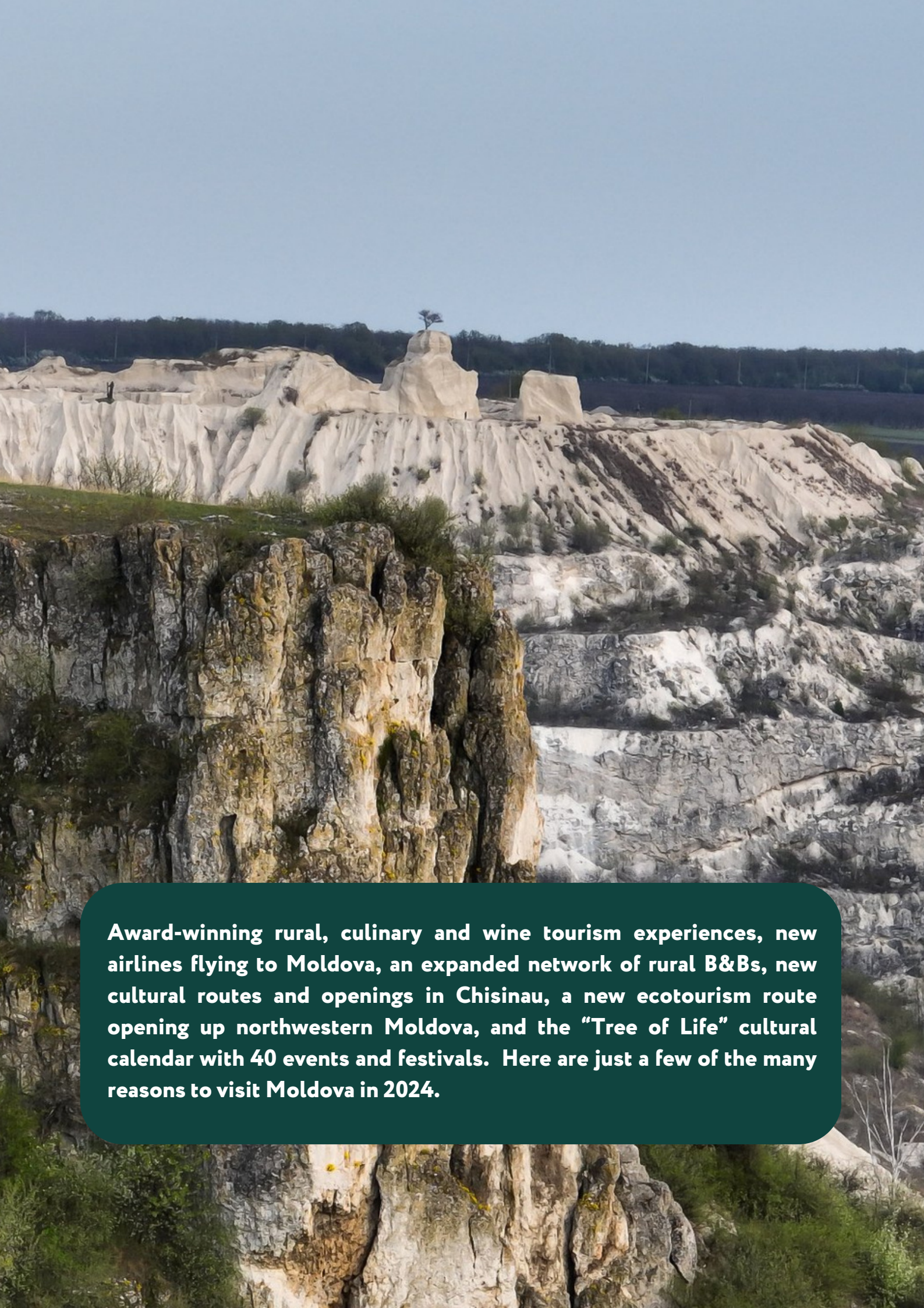


WHY VISIT MOLDOVA IN 2024





Award-winning rural, culinary and wine tourism experiences, new airlines flying to Moldova, an expanded network of rural B&Bs, new cultural routes and openings in Chisinau, a new ecotourism route opening up northwestern Moldova, and the “Tree of Life” cultural calendar with 40 events and festivals. Here are just a few of the many reasons to visit Moldova in 2024.

