to him. At that time, the imperial government, to keep the population in subjugation, stationed large armed contingents in the province. From Siberia to the military unit in Beltsy, Ivan Dmitrievich Bursky was seconded, who married Maria, the daughter of Georgy Ryshkanu. As dowry, Maria received the estate of Horodishche. After marriage, Ivan Bursky, with the assistance of his father-in-law, went into reserve and concentrated all his activities in the estate.

By the decree of the Russian tsar, landowners were obliged to build a school and a church in their villages. In the village, a wicker church was built on a stone foundation. On the site of the old wooden church, in 1906-1907, a

stone church was built and consecrated on Easter Sunday in 1914. In 1901-1904, a school with two primary classes was built, where education was taught in Russian, and after 1918, four classes were taught in Romanian.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Horodishte Gorge

The canyon with millennia-old rocks hides 5 large caves (with an entrance diameter of 2 to 4 meters) and numerous other small ones, measuring up to 1 meter in diameter.

It's worth noting that for a more spectacular hike and a gradual introduction to the Horodishte canyon, it is recommended to start from the village of Drutse, where the canyon, rich in caves and springs, begins, extending for about 5 km, possibly the longest in the northern part of the country.

However, this gorge is «divided» between two villages around the sharp bend of the Chuhur River, and officially, according to cadas-

tral data, the village of Horodishte begins from the rock „Sphinx”, which is approximately halfway between the Drutse and Horodishte canyons.

„Sphinx Rock”

The „Sphinx” is a rocky ledge once artificially carved. The image of the sphinx is more attractive from the village of Drutse, where its outlines are better visible, and also because it forms a perfect contrast for photos when the western side is behind it. The Sphinx stands at a height of over 130 meters. The Sphinx is in close proximity to the oak forest (or the forest of 7





springs) and opposite the pine forest of Bulhak.

Pine Forest (Bulhak)

On the left side of the gorge is a pine forest called by the villagers and also on old cadastral maps - Bulhak. At the top of the rock, there is probably the only karst lake in Moldova, evidenced by its perfectly round shape and its location over 100 meters above sea level. The lake dried up in the 1980s due to improper mining activities. Now, only reeds remain, and in the 1970s, dozens of pine trees were planted around the lake, which today majestically surround the oasis. This is perhaps the only pine forest of such size, more than 20 hectares, hiding the only karst lake in the country in its midst.

Țiglău Rock with Two Caves: Round and Droplet Cave

At the foot of the pine forest, the rocky cliff Țiglău stands out. In

the rock, with its unique acoustics, there are two most impressive caves. One of them has a perfect circular shape with a diameter of 4 meters at the entrance, and ancient hearth traces are visible on the rock. From the Chuhur Riverbank to the rock, a long echo stretches, and every cry and roar echoes loudly from the depths of the rock. One of the most impressive rocks in the Drutse-Horodishte gorge, with a challenging ascent, the cave maintains a constant temperature in its quite modest space. Hidden under the mysterious pine forest and above the last slabs of the water mill, the cave attracts mountain hiking enthusiasts. The sheer rock around the cave and sandy soil turn the entrance and exit into a real challenge. In the same conglomerate of rock formations, there is another unique cave, hidden from prying eyes, in the shape of a droplet, rising above the village of Horodishte.

Forest of 7 Springs

A young oak forest was planted in the place of the old oak forest



with a rich level of groundwater. At least 7 springs were found (now 5 of them have dried up), but the reservoirs where springs once gushed are still visible, although now they are overgrown with reeds. On the banks of the Chuhur River, there are still carved stone paths that once carried water from the streams of the 7 springs. In the forest, the surface stone of a centuries-old well and several centennial oaks still survive. The forest is located on a rock opposite the pine

forest, next to the „Sphinx”, hidden above the canyon, right on the border between the villages of Drutse and Gorodishte.

Spring in the Rock

Immediately after the forest with 7 springs, between the „Sphinx” and the rock of Havana, on the right bank of Chuhur, towards Horodishte, you can admire a small lake,







the source of which comes out of the rock and gradually flows into larger waters. Unobtrusively built into the earthen shores, forming an impressive water oasis overlooking the pine forest, the spring water then flows into the Chuhur River. Also to the right of the source, towards the rock of Havana, there are 7 burial mounds.

Rock of Havana

The Rock of Havana is located on the right bank of the Chuhur River in the northeastern part of the village of Horodishte under the ravine, next to the oak forest with 7 springs.

The Rock of Havana is a slightly pyramidal formation with individual rocky projections, now surrounded on one side by fruit orchards and on the other by grain crops. It is located just behind the rocky spring. From it, there is an excellent view of the 7 burial mounds and the village of Horodishte. The rock got its name «Havana» from ancient times because

it has the shape of a pitcher («gavanos»), in which food was stored, and sometimes goods such as money or other valuables were hidden. Elders say that tunnels pass through the chain of rocks to the village of Drutse and to the Prut River itself, and there are many galleries in the rocks. Today, the Rock of Havana can be admired from the lake at its base. Legend also has it that treasures of Turks, Huns, and robbers were hidden in these rocks. For many years, people have tried to dig and search for wealth here. There is a second rock where villagers installed a crucifix similar to the one on the Rock of Evil Spirits (Kholm), a sign that this rock also has untold stories.

Havana was once a passage between two rocks. It was here that the residents of Horodishte walked to their relatives in the village of Drutse, to fairs, or for fishing by the river.

7 Burial Mounds

At different times, these lands were traversed by nomadic shep-







herd tribes, leaving behind 7 burial mounds. The largest of them is now the highest point in the area and can become a strategic «observation point» from which one can admire the surroundings. The mounds are „hidden” on the outskirts, behind the village, but with a view of the rock of Havana. The top of the highest mound is visible within a radius of several villages and from the national road con-

necting the villages of Zeikany, Pochumben, Drutse, Horodishte, and Veratik. Also from the north - from the villages of Edinets district.

Turkish Cemetery

Situated above the small caves on the left side of the Chuhur River, within the rocky chain leading to

the Hill, the Turkish Cemetery is shrouded in legends and mysteries. Elders claim that it holds a medieval Turkish cemetery. The rocky chain from the „Sphinx” to the west seems to be a source of wonders. Treasure hunters equipped with metal detectors periodically appear here. Once adorned with wooden crosses, which rotted away, and stones that crumbled and mixed with the earth, the land above the round cave in the rock chain, stretching right in front of the village, remains full of enigma.

*Hill or „Rock of Evil Spirits”
and Two-Story Cave*

The Rock of Evil Spirits is perhaps the most mysterious rock in the northern part of the country, remaining unsolved to this day. Moreover, villagers have blocked access to the depths of the cave, which, they say, is endless. Many young people got lost and never returned, and those who did lose the gift of speech and soon perished.

Legend has it that robbers (Turks) hid gold here and cursed both the cave and those who would discover the treasure. According to the villagers, spirits dwelling in the rock would snatch people's souls, and liturgies in the church were the only weapons for those possessed. It is also said that strange things happen around the rock at a certain time of the year, and many residents have strange dreams. Moreover, many villagers avoid approaching the rock. That's why a huge iron cross, visible in the village and beyond, is installed at the top of the cliff. Today, the two-story cave with a diameter of up to 4 meters has become not only a tourist attraction but also a research site, as it has not been studied and preserved according to geological rules. Several decades ago, samples of Paleolithic human remains and fragments of animal bones were extracted from the cave, holding historical value. These relics are kept in the village museum. Additionally, the Hill or «Rock of Evil Spirits» is also the site of an ancient fortress, the ruins of which can still be seen from above. Pyramid-shaped and



the tallest in the entire region, it concludes the journey through the Drutse-Horodishte gorge, and the Chuhur River continues its course towards the village of Veratik.

