



Dracula Is Dead: Travels in Post-Communist Romania

Sheilah Kast, Jim Rosapepe

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In December 1989, Romanians overthrew dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, ending more than forty years of Communist totalitarianism. Five years ago, on the twentieth anniversary of the fall of Communism in Romania, former United States ambassador to Romania Jim Rosapepe and his wife, award-winning journalist Sheilah Kast, wrote *Dracula Is Dead*. Now, on the twenty-fifth anniversary, they've updated it in a second edition.

The book has achieved an amazon.com ranking of #5 in the essays/travelogues category and shares thoughtful insights on how Romania has reintegrated with Europe, while preserving its unique heritage.

Today, Romania is a thriving democracy, an economic success, and a member of NATO and the European Union.

Since 1989, Romania's economy has grown by 220% and its population has shrunk by thirteen percent as the birthrate fell and younger people left for higher pay in Spain and Italy. In 2014, Romania elected an ethnic German as president. Most important, Romania is now a normal European country with largely open borders and confidence that its future is democratic.

What's the story behind the Romanian miracle?

Join this amazing tour of an amazing land beyond Dracula, beyond orphans, beyond Communism, to the vibrant culture, unique history, and 21st century skills that define modern Romania.

In the last decade, Romania became a world class player in IT -- and in cinema. Romanian films such as "Tales from the Golden Age," "12:08 East of Bucharest," and "4 months, 3 weeks, 2 days" all won awards at Cannes in recent years -- and have more fans abroad than at home.

You'll travel to Bucharest, the capital city once called the Paris of the East, where centuries-old Orthodox Christianity thrives in tandem with cutting-edge information technology; to Maramureș in the north, where the Holocaust took a great toll on a once vibrant Jewish community that included Nobel Prize-winner Elie Wiesel; to Transylvania, home not just to Vlad the Impaler, the real-life Dracula, but to the historic struggles between Romanians and Hungarians, now at peace; and to fascinating spots in-between.

Along the way, you'll meet people, famous and unknown, who have made Romania -- people like King Michael, who in World War II, at age twenty-two, led a coup to unseat a fascist dictator, only to be forced into exile by the Communists; Ion Iliescu, both a leading figure during Communism and Romania's first democratically elected president; and Judith Katona, a young woman who, like many Romanians, went abroad to study after the Revolution but returned to create the new Romania.

More than a travelogue or memoir, *Dracula Is Dead: Travels in Post-Communist Romania* presents Romania through American eyes, taking you with Jim and Sheilah as they discover a remarkable country of boundless hospitality, brilliant skills, and a bright future in a peaceful Europe.

Romania's quarter-century since the Revolution has been a bumpy ride -- divisive politics, economic cycles, and a war next door.

But, through it all, Romania has emerged more free, more prosperous, and more secure. It also has preserved its unique culture -- Romance language, Latin culture, Christian Orthodox religion, tolerant inclusion of ethnic minorities, rural village life, and love for (almost) all things American.

See for yourself.

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