Valeni has been named “Best Tourism Village” by UNWTO and other international awards for best culinary and beverage experiences

Located in the Lower Prut UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Valeni is a village in southern Moldova known for both its rich natural resources and cultural traditions. And more recently, how its model of sustainable rural tourism development plays a role in the conservation of both, so that the richness of the local environment and culture are understood and valued by local residents and travelers alike. In addition, the village is a pioneer SMART village applying digital innovation and renewable energy into local services and tourism infrastructure. These are just a few of the reasons why [Valeni was named as a Best Tourism Village](#) by World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 2023.



According to the UNWTO, “Valeni offers a unique tourism experience, blending cultural immersion, Moldovan wine tasting, and natural adventures...reshaping its economy from unsustainable agriculture to sustainable practices.”

Travelers can go hiking or [cycling](#) along trails around Lake Beleu, the Valeni Golden Hills, and the road of Petru Rares or join a cooking class to learn how to make plăcinte (a traditional Moldovan dish) or take part in a traditional HORA dance or enjoy Moldovan hospitality and tranquility at one of the family-run B&Bs or guest houses. Or maybe, do it all to enjoy the full Valeni experience, immersed in nature and culture. See for yourself [in this video](#).

Moldova is also home to other award-winning culinary and beverage experiences

[Eco-Resort Butuceni](#) was the winner of both the World Food Travel Association's [2023 Global Culinary Travel Awards](#) for Best Agricultural or Rural Experience for Culinary Travelers and the [Iter Vitis Best Authentic Wine and Food Experience Award](#). These awards recognized their long-term commitment to the local community using locally sourced ingredients, preserving traditional recipes from the village and hiring local people as chefs.



In addition, [BERD'S Chisinau MGallery Hotel Collection](#) was the winner of the Global Culinary Travel Award for Best Beverage Experience for Culinary Travelers, highlighting their passion for wine selection and unique beverages.



New airlines flying to Moldova with direct flights from Europe and the Caucasus, plus new flight options from New York City

Eurowings, Air Baltic and Georgian Wings are some of the new airlines starting direct flights to Chisinau in early 2024, making traveling to Moldova even easier this year. These new airlines will add Stuttgart, Cologne, Riga and Tbilisi to the growing list of cities with direct flights. This is in addition to new airlines and direct routes added in 2023, including Aegean Airlines with flights from Athens, [WizzAir](#) from London Luton, Rome and Milan, plus low-cost airlines FlyOne and HiSky with direct flights from many cities in Germany, Italy, and the UK, as well as from other European countries. These direct flights make Moldova just two to three hours away from most major cities in Europe.

Moldova is also becoming easier and more affordable to get to for travelers from North America this summer

HiSky is beginning new flights from [New York City \(JFK\) to Chisinau](#) via Bucharest four times a week from 7 June 2024. This means a total travel time from New York City to Chisinau is around 12 hours with prices beginning at €375 each way.



All of these new airlines and routes **make Moldova closer than you think**, meaning it's easier, faster and more affordable to enjoy a [city break in Chisinau](#) or [explore the rest of the country](#) and experience full Moldovan hospitality.

Note: From 18 January 2024, Chisinau airport code will change from **KIV** to **RMO** (Republic of Moldova), thereby retiring the Soviet-era airport code KIV that represented Kishinev, the Russian name for Chisinau.



Chisinau, Moldova's capital city, strengthens its allure as a unique European city break with new cultural routes, dining options and a new Accor Hotel

Chisinau has recently developed a series of cultural routes to help travelers further understand and explore Chisinau's history, diversity and arts. These themed routes highlight the different ethnicities and people who contributed to the city and its development, including Armenian, Greek, Jewish, and Polish populations. Museum buffs will enjoy the special Museum Route that showcase the country's history, art, ethnography and more. There is no official route – yet – for opera, ballet and performing arts fans, but the National Theatre of Opera and Ballet "Maria Biesu" is the first stop for world class performances, especially each September when they host a two-week opera and ballet festival.