Century-old Church and Burski Family Mausoleum

The church of the village of Horodishte, an architectural gem designed in the early 1900s with the support of the Burski boyars, was built in 1912 by a stonemason from Odessa. It was the only church in the region that did not undergo any changes in its use, such as being turned into a warehouse or other purposes unrelated to the church. Locals tell that when Soviet authorities closed the church, villagers put six additional locks on it so that no one could open it. Periodically, a few women secretly kept the church clean, and valuable items were hidden in the homes of the villagers. Elders say that the new 1912

building was constructed on the ruins of an old small church built of wattle on a stone foundation. This is evidenced by old stone crosses with inscriptions from the 1800s in the cemetery behind the church. After the church resumed its operation, villagers contributed to its major repairs, painting, and the construction of an extension for events. Today, the family mausoleum of nobleman Ivan Burski is still on the church grounds. Across the road from the church is the boyar's tomb.

Boyar cellars

The boyar's cellar still exists today, although it is on private property. There are initiatives for its reconstruction and opening for public viewing. In its time, the boyar's yard, the church, and the village school were the most prominent places in the village, built on the highest point visible from the villages of Veratik and Korpatch.







*Useful Information:***Tourist Information Center:**

The Tourist Information Center is located at the Primaria. Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 17:00. Contact person - Angela Bricyag. Phones: +37369678750; +37325640271; email: bphorodisteriscani@gmail.com

Food places:

Kotyala Pavel company, opening hours: 8:00-20:00
Tel: +37324640320

Center of Health: Opening hours: 8:00 - 14:00,
tel. : +37325640408

Pharmacy: located in Veratik village
Opening hours: 8:00 - 14:00



DRUȚĂ



VILLAGE HISTORY



*Travel logo
Druța village*

Surrounded by rocks, the small village has existed many years. From its beginnings, the village Druța was initially known as Stângăceni, as it was founded on the left bank of the Ciuhur River, the only village on the left side of the river. It is first documented on October 8, 1612. By 1835, in historical documents, the village is known by both names - Stângăceni and Druța, named after the boyar Doruța.

In Druța, there is an ancient church dating back to the 19th century, known as the „Monument with Three Crosses”, which is preserved near the church to this day. About 300 years ago, it served as the pristole (altar) of the former wooden church. That church was sold to Sarbaca. The stone church was built by the Lipovans with the support of the locals, who contributed with money and goods. The foundation of the church was laid by three rich people: Gheorghe Eșanu, Mogâldean and Ion Țurcanu. During building of the church, each woman had to bring 500 eggs, as their whites were used to prepare the mortar. The church opened its doors on „St. Nicholas” day and was also dedicated to „St. Nicholas”. From the second half of the 19th century the villages of Stângăceni (Druța) and Pociumbeni formed a single parish with two churches. Since 1960 the church in Druța ceased to function, being transformed by

the Soviet authorities into a bread storage facility. During that time, almost all religious artifacts were stolen and sold. Only in 1989 the church was reconstructed, with the dedication to the „Assumption of the Virgin Mary”, with

Father Zorilă as the priest. In the church there is an old shroud from the consecration of the holy place. The oldest icons are: The oldest icons include Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Paraskeva, and Saint Nicholas



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Druta reef

Druta reef, although not large, is charming. Its area covers 100 hectares, stretches for a kilometer from south to east, and reaches heights of over 70 meters. It is crossed by the Ciuhur River, hiding itself in a long and winding gorge that, over millions of years, managed to break through the chains of extensive and quite deep valleys between the rocky ridges. The riverbed is filled with large boulders rolled down from the gorge's slopes. The width of the river in the gorge is about 5-6 meters, but during floods, it can become much wider. The Ciuhur River has a very winding and capricious course, changing its direction in the most unpredictable way. This is due to both small differences in elevation and the multitude of obstacles, in the form of rocky coral reefs encountered along its path. t

*„Tugui's cave'
or 'Tugui's grotto'”*

„Tugui's cave' or 'Tugui's grotto'”. Legend has it that 250 years ago, the fearless outlaw Tugui and his beloved, a Turkish woman named Rada, hid in this cave or forest to avoid becoming victims of the Turks. The forest was later named „Rada's Forest”. Peasants' families resisting Ottoman rule also sought refuge in this cave because the Turks imposed taxes on jewelry, grain, animals, and very often the most beautiful girls. Left alone, Tugui became a forester guarding the forest named after his beloved. He also became the guardian of the lands on the left side of the Ciuhur River. In case of theft in the neighbouring villages, Tugui was finding the thieves and holding them captive for 2-3 days to teach them a lesson of „good manners”. Tugui's cave could accommodate 8-10 people. Since then, the cave has been





preserved under the name „Peștera lui Tugui”.

Stone mine

The length of the galleries ranged from 40m to 1km, depending on the rock's strength, technical conditions and mining feasibility. Today the mine is not working due to a lack of labor and outdated equipment.

Coltun's Spring

Elders say that the water from the ancient spring, also called «Coltun's Spring,» is pure and healthy, serving as the village's source of livelihood in hot weather when well water dries up, or when locals graze their cattles. The water from this ancestral spring was believed to have healing properties, even for wounds sustained during battles. Water analysis has repeatedly been tested and it is recognized as one of the purest.



Pine forest

Located on top of a rock, it is said that this place was once a lake with clean water called „Bulhak” (swamp), fed unceasingly by underground springs. Over time, due to heavy rains, the lake’s sources became muddy and dried up. Pine trees were planted in this area, and in the 1930s, a nest of a bandit group led by the female

bandit Agafya was situated nearby. She terrorized nearby villages, robbing and taking the most valuable items, burying them in the ground. It is said that years later, peasants found precious items while tilling the land, prompting experts to investigate the area. Nowadays, the pine forest is a place for tourists to relax, and instead of a lake, reeds and ferns grow, creating a beautiful carpet in the middle of the forest.





Rada's Forest

It is said that Rada was a very beautiful Turkish woman who was keeping under her control the nearby forests and areas on the right side of the Ciuhur River. She was the beloved of the fearless Tugui, the forest being their hiding place from enemies. Tugui and his comrades, to prevent her from being taken by the Turks, kidnapped her and hid her in the forest, hence the name „Rada's Forest”.

Crane well

The village on the banks of the Ciuhur River is one of the few places where wells with cranes are preserved. The old well, „Salvation Well”, is a true history book of this place. A place where life makes sense, even if that meaning is gradually being lost. The well was built at the foot of the rock, in the past, it was the only place where the villagers could use water as a source of survival in hot weather.

*Useful information***Tourist Information Centre**

Tourist Information Centre is located in the village library

Working hours: Monday-Sunday: 10.00-17.00, Saturday: day off

Contact person: Rusu Galina, tel: 068017504

Accommodation places:

Pochumbeni village. Contact person:

Baibarac Maria; tel: 069044390

Food places:

UNIVERSCOOP grocery shop - Druta village.

Opening hours: Monday-Sunday: 7.00-10.00, 17.00-20.00; Contact person: Macero Sica, tel: 060779444.

UNIVERSCOOP shop: Pochumbeni village.

Opening hours: Monday-Sunday, 8.00-12.00; 16.00-19.00.

Contact person: Cotia Victor, tel: 068111662.

Producers of local products and handicrafts:

Matcan Ion - fruit (apples, cherries) and vegetables (potatoes, onions), Druta village, tel: 069324698

Fusu Oleg, bee honey, Druta village, tel: 067353049.

