

ACTIVE TRAVEL Responsible Travel Policy

The link to the Active Travel Ecotourism Policy and Management Strategy: <http://www.adventure-tours.ro/files/active-trekking-tour-in-national-park-piatra-craiului-2-days.pdf>

Policy aims

Active Travel is committed to creating more opportunities to showcase the natural beauty of Romania while preserving these natural assets for future generations. Conservation and tourism do not have to be at odds. We have a vision for ecotourism that brings people into contact with nature, not in conflict with nature.

Economic responsibility

By promoting eco tourism in our multi day trekking tours we stay in local guesthouses, run by the families, in the mountain villages. In that way the tourists have the chance to taste the home made food and the local products, to buy hand made souvenirs. In the same time the money they spend stay in the local communities helping the locals to maintain and/or to develop their small businesses. More than this the young generations noticed that they do not have to move at the cities to work in a big company; they can learn how to run a guesthouse or a small shop in their villages, instead. The more tourists we have in their areas, the more chances to use the locals as employees. For example in our self guided tours we use a local company for the tourists and luggage transfers from one village to next one.

Environmental responsibility

We print only catalogues in qr code format when we participate at the international tourism fairs. By doing this we save a lot of paper. We are working with small family guesthouses which promote eco tourism and they have in their rooms the instructions about how they can reduce the water consumption (eg. using towels) and they serve local food produce in the local communities (eg. milk, eggs, meat, cheese). We limit the use of plastic bottles by providing reusable bottles, as much as we can and we are not working with the single use plastic. These are one of the reasons we have 3 of our products eco certified: <http://www.adventure-tours.ro/eco-romania-certified-programs-eco-romania-certified-programs.html>. *The Ecotourism Certification System developed by AER (Association of Ecotourism in Romania) has adapted the international experience to the Romanian context. It is based on the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Programme promoted by the Australian Ecotourism Association (NEAP is the first accreditation system in ecotourism) and on Nature's Best developed by the Swedish Ecotourism Association (the first accreditation system in ecotourism in the northern hemisphere).*

Our mountain guides (including me) carry all the time in our trekking tours, with or without tourists, a bag and collect the trash they found on the paths. We stay only on marking trails. For example, when following a trail, parties should walk single file down the middle of the trail. We visit the wildlife only at a small hides (maximum 8 people) for an authentic experience. Actually our small group day tours have a maximum number of 8 tourists, for example. We are specialized in private and small group tours. Quality vs quantity!

Social responsibility

In our multi day trekking tours we use the local resources: we stop at a local handicraft or to a museum or at a local guesthouse for cheese tasting (eg. <https://www.adventure-tours.ro/day-tour-in-romanian-mountain-villages.html>). Where we need we use local guides.

Our tailor made programs help clients to better identify those areas that can offer awesome nature and rural culture experiences.

Our tourists can participate at the current works in the villages (eg. cutting the grass, milking the cows or sheep). We make a stop, during summer time, at an authentic sheep farm up into the mountains for a shepherd's lunch called "bulz" (polenta with cheese). Here we show at the tourists how the cheese is produced in a traditional way. The tourists could taste a special yogurt called "jintita" (can not be found in the local markets or big markets).

We inform the clients that it is important to know and respect a few elementary rules before visiting the areas of the National Parks or Natural Parks. In these areas we have locals from the mountain villages which are struggling to preserve their traditions and their way of life (not so much help from the Romanian state). We inform them to keep down the noise level so both humans and wildlife can enjoy the balance of nature, to admire the flowers and if they wish to pick them to use only their photo camera. During our tours we use to make a stop at a local guesthouse which has a small farm for a cheese tasting and/or an eco-lunch with local products. They can visit the farm and/or to participate to the daily activities, as milking the animals or cutting the grass. In this way they have a perspective about the conditions of living in these areas and they understand how important is to respect their lifestyle.

All my guides are licensed guides (cultural or mountain guides) who know the areas where we organize our tours. Anyhow when we arrive in some areas we use the services of a local guide.

The best examples are:

1. Transfer to the Palamari's Cultural Center near Fundata village, on our way to Brasov. Palamari's Cultural Center has an open air exhibition of the Maramuresean architectural complex into a Transylvanian environment. We stay about 4 hours for traditional and creative workshops such as: relaxation - finger painting / photography / moulding / slow-food - the importance of traditional cuisine / Romanian traditional dances. Ecolunch to the center.

2. We make a stop one day in a mountain village in Bran area and we offer to our clients this program which is organized by a local guide : "Day tour in Romanian mountain village - Sustainable, local, eco tour". The program of the day tour is as follow:

Cheese tasting

2 - 3 hours trek on the hills, admiring flora and fauna (1322 m altitude)

Traditional lunch with eco products

Tour of the village in horse driven carriage

Visit at a traditional loom