The last few years have seen a lot of activity in Chisinau's hospitality and restaurant scene, and the openings of an Accor Group Hotel and several high-end dining options have added to the growing list of high quality, but still good value, offerings for staying and eating out in Chisinau. This includes reopening of the former Jazz Hotel in December 2023 as the Mercure Chisinau Center Jazz Hotel (4.5 stars), joining the 5-star Berd's Hotel that is part of Accor's luxury brand Mgallery Hotel Collection.



Recently opened Lume Neo Bistro (Lume means "people" in Romanian) and LeAcasa Restaurant join other fine dining restaurants like Divus, Atypic and Julien Gastro Bistro using locally sourced products and wines, thereby leveraging Moldova's strength as an agricultural and wine country, in innovative ways that add a local twist to fusion cuisine.

All of these recent developments mean that there's never been a better time for leisure and business travelers to visit Chisinau and enjoy a unique and memorable city break.

Network of family-run rural Bed & Breakfasts across Moldova expands to 55 establishments, creating more opportunities to connect with local experiences



Moldova's focus on rural tourism development and investments continued in 2023 and it is expected to grow in 2024 as more rural communities around the country engage more in tourism. This means that travelers now have more opportunities throughout the country to experience Moldova's genuine hospitality in family-run B&Bs, eat delicious home-cooked traditional meals with ingredients straight from the garden or nearby farm, learn about local culture and traditions, and immerse themselves in nature. And to enjoy all of this with modern comforts, more options for local cultural and outdoor experiences, and better tourism infrastructure throughout the country.

With the official opening of Hill and Valley, a family-run eco-farm and winery focused on sustainability and community development, in the spring of 2024, Moldova's network of rural family-run B&Bs will expand to over 55 properties in 2024. Many of these rural B&Bs are located near or along the Iter Vitis Wine Routes, making them a good base for visiting local wineries to do wine tastings and learn about Moldovan wine. They also are well situated near protected areas or natural parks for going hiking or cycling on one of the newly marked trails throughout the country.

This commitment to rural tourism development supports national sustainable development goals to improve socio-economic opportunities to villages and communities around Moldova.

New Stâncile Prutului (Prut Cliffs) Ecotourism Route with 156km of marked trails opens up northwestern Moldova to adventure and cultural travelers

With its official launch in May 2024, the Stâncile Prutului (Prut Cliffs) Ecotourism Route in offers “156 km of freedom, 156 km of hiking, 156 km of adventure.” This area in northwestern Moldova on the border with Romania and Ukraine is renowned for its natural beauty, dramatic gorge- and water-filled landscapes, long history, and cultural richness. The new route aims to connect all of these local features and strengths together for travelers to experience and enjoy with 156 km of marked trails that can be explored by hiking (day hikes), cycling or car.



Some of the highlights of this trail include the Duruitoarea Veche Grotto and Gorge where the remains of a neanderthal man and skeleton of a mammoth have been discovered, Fetești Gorge or "Little Switzerland" with its dramatic views, the Brînzei Gorge with its limestone formations filled with fossils from when this area covered by a sea 15-20 million years ago, as well as many other natural, historic or cultural attractions along the route.

In order to achieve these goals, the project worked heavily with local communities to engage them in the creation of the route and local tourism development, providing training and support to create quality tourism services for accommodation, food or experiences. It also focused on highlighting the local strengths of each community by creating local destination brands and products that the route would join together as a tourism network.

Learn more about the Stâncile Prutului (Prut Cliffs) Ecotourism Route and how it came together in this video.

The 2024 “Tree of Life” cultural calendar filled with festivals, events and races

2024 is gearing up to be another full year of festivals and events in Moldova with the “Tree of Life” cultural calendar filled with cultural, music, food, and wine events, plus unusual races for runners and other unique traditional festivals. In addition to the “Tree of Life” agenda playing an active role in the conservation and promotion of local culture, these events throughout the country offer tourists a unique way to immerse themselves and learn about local culture, cuisine and wine. There’s certain to be an event or festival that meets every interest or whim.