Macovsky Mihail, - bee honey, Pochumbeni village, tel: +37368520240

Creciun Ala, berries (gooseberries) and handicrafts (beads), Pochumbeni village, tel: +37369219314

Pislaru Vasile, fruits (cherries) and vegetables (potatoes), Pochumbeni village, tel: +37369208057

Vlasova Oksana, cheese (sheep cheese), Pochumbeni village, tel: +37368521037

Medical centre: Druta village, working hours: Monday-Friday, 8.30-10.30 a.m., with home visit -1 hour. Contact person:

Tozlovanu Viorica, tel: +37369458481



BRÎNZENI



VILLAGE HISTORY



*Travel logo
Brînzeni village*

The village of Brînzeni is attested in 1606. This ancestral estate, adorned with picturesque hills, such as Cernița, Brînzeni, Dealul Curții, Ponoare and Rîmbu, is bathed by the Racovăț and Draghiște rivers. Near the village there are several natural monuments, the hills are covered with aromatic plants of rock - thyme, winter-rosemary, ear-buckthorn, chives.

The region also boasts caves and grottoes that once served as shelters for prehistoric humans. The best researched is the Brînzeni cave, located on the left side of the Racovăț river valley, 3 km south-

west of the village. The cave has revealed three layers of culture. The upper layer contains artifacts such as, pottery, stone tools and animal bones, belonging successively to the Late Cucuteni-Tripoli culture, the Bronze Age and the Middle Ages. In the middle layer, bones of juniper, deer, rodents, birds, fish and turtles, along with stone and bone tools dating back to Mesolithic were found. The lower layer revealed flint objects, including hand axes, large and small scrapers, serrated blades and toothpicks. The archaeological remains in this area are indeed very rich providing valuable information for our history. So, before the foundation of the feudal village there were 21 other human settlements in different periods of history. Specialists have identified 11 human settlements so far, dating back to more than 12 thousand years BC.

The settlement sites include objects made of flint, petrified bones, traces of hearths, charcoal and an amulet made of ivory in the shape of a fish.



During the Early Iron Age, a human settlement existed on the estate of Brînzeni village, inhabited between 1000-900 BC, and this village perished in flames.

Only after the Roman Empire conquered Dacia in 106 AD, two villages were founded here, existing until the invasion of the Huns in 376 AD. But they also burned down. Only piles of burnt clay remain from the houses made of clay-bonded wicker. Various objects typical of the Roman era from the Moldavian territory can still be found there today.

On July 27, 1775 the priest Ioan from Româncăuți was ordained at

Brînzeni in the church St. Parascheva. In 1795, Enache Stroescu, coming with flocks of sheep from Transylvania, took possession of land in Brînzeni, Trinca, Zăicani and Stolniceni.

In 1816 the priest Iacov Zugravu, a skilled painter, borrowed money and painted the walls of the church in Brînzeni. In 1869 the parish school was established here, and 12 years later, in 1881, it was included into the the Ministry of Public Education system.

Until 1876 most of the village estate belonged to the Botezatu family, then it passed into the possession of the boyar Vasile Stroescu.



TOURISTIC ATTRACTIONS

*Vasile Stroescu's mansion
with dendrological park*

In Brînzeni village, Edineț district, there is a mansion with the dendrological park of Vasile Stroescu, a nobleman, patron of the arts and a prominent personality of Romanians from all over the world. His family owned estates in several parts of Hotin county, including the



current Edinet district. The complex is an architectural monument of national importance, built in the second half of the 19th century, designed in the style Russian classicism. It included several auxiliary buildings: a lodge, barn, oil mill, horse stables and a blacksmith shop. It is the family mansion, where Vasile Stroescu settled in 1875, typical of the Moldavian boyars of that period.

The building, both sober and elegant at the same time, with two levels and a balcony, was the most beautiful in the village, following the classical style of the most distinguished nobles. The wooden staircases with wrought iron railings, that provide the interior that period atmosphere have survived to this day. The decorative terracotta stoves and the marble fireplace with a double lion coat of arms, speak volumes about the once beautiful history of this building. The ceiling ornaments over a century old, have retained their former colours and charm of bygone years.

Each room boasts a different colour and ornament featuring leaves, flowers and various decorative elements with vibrant shades seem to have been added recently. The only thing missing are the gas lamps, which have been replaced over time with chandeliers.

A portrait of Vasile Stroescu hangs on one of the walls, reminding us of the former master of this estate.

In front of the mansion there is

a beautiful park, supposedly designed and created by Vasile Stroescu. The dendrological park, covering approximately two hectares, was landscaped with decorative trees of different species, most of which were imported. Now it is known as the Brînzeni Park.

The village of Brînzeni is surrounded on all sides by 4 reefs with a towering over 210m, constituting a unique natural and anthropic her-



itage for the locality. Positioned to the southwest of the village, these reefs boast a distinctive landscape, while to the southeast lie the Brînzezi Caves - a protected area designated for geological and paleontological nature monuments. The village is endowed with still waters, an unprocessed stone quarry, rich flora and fauna, as well as springs of both potable and therapeutic water.

Brînzezi Canyon

The Brînzezi Canyon represents a geological or palaeontological natural monument covering an area of 44 ha. This gorge formed 15-20 million years ago, when the Tortonian and Sarmatian seas retreated from our lands. The gorge consists of limestone formations, containing particles of corals, molluscs, shells, algae and marine animals.

Mersâna Grotto

The reefs the southeast of the village, namely in the „Mersâna

Area”, constitute a natural complex highlighting two large conoid reefs. One is located at the confluence of the Racovăț and Draghiște rivers and is about 135m high, while the second – of 167m high, is located on the left bank of the Racovăț River. In the walls of the second one, you’ll find the Brînzezi Grottoes, protected by the state.

The grotto is over 500 000 years old and Archaeologists have determined that „Mersâna” grotto was inhabited in the Mesolithic, Eneolithic and Bronze Age. Artifacts found in the cave, including fragments of tools, confirm its use as a natural shelter for prehistoric humans. Mersana Grotto is an open-air museum.

Râmbu Rock

Among the 4 reefs in the so-called Râmbu area, the most representative is at the edge of the village, oval-shaped (oncoid).

A cross, known as the „Protective Cross” has been erected on Râmbu Rock. Traditionally, on July 12, St. Peter and Paul’s Day, villagers





climb up to the cross with the village priest, conduct a divine health service for all the villagers and bring traditional dishes served to those presents.

Giant's Tomb

The Giant's Tomb also has a legend associated with it, suggesting that giants once inhabited these areas. The last of them is said to be buried in this rock. Locals do not work this area, because the legend says those who dared to do so either died suddenly or fell ill.

Chișcă Spring

The spring is named after the villager Mihail Chișcă, who developed this spring. The waters of the spring originate deep from the Uriașului rock and flow into the Racovăț river. It is known for having some of the best potable and healing waters.

At the edge of the village there is a spring with pure and flavorful

Cracii Spring Stopover (confluence of Racovăț and Draghiște)

water. The spring's waters flow into the Racovăț river, which, a few hundred metres downstream, receives the waters of another river - Draghiște, forming a large and extremely beautiful reservoir.

