

45°28'49.87"N / 25°54'57.03"E



Window Seat

CAREENING AROUND these hairpin bends on DN1A near Cheia, Romania, may have you reaching for some stomach-calming ginger. If you're at all superstitious, you should pack garlic, too, especially if you're heading north-west into Transylvania with "Count Dracula's birthplace", Sighișoara, in your sights. Cross over the Carpathian Mountains and you're in vampire territory, made famous by notorious 15th-century prince Vlad the Impaler, who allegedly inspired Irish Gothic novelist Bram Stoker's Dracula character. In the photogenic medieval town of Sighișoara, it's almost compulsory to visit the restaurant in the house where Vlad was born and sink your teeth into a Romanian menu sprinkled with vampire references (Dracula Kiss cocktail, anyone?). Beyond the city, brown bears and wolves lurk in the primeval forests of the Carpathian Mountains, along with cave-dwelling dwarf bats. Spoiler alert: while werewolves are known to inhabit fertile imaginations worldwide, there are no blood-sucking vampire bats in Transylvania – you'll have to go to Central and South America for those.