Highlights from the 2024 “Tree of Life” cultural calendar include:

Milestii Mici Wine Run, 10km (2 March 2024; Milestii Mici near Chisinau)

A truly unique running experience you won’t ever forget. The Milestii Mici Wine Run is a 10 km race through its Guinness Book of World Records underground wine cellars filled with wine barrels, 2 million of bottles of wine (we kid you not) and endless legends. Of course, participants will enjoy a special wine tasting after the race. More serious runners might be interested in the Chisinau Marathon on 29 September, 2024 that takes you through the streets of Moldova’s capital city.



Ia Mania Festival (29–30 June, 2024; Holercani village)

Named after the “ia”, the traditional embroidered blouse, Ia Mania is Moldova’s biggest festival of traditions, handicrafts, and of course “ia” blouses. This year is the 10th Ia Mania Festival so expect two days filled with traditional music, food, dance, wine and handicrafts.

DescOpera Classical Music Festival (June 2024, Butuceni village)

This annual outdoor festival of opera and classical music is a favorite for locals and international visitors alike. With the dramatic Orheiul Vechi's limestone gorge as the natural backdrop, it's hard to imagine a more beautiful place to see opera.



National Wine Days (5-6 October 2024: Chisinau and wineries around Moldova)

A nation-wide celebration of Moldovan wine and wine culture you won't want to miss. With 70+ wineries taking over the center of Chisinau and events at wineries throughout the country, this is THE festival to celebrate, learn about and taste Moldovan wine.



You can find a full list of the “Tree of Life” cultural events online at moldova.travel.

Note: Please take into consideration that the dates may vary.

Moldova in the News and Recent Campaigns

European Travel Commission (ETC) and Visit Europe Campaign “Eastern Europe Unveiled” – Moldova was one of the countries selected as part of the campaign’s history theme. Ross OC Jennings (aka, The First Piper) was sent to find historical gems throughout the country, from Chisinau to Orheiul Vechi to the largest wine cellar and collection in the world to a surprise traditional grape stomping at a vineyard.

National Geographic Traveller (UK) campaign highlighting Moldova as an emerging wine tourism destination: The campaign centered around the article “Discover Moldova’s vibrant viticulture regions” to explore Moldova’s different wine regions and the unique wine holiday experiences, from winery stays to farm-to-table eating experiences.

Euronews campaign showcasing Moldova’s wine culture and long tradition of wine making (7,000 years!). The campaign included a feature video on Euronews Explore Travel Series and a series of articles highlighting the connection between Moldovan wine and its culture, hospitality, and landscapes.

European Political Community (EPC) Summit: Moldova was the location of the EPC Summit in June 2023, hosting 45 heads of state and hundreds of international journalists at Castel Mimi just outside Chisinau. The successful summit shows Moldova’s ability to host major international events, and for participants to still feel the personal touch of local hospitality.

Practical Travel Information:

- Moldova is visa-free for 90 days for over 100 nationalities, including EU, UK, and North American citizens and many nationalities from Asia and South America.
- Information on the current safety and security situation in Moldova in relation to the war in Ukraine is [here](#).
- Moldova's official tourism information website is moldova.travel, also on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). This is hosted and run by the [National Inbound and Domestic Tourism Association of Moldova \(ANTRIM\)](#).

Media Activities and Press Trips

If you would like further information, requests for quotes, or images on any of the topics above or on another story you are working on about Moldova, please contact us at: media@moldova.travel. For more updates, story angles, and press releases, please check out our [Media Centre](#). You can also find more information in our [Press Kit](#).

We do occasionally host press trips and are expected to have several trips in 2024 around strategic themes related to wine, rural, culinary, cultural and adventure tourism. If you have interest in one of these press trips, email us to be included in our media database. Please include your media kit and/or details about the publication, audience, story angles, your location and desired timeframe.