Țuguia Rock (Țugurlan)

The legend associated with Țuguia rock states that „children of the giants who once lived in these places used to play by throwing massive chunks of stone at each other. A sharper piece of stone fell onto this rock and due to the more tapered shape of the stone, it was named Țuguia Rock”

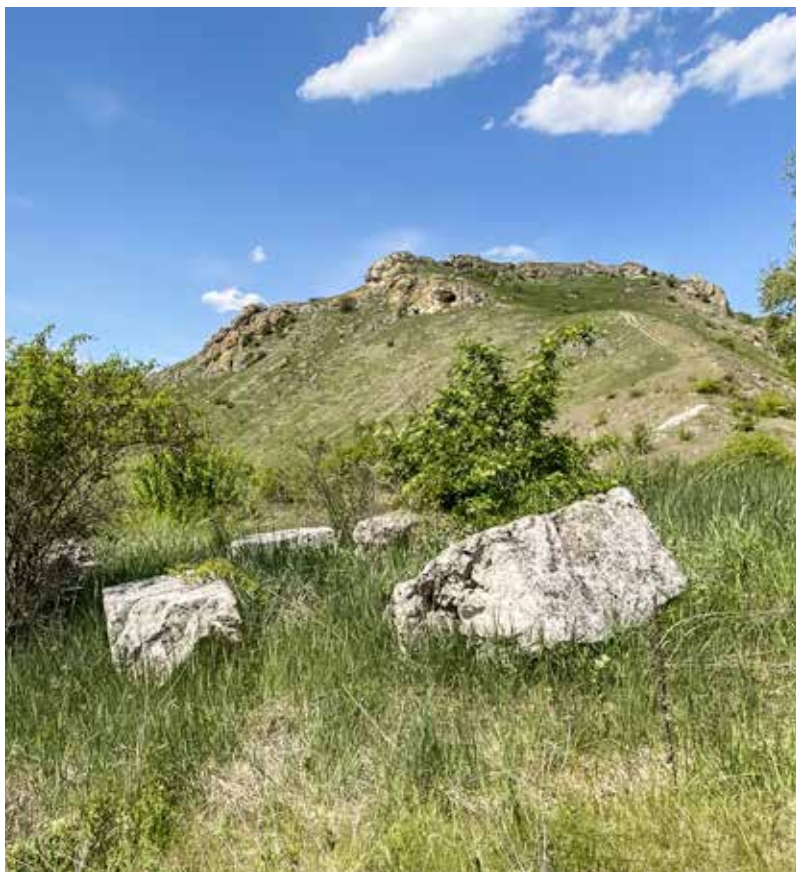
Mill Rock

The highest place in Brânzeni is called „Mill Rock”. In the dis-



tant past, near the rock in the western area, on the right bank of the Racovăț River, there was a watermill. This mill was not only visited by villagers but also by people from neighboring lo-

calities Hence, the name „Mill Rock” originated. It is 165m high, located in a picturesque area on the right bank of the Racovăț River with its slopes containing several grottoes



*Useful information***Tourist Information Centre**

The Tourist Information Centre is located in the House of Culture. Contact person: Mrs. Елена Василиу, tel +373069504352

Places of accommodation

Guest house Strilețchi Valentina, tel.068610800

Guest house Grasu Ghenadie, tel.068634133

Dining facilities:**Shop „Miradan ART”**

Working hours 8.00AM - 8.00PM tel.079005454

Shop Bodiuc Corina,

Working hours 8.00AM - 9.00PM tel.078355331

Shop Babiuc Boris, tel.060661478

Working hours: 8.00AM -12.00PM -2.00PM-8.00PM

Brînzei Family Doctors’ Office

Working hours Monday - Friday 8.00AM – 12PM;

12.30PM-5.00PM Tel. 024659211

Pharmacy, fire brigade, police station are located in Edinet, (distance 17 km).



FETEȘTI



VILLAGE HISTORY



*Travel logo
Fetesti village*

The village of Fetesti is one of the oldest villages in the Edinet district. According to documents, it emerged in the late 15th to early 16th century. This territory was settled since the times of Stefan the Great.

The old name of the village was Hritsen, and only in the late 18th to early 19th century did the name Fetesti appear. According to the decree of Prince Petru Vode dated July 3, 1975, the village of Hritsen with a mill was transferred to Evdokia, the daughter of Luka Arbore, the gatekeeper of Suce-

ava. Thus, the village previously belonged to Luka Arbore, a former courtier, beheaded in 1523 by Prince Stefan the Younger.

The village of Hritsen is mentioned in various documents and charters from the 17th century (1606, 1621, 1635). Then, the village of Hritsen appears in the population census of 1772-1774. According to this data, the village had 40 inhabited and 5 abandoned houses, 45 men and a priest.

During this period, surnames appear: Gribiță, Movilă, Furtună, Ursul, Ocrain, Roșca, Budeanu, Traistă, Baltă, Leurdă, and on the other hand, professions are mentioned, for example: Petre morar, Istrate pâslar, Gigoraș cojocar, Simion ciubotar, and so on.

In the 19th century, the village belonged to Gavril Stroici Scordeli, merchant Shimon Laufman, and some free peasants. In 1904, the settlement is certified as the „old Romanian village of free peasants”. It had 280 houses, 1872 souls and a church.





In the first decade of the 20th century, a 4-year school was opened. The average number of pupils reached 40 people per year. Lessons were conducted by the village priest Georgiy Balabanov, then by Pavel Barbos and teacher Popovich.

By 1942, Fetesti became the center of a commune consisting of two villages: Fetesti and Gordinesti. The ethnic population of the commune was 4656 Romanians, 335 Ukrainians, 27 Russians, 6 Poles and 5 Germans. The commune had 2 churches, 3 elementary schools and a Cultural Center.

The Ministry of Agriculture established a breeding farm for stallions in the Fetesti commune, which was used for crossbreeding and enriching the local breed. In total, the commune had 616 horses, 1095 heads of cattle, 3461 sheep, and 1389 pigs. Agricultural inventory included: plows - 376, harrows - 343, seeders - 12, cultivators - 44, agricultural tractors - 10, and so on.

These were the main indicators with which Fetesti entered a new period: war, famine, deportations, collectivization, socialism.



ATRAȚII TURISTICE



Fetesti Gorge
- „Little Switzerland”

Surrounded and protected by the ancient guardians of Moldova - the Priprut Rocks - a small corner of paradise is hidden, the „Moldovan Switzerland”. Located along the Dragishte River, it showcases the wonders of nature with a complex and diverse relief, incredible

flora and fauna. Just across the river, near the bridge, a cliff rises, offering a view of a unique landscape later named „Little Switzerland” or „Moldovan Switzerland”. From the majestic cliff, you can see the course of the Dragishte River as it meanders through the forested gorge, the steep and picturesque slope at its base, and the depressions revealing views of rolling ridges, fields, and country



roads. The path through the forested gorge is very interesting, with steep descents and ascents leading tourists to the edge of the forest, where a giant two-trunk oak, over 30 meters high, grows.

„Little Switzerland” boasts a rich and diverse vegetation. There are about 160 plant species here, including 15 species of trees and shrubs. „Moldovan Switzerland” is a natural wonder in northern Moldova!



Fetesti Gorge

Fetesti Gorge resulted from the impact of the Dragishte River on the reef massif. It is considered one of the most picturesque gorges in the Priprut Rocks zone. Together with the gorges of Burlenesti and Trinkia, it forms the natural complex of Trinkia-Fetesti-Burle- nesti in the Dragishte River basin. Here, an oval-shaped reef about 90 meters high, known as «Grand- pa’s Rock,» is found, along with other reef formations consisting of fossilized marine organisms from the Badenian period (18 million years ago). To the west, there is a solitary formation from the same period, on top of which traces of Paleolithic human activity have been preserved.

Violin Factory

The musical instrument factory in Fetesti was established through collaboration between local au- thorities and Romanian entrepre-



neur Vasile Gliga, who invested over 100,000 euros in the workshop. Thirty years ago, Vasile Gliga and his wife founded a violin factory in Reghin, Romania. At that time, mechanical processing was done in Reghin, and the instrument parts were then delivered to the workshop in Fetesti, where

they were handmade. Assembly and painting also take place in Reghin, from where orders are shipped worldwide. The musical instrument factory in Fetesti provided employment for 30 local residents who underwent training in Romania for three months.

*Useful information***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the public library.

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

Contact person - Alena Chepuk. Phone: +37369554931;

e-mail: elenacepuc71@gmail.com.

Fetești-Info, NGO. Event and excursion organization. Phone: +37324662555.

Violin Factory. Organization of tours. Opening hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Contact person - Ion Muntianu. Phone: +37369325120.

Family Medicine Center. Opening hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. tel: +37324662340.

Post Office. Opening hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Phone: +3732462333.

Local Police Station. Opening hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Phone: +37324662002.



TRINCA



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



*Travel logo
Trinca village*

The first people appeared in the area of the present Trinca village and its surroundings from ancient times. The oldest settlement dates back approximately 40.000 years

and belongs to the Middle Paleolithic, representing the oldest settlements in the Edinets District. These sites include the «Pigeon Cave» (Peștera Hulubilor) and the «Scridon's Cave» (Peștera lui Scridon). Archaeologists have studied these sites as temporary hunting settlements.

Another period of colonization in the region corresponds to the Geo-Dacian culture, dating back to the 10th-9th centuries BCE, when a village formed on the bank of





the Drăgiște River, near the forest. A new historical stage relates to the 16th-17th centuries and corresponds to the Moldavian feudal culture. The first written document mentioning the settlement Șficiațuți, the initial name of the village, dates back to this period. The first information about the village's inhabitants is found in the 1773-1774 census. According to these data, the village had 28 households, and the population consisted of 25 families, including the Sorochan, Roshka, Memelge, Ivashko, Boboi, Voicul and Codreanu families.

In 1809, Trinca was owned by Eka-

terina Sturza. According to legend, it was during this period that the name of the village Șficiațuți was changed to Trinca. The name is derived from the diminutive form Ecaterina - Catinca - Tinca Sturza. The Sturza family remained the owner of the estate until 1881. Later, the estate passed into the ownership of the Stroescu family. It was here that Vasile Stroescu, a well-known Romanian philanthropist, was born, being the 15th child of the family.

In the 19th century, Trinca village quickly expanded from 28 houses registered in 1774 to 118 houses and a population of 1230 people.

ТУРИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНОСТИ

Trinca Gorge

Trinca Gorge originated thousands and thousands of years ago when the Drăgiște River ruthlessly carved into the Lower Badenian-Sarmatian limestone reef. This process formed a picturesque

landscape of a deep valley surrounded by sheer rocky walls. On the slopes of these majestic gorges, several caves hold the secrets of the past. In these caves, time has stood still, history and memories of the ancient world pursue us, leaving evidence of their existence—skel-etal remains of hunted animals and prehistoric Neanderthals.



Caves of the Gorge

The caves served as habitation for prehistoric hunters during the Middle Paleolithic (80-60 thousand years ago). Due to the specific activities of the inhabitants, more than 440 skeletal remains discovered in the caves belonged to 15 bears and 383 remains of 15 mammal species. The caves also revealed remnants of Eneolithic settlements and a Thracian necropolis. In the Trinca Gorge, there are three caves:

1. Pigeon Cave is located in the western part of the village of Trinca, on the right side of the Drăgiște Gorge, more than 50 meters above water level.
2. Hunter's Cave is situated west of the village, on the right bank of the Drăgiște River, 70 meters west of the Pigeon Cave. This cruciform cave faces south, measuring 14 meters in length, 10 meters in width, and 1.5 meters in height. Archaeological excavations uncovered bones of reindeer, noble deer, rhinoceros, bison, beaver,



and bear along with flint objects from the Middle Paleolithic.

3. Scridon's Grotto (Grotă lui Scridon) is west of the village, in the canyon of the Drăgiște River. The two cave chambers cover an area of 300 square meters and yielded numerous ancient artifacts from the Middle Paleolithic period.

Drăgiște River

The hydronym Drăgiște, according to the late scholar Ion Drona,









has ancient, Geto-Dacian or Old Romanian origins and transitioned through the Slavic line - draga (Bulgarian, Serbian, Slovenian), draha (Czech), droga (Polish), meaning on these foreign languages - „strait, gorge, depression (in relief), a place where water flows, valley, and even road; path”.

Legend has it that two young people met and fell in love on the banks of the Drăgiște, and impressed by their story, the locals named the river that bathed their settlement.

Church and Hospital Building

Trinca Church is located in the village, on the road leading to the village of Constantinovca. This historic building, built in 1902 by Vasile Stroescu, was blessed by Tsar Nicholas I and consecrated by the Bishop of Hotin in 1904. On the church grounds, there is also a burial monument of the Stroescu family, built from black granite brought from Paris by Vasile Stro-



escu's son-in-law. The monument, established in 1904, has been well-preserved to this day. Over the years, Priest Vasile Roșca, with local residents' assistance and support, carried out restoration work to maintain the building.

Several buildings on the hospital grounds, completed in 1902 by Vasile Stroescu, have historical and scientific significance. For the first time in the country's history,

R-graphy devices were installed here, brought by Vasile Stroescu from Germany, and the buildings were equipped with state-of-the-art medical technology of that time. One of the buildings on the hospital grounds was Vasile Stroescu's parental home, later converted into a maternity ward. Currently, only one of the buildings is equipped and operational, serving as a family doctor center.



*Useful information***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the House of Culture. Opening hours are from 9:00 to 18:00.

Contact person: Elena Razlog. Tel: 060736938,
email: razlogelena2@gmail.com

Accommodation:

Hotel and Restaurant „**La Paris**” **Korzheuts village**.

Distance: 5 km from Trinca village

Dining places:

„**La Rifca**” Store, Trinca village, working hours: 8:00 - 22:00

„**R.Grib**” Store, Trinca village, working hours: 8:00 - 21:00

Health Center. Opening hours:

Monday - Saturday, 8:00 - 16:00, tel: 0(246)41360

Pharmacy, Trinca village, Opening hours:

Monday - Friday, 9:00 - 16:00. Saturday - Sunday, 9:00 - 14:00



GORDINEȘTI



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



*Travel logo
Gordinești village*

The village of Gordinești (Gordinești) is documented on May 27, 1427. According to historical records, the first population census took place in 1429, registering 18 peasant households. The village was situated in the estate of the noble Neagoe-Negoitse and was initially named Neogesht. Later, a Polish farmer named Gordin settled in these lands, and the village's name was changed from Neogesht to Gurdinesht. Gordin

had a temporary dwelling with three rooms. Six more people, including a woman named Alba, came from across the Prut River, with whom he started families. They established their own farms, raised sheep and cows, and cultivated Tatar corn, from which they learned to make bread and corn flour. They stored corn in underground pits. One villager, Tenase Ferya, built a mill with blades in Yorgi's garden. Besides agriculture and animal husbandry, they also engaged in stone carving. The oldest Golgotha-style cross in Moldova, carved in 1552, is still preserved.

According to the 1774 census, the village had 23 households, and even then, there was a wooden church in the village housing the archives of the Basarabia Governorate. In 1862, a parish school was opened in the village. Gradually, the village expanded to 1,750 desiatinas and 161 households. In 1914, the war with Germany began, and in 1917, the village of



Gordinesti was occupied by Austrians. The border ran through the village of Voloden. Hritsu, a versatile craftsman, settled in the village during this time. He dug and fortified a stone quarry.

In 1941, the war started, claiming the lives of 115 villagers. Later,

collective farms and state farms were established.

Today, the village has 1200 households and 3020 residents. Agriculture continues to be the primary source of livelihood for villagers, reflecting the true essence of rural life.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

„By the castle” canyon

The natural area of this canyon includes steep slopes of the Rakovets River valley and is one of the deepest canyons in the Republic of Moldova. Among the majestic limestone rocks, there are several caves serving as shelters for birds and reptiles inhabiting the area.

The Gordinesht-Buzdujen-Brunzen Natural Complex in the Rakovets River basin forms the „La Castel” Landscape Reserve. Local residents of Gordinesht confidently claim that this marvelous castle is not just a legend but actually existed. It is said that the stone palace was destroyed after the Bessarabia occupation, and a few decades ago, some elements, including a carved table surrounded by tree stumps, still remained.

Legend has it that the name „La Castel” is associated with a beautiful love story and a castle that disappeared into the mists of time, leaving behind only towering

rocks and the memory of a young girl imprisoned within its walls. They say that once two young hearts experienced a beautiful love story. In the village lived a beautiful girl loved by a Turk. The girl’s parents opposed her engagement to her lover, so he decided to kidnap her and hide her in the castle. Groups of hunters were sent from the village to find the girl, but without success. When the party approached the castle, they found a rich feast in a cave along the way. They sampled everything and drank many glasses, but then all fell into a deep sleep. Most of them woke up exhausted and refused to continue their mission. At that moment, something happened, and the castle sank into the ground. Nothing was left: neither the beautiful girl, nor the young lover, nor the castle. Only the legend and the Rakovets River, wandering among the rocks of this place, survived. Today, the castle is gone, but the mysterious name „La Castel” remains.







Rock spring

At the foot of the «La Castel» Landscape Reserve, 5 km from the village of Gordinesht, there is a spring with pure and refreshing water, where tourists stop to try the elixir of life. This spring was dug and installed in 1923 by Father Victor Katerau and villagers who came to help him. Father Victor also made a Cross, which was placed next to the spring (for

passersby to worship, make their Holy Cross, and then drink the pure spring water). A second cross was made by Panfil Albu in 1970. These two monuments were made of stone from the Hritsu quarry. In 2018, with the support of the village mayor and council, another Cross was made. The stone for it was brought from Kosauts. A gazebo was built next to the spring in 2020, where tourists can rest, have lunch, and enjoy the nature of the „La Castel” reserve.



Spring in the village center

In the center of Gordinesht village, there is a spring built in 1943 by Vasile Ratse. A monument to Romanian heroes who fell in battles for the liberation of Bessarabia is installed near the spring. In 2019, Gordinesht village resident Sergiu Turyak restored the spring so that its water could quench the thirst of passersby.

Bare rock

One of the many rocks in Gordinesht village is called «Bare Rock» (Stâncă Goală). Climbing to the top of the bare rock, you can see strange formations. Traveling through these places, overcoming any route, you will pass through unusual locations with views of rare beauty. The bare rock is uniquely oval, with an area of 90 m². In recent years, archaeologists excavating here discovered the remains of two dwellings. Archaeological studies showed that human

settlement appeared here about 4000 years ago. The main craft of the people at that time was the production of axes. The reserve represents not only archaeological or scientific, but also educational interest. History lessons are often held here.

Dragon's tooth

On the border between Gordinesht and Volodeni villages stands a rock 8 meters high and 20 meters long. Travelers visiting the „La Castel” Landscape Reserve named it the „Dragon's Tooth”. From here, there is a breathtaking view of the beauty of nature.

Stone mines

In Gordinesht village, to the delight of tourists, there are five stone mines, one of which is still operational. The raw material extracted from the mine is used in construction today. The other stone mines are not active, but serve as a tourist attraction frequently visited by travelers.





Old cemetery in gordinesht village

The old cemetery in Gordinesht village, located in the western part of the village, is divided into four sectors arranged sequentially from south to north, separated by ditches and rows of trees and shrubs. An old church where prominent village people were buried once stood on the cemetery grounds. Several tombstones, bearing witness to the remarkable stone carving tradition in the area, have been preserved. The oldest of them dates back to 1552.

Prince Gordilă (Gordilă)

Prince Gordilă (Gordilă) is buried in the old cemetery. His grave is marked by a necrological stone. Massive stones are deeply set into the ground, and the crosses represent a rare example of medieval religious stone that has survived to this day. The cemetery in Gordinesht is known as the

oldest cemetery in the Republic of Moldova.

Chuhriy estate

At the exit from Gordinesht village, towards Tyrnova village, a picturesque relaxation spot called „Moșia lui ciuhrii” (chuhriy estate) was created in the parental home of Mrs. Julia Chuhriy. Here, there is a gazebo, a lake with water lilies, and a boat for the leisure of visiting tourists.

With the support of the village council, the «DOR-fest» festival was held twice in the estate, attended by guests and participants from Moldova and abroad.

Lavender fields

On the Edinet-Gordinesht highway, at the entrance to the village, there is a lavender field - a beautiful place for relaxation and photography. The owners of this field create bouquets from lavender, produce oils, perfumes, toiletries, etc.







*Useful information***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the mayor's office building. Opening hours: Monday-Friday 8:00-17:00.
Contact person: Veronica Raca. Phone: +37368174122

Accommodations

„Gurau Ala”. Î. Village Gordinesht. Phone: +37368896888.

Dining Places:

„Damir” Mini-Market. Opening hours: summer 08:00-22:00, winter 08:00-20:00. Phone: +37360528825.

„Pripa Elizaveta” Store, Individual Entrepreneur, Gordinesht Village. Phone: +37367679788.

„Lungu Alexandru”, honey producer. Gordinesht Village, opening hours 8:00-17:00. Phone: +37360796108.

„Miros de lavandă”, LLC. Gordinesht Village. Lavender products. Opening hours: 8:00-20:00. Contact person: Adela Creciun. Phone: +37360868666.

Sheepfold. Sheep cheese and meat. Contacts: Ion Yaloba - phone +37360057066; Vasile Kotogoi - phone +37379236351.

„Panciuc Ion”. Dairy products. Opening hours: 7:00-19:00. Phone: +37362154815.

Craft Workshop. Gordinesht Village. Opening hours: 08:00-17:00. Contact person: Dorel Danchuk. Phone: +37368999090.

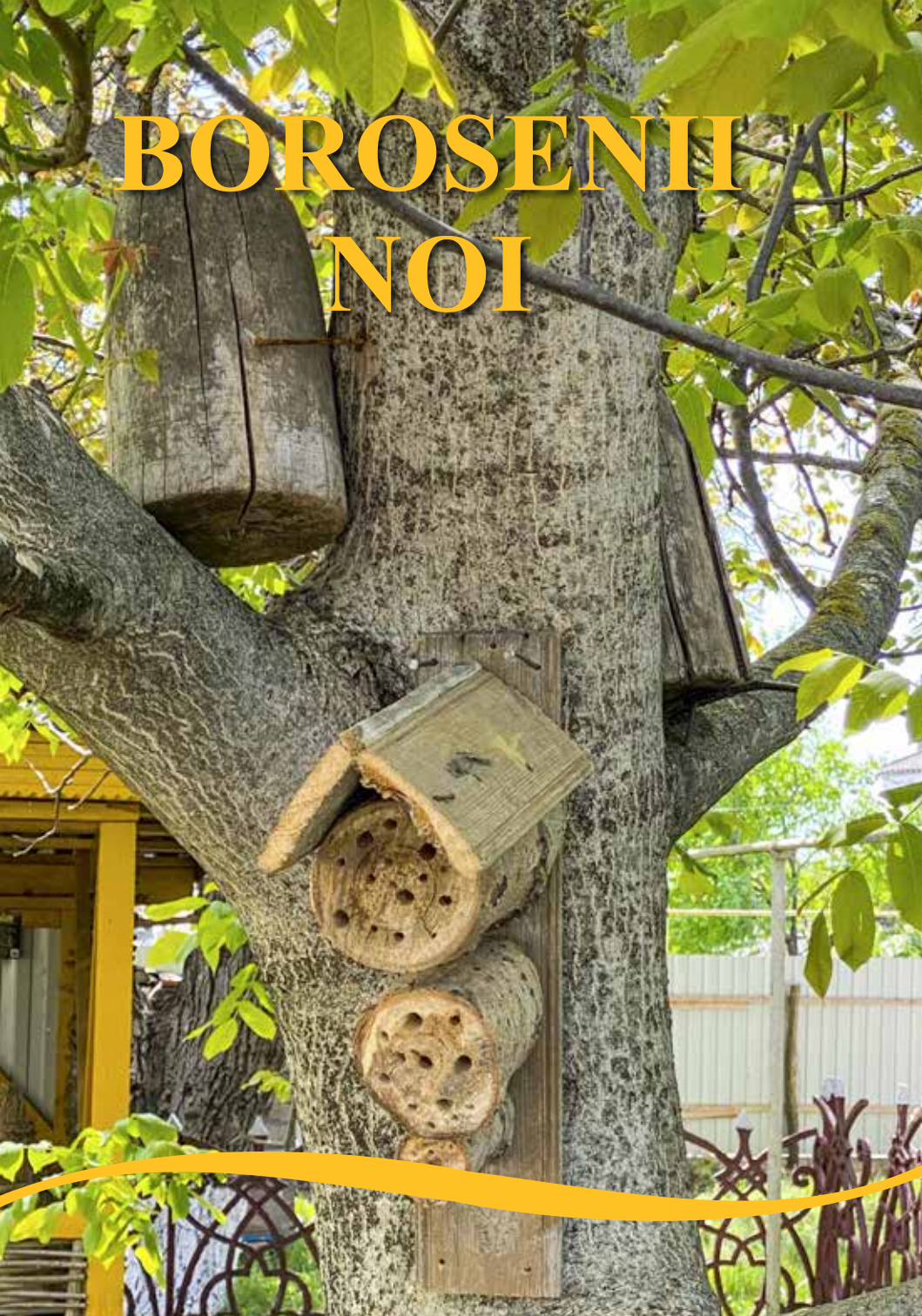
„Covilora” LLC (Stone Mine), organization of tours to the stone mine. Working hours: 08:00-17:00. Contact person: Grigore Albu. Phone: +37368387702.

„NAZERLEV” pharmacy. Gordinesht Village. Opening hours: 08:00-19:00. Contact person: Nasar Abdulhadi. Phone: +37324660947; +37367608043.

Police Station, Fetesht Village. Opening hours: 08:00-17:00. Contact person: Andrei Dulcea. Phone: +37368420099.



BOROSENII NOI



HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE



Travel logo Borosenii Noi village

The village is situated at the source of the Camenca River, in a region of plains and hills, 8 km northwest of Rîșcani city. The hill that separates Borosenii Noi from Pîrjota village has an altitude of 248 meters, and from its top, a centuries-old forest with numerous springs descends to the village „gate” —a rare sight for the Bălți plain. From ancient times, a legend about the Land of Honey has existed in Borosenii Noi. The village is surrounded by forests, a true oasis of peace and visual delight. Tall and proud trees invite you for a walk. The people of Borosenii Noi were enticed

to such a walk. Here, in hollows built into the white trunks of the trees, they discovered bees. They were hardworking, ingenious people who loved work, nature, and these insects, deciding to domesticate them. They wove baskets from willow branches glued with clay. Thus began the practice of beekeeping. As territories between the Prut and Dniester rivers were often attacked by the nomadic hordes of Tatars and Turkish armies that even reached the territory of Boroseni village. The people of Boroseni, being wise, thought about how to defend themselves from enemies. They came up with an idea: they placed the bee hives and tied them together with a braided rope, and the end of the rope was brought to the doorstep. When the enemies approached, they pulled the rope, the hives overturned, and the bees welcomed them, stinging them mercilessly. The little bees emerged victorious. They saved the locals' lives.





The legend passed down from generation to generation states that the name of the locality comes from a strong blacksmith nicknamed Borosan by his friends. Whether it is true or not is hard to say. The official biography of the village begins on July 10, 1663. This date is recorded in the village's statute and is supported by several researchers.

Around 1750, the landowner Scalețki placed a guard on the edge of his estate - the old man Toader Borosanu, from Boroseni. He built himself a shack on the banks of the nearby stream. The place was wonderful. In front, he had the stream with crystal-clear water, and behind the house, the forest stretched for thousands of hectares. Soon the landowner moved about 16 families here because a greedy neighbor appeared in the southern part of his estate. The new hamlet began to be called Borosenii Noi.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Oak Forest

The village of New Boroseni is surrounded by forests – a true oasis of tranquility and visual delight. In front of us stand majestic oaks that cling to the earth like giants with their roots. mighty and slightly gnarled branches rise so high that you can't even see their tips. The clear sunlight illuminates the gaps, giving the grass a yellowish hue. Beneath the trees, the grass is dark green. You wish to stroll through such a forest because among the ancient trees, you feel like you're in a fairy-tale forest. Besides the old oaks, young trees have also taken root, and in the coming years, they will become tall and sprawling giants, too. Currently, there is a restaurant with 10 seasonal accommodation places in the forest.

Monument to the first teacher – 1902

In the churchyard of the village (the place where the first school was built), stands a monument to the first teacher, Maria Andreevna Filipovna (1862-1902), the daughter of a local landowner. It is said that she was very gentle and kind. Before her death, she requested to be buried in the schoolyard. The people of Boroseni not only honored her request, but also erected a granite monument at her grave as a token of gratitude for her kindness.

Church of St. Paraskeva

You will discover the history of the church that touched people's



souls, attend a Tedeum for health, and learn about the lives of saints and parables. In this holy place, «Saint Paraskeva,» there is a copy of the Mother of God icon from Gîrbovăț, painted in 1885 in Iași. The icon you found only here, is the icon of Moldova's saints, the icon of St. Nicholas that has remained unburnt since the time of the Turks.

*Apiary and „Honey Land”
Museum*

Today, the holy place, „Saint Paraskeva”. church with its apiary and a new stone church built by the landowner Caceaun in 1775, is enjoyed by faithful villagers. The „Honey Land” in Boroseni is a unique apiary in northern Moldova, where the soul is soothed by prayer and humming of bees. „Approach to the bee and see how hardworking it is and what skillful work it performs. Its work is beneficial for the health of both kings and common people. It is loved and praised by all” (Proverbs from the Bible 6:9)





„Honey Land” is, above all, an opportunity for bee and honey lovers to enter the mysterious and fascinating world of bees, taste honey from different plants and trace the history of the friendship between a human and a bee. The apiary presents both old-fashioned beehives (boards, loungers, etc.) and the most modern ones used in most industrial apiaries worldwide.

Products for Sale:

Enthusiastic beekeepers in our free time offer for sale a wide range of natural bee products,

collected from our apiary. New, unique products that you can find only here include: Elixir of Love, lemonade, distilled mead, Elena’s mead, acacia honey, api-immuno-forte polyfloral honey, creamed honey, linden honey, propolis tincture, propolis gum, dead bee tincture, digestive immunity bee cocktail, anti-aging moisturizing cream, choco bee, pro-polished honey, rose bee, lip gloss, and many, many other products, wax candles.



*Address: Churchyard of the village New Boroseni, Rîșcani district, Republic of Moldova.
Contact Person: Daniela Pinzescu, tel. +373 676 56 402*

farmer in the village - now stands on this place.

Mounds at the Entrance to the Village

Șchiopu's sheepfold

Once, a one-legged shepherd came to the landowner Arestic and agreed to sell him the pasture near Moscalu's pond. He brought a flock of several hundred sheep, made the rounds, improvised a dwelling and began living there alone, both in winter and summer. In one winter, a pack of wolves attacked the sheepfold. When the wolves approached very close to the them, he came out of his house with a loaded weapon, shot, and killed one of the wolves. It turned out he hadn't shot the she-wolf, as the pack rushed at him and tore him to pieces. Since then, this place on the village estate has been called «Șchiopu's sheepfold».

The tradition is still preserved today. One of the village's sheepfolds, the sheepfold of Efrim Stepan - the most famous sheep

The elders recounted that one of the first settlements in our area was the village of «Grădini.» It was a small village of about 30-35 yards, and its inhabitants acted as guards at the «mound.» It was a royal order, to build mounds on the highest places, and when enemies entered the country, the guards of these mounds had to light fires on them to alert the royal court.

Folk Band „Țărăncuța” Members of this ensemble, passionate about beauty, spend their free time in search authentic songs, enriching their repertoire with true gems of folk music. The heart and mentor of this collective is its leader, Mrs. Felicia Bojii, a laureate of numerous national contests and festivals. It is worth noting that members of this group are known for their master of authentic interpretation collected from grandparents and great-grandparents of the village.



*Фольклорная группа
„Țărăncuța”*

Popular Theater „Brăzdenii” For
70 years, an amateur acting troupe

has been active in the village, periodically performing the stage of „Brăzdenii” Folk Theater. The troupe consists of 25 actors of various ages. Most of them are not from the cultural field, but they have a special love for everything they do on stage.



*Useful information:***Tourist Information Centre**

The Tourist Information Centre is located in the village library.

Working hours: Monday-Friday, 9.00AM – 5.00PM.

Contact person Zinaida Tibuleac, tel. +37376827886

Places of accomodation:

„Адина”, hotel, Riscani town, tel. +3737671118

Dining facilities:

„Aici de toate”, Grocery shop, Borosenii Noi village, working hours: 8.00AM - 10.00PM, tel. +37325648690

„Kravtov Oleg”, Grocery shop, Borosenii Noi village, working hours: 8.00AM - 10.00PM,

Family doctor's office, Borosenii Noi village, working hours: Monday-Friday 8:00AM-4:00PM, tel. +37368892849, +37325648340



MIHĂILENI



VILLAGE HISTORY



*Travel logo
Mikhaileni village*

Mihailen vllage is situated on two rather steep hills along the course of the Okul-Alb River. Stone artifacts found in these areas confirm human habitation since the Stone Age.

Within the territory of the Mihailen village, statues of the goddess of fertility and femininity have been discovered, indicating the period of the Cucuteni-Trypollian archaeological culture (5000-3500 BCE).

There are six ancient settlements in the village of Mihailen, with the most historically interesting ones located in the Ruska area and the Kurkovo estate, where

a monastery once stood. In Ruska, remnants were accidentally discovered, providing evidence of an ancient human settlement: burnt bricks, fragments of clay pots, bones, etc.

According to the oldest records, the first inhabitant of this settlement was Ion Samson, who came from the slopes of Galeshen. He brought his herds, consisting of several hundred sheep, and settled with his entire family in the estate of the Mihailen village, which at that time belonged to the Moldavian ruler Ion Sturza. To this day, one part of this village bears the name „Galeshen”. Their descendants also bore the surnames Galeshanu, Samson, Skutaru. Later, residents from the Ryshkan side also settled in this part.

Subsequently, the slum „brânzen” appeared - with residents arriving from the village of Merkulesht, the slum of „mustețenilor” - with residents from the village of Musteatsa, Skein, Gizdita, Chubary, the slum of



„zăcănenilor” - with residents from the villages of Zeikany and Shaptebany.

The „Protection of the Mother of God” Church in the village of Mihaileni was designed in 1876 by the deputy governor Piche and the architect R. Savitsky. The church is built in the shape of a cross: length - 29 meters; height - 22 meters, with a tin roof and two metal crosses. The construction

was supervised by Archpriest Ioan Pavel Barbu, assisted by Nikifor Savitsky. In 1883, the church was consecrated and began its work.

The first scholar with higher education was Tudor Musteatsa. He was a member of the State Duma of Russia and participated in the events of 1917.

According to documents, the first mayor of the village was Simion Spataru



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Eugen Coșeriu Bust:

Eugen Coșeriu (or Eugenio Coșeriu), born on July 27, 1921, in the commune of Mihailen, pre-war Bălți district, and passed away on September 7, 2002, in Tübingen, Germany, was a Romanian linguist in exile, an honorary member of the Romanian Academy since 1991. He was the founder of

the first linguistic school in South America and the Tübingen School of Linguistics. Eugen Coșeriu is considered one of the most significant linguists of the 20th century.

Church „Coverage of the Mother of God”

The Church „Coverage of the Mother of God” was built in 1876 according to the project by Deputy Governor Piche and architect R. Savitsky. The church is cross-shaped: length - 29 meters; height - 22 meters, with a tin roof and two metal crosses. In 1883, the church was consecrated and began its activities. On April 3, 1964, the church was closed. In 1986, the church premises were turned into a museum. In 1988, the „Coverage of the Mother of God” Church in Mihailen village was reopened and continues to operate to this day.



*Carpet Festival „Mihailen -
Mirror of Carpets”*

In Moldovan folklore, the carpet was a symbol of female industriousness and skill, carefully preserved and passed down through generations. The art of Bessarabian carpets is still shrouded in countless mysteries related to its origin, unique forms of artistic expression, messages and spiritual value.

The Mihailen Carpet Festival takes place every year on the third Sunday of August in the village's central park. The festival, starting in 2015, attracts dozens of folk craftsmen from different parts of the country and abroad. It serves as an opportunity to showcase folklore ensembles, songs and dances, traditional costumes, rituals and the region's traditional cuisine. Visitors can purchase various items and goods crafted by folk artisans.



Folk Craftsman Ludmila Skutaru

Ludmila Skutaru is a folk craftsman specializing in Bessarabian carpet weaving, included in the UNESCO international heritage. She weaves carpets, large and small woolen items, covers and runners. She offers workshops on weaving, wool spinning and dyeing. She prepares various pre-made and ordered items for sale.

Craft Workshop

The workshop is a place where ancestral traditions are passed down to the younger generation. Both children and adults learn to weave carpets using techniques such as „bobyshaks”, „thread” carpets and traditional carpets. Children also

learn crochet and making decorations for various holidays.

Folk Wood Craftsman Sergiu Obadă

Sergiu Obadă, despite physical challenges, owns a workshop where he creates art furniture.

„Small Animals and Birds Fair”

This fair takes place every year on the first Sunday of September. It invites enthusiasts of pigeons, exotic birds, rabbits, and many other birds and domestic animals. Guests come from all over the country, Ukraine, and Romania





*Useful information***Tourist Information Center**

The Tourist Information Center is located in the village library.
Contact person Galina Vrabie, tel. +37368562109

Food places:

Restaurant „Mariaj,” - contact person Elizaveta Josanu.
Tel. +37368132917

Store „Market”. Working hours - 8:00-21:00 Tel. +37379971997

Folk crafts master Ludmila Skutaru.

Making carpets and woolen products.

Address: village of Mihaileni, tel: 060436576

Craftsman in wood processing - Sergiu Obade

manufactures wooden art furniture.

Address: village of Mihaileni, tel: 060075177

Health center. Working hours Monday-Friday 8:00-17:00.

Contact person Andrei Toma. Tel. +37369304367

Pharmacy. Tel. +3736866418

Post office. Working hours: Monday-Friday 8:00-15:30.

