ROMANIA

Cisnadie town square

A Driving Day

The rain has found us again. Such a shame as the distant Carpathians could no longer be seen from our camp site. We took the secondary roads for the first part of our trip across to our next region of interest - Brasov. This road took us through a number of the Saxon villages for which the Sibiu region is famous. We stopped in the town of Cisnadie. This was funny because we thought we had been there for two days already. As it turns out our previous location was Cisnadoara.

The town of Cisnadie was colourful, well maintained and full of people. The Saxon (German) style stood out a mile. We particularly loved the little windows high in the roof that give the impression of eyes following you. We parked near the town centre and walked the streets and bought some bread from the first specialised bakery we have come across on this trip. The next 2.5 hours of the trip was mainly on a highway but it gave us great views of the Carpathians that brooded beside us as we drove. The

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PITSTOP Railway crossing lights flashing. We stop. Train coming. Train stops and straddles the crossing. Kids get off. We wait. Train eventually moves off. Slow life.

NO PACKETS Amazing to see supermarket freezer self-serve with many types of vegetables. Fill your plastic bag by the ladlefull.

PACKHORSE? Evidently the cars are filled to overflowing with as much weight as pack horses are filled around here.

Shadowing the Carpathian Mountains …….

highlight of the last part of the journey, on a secondary road, was seeing many more instances of the use of horses and carts, manual labourers in the fields and shepherds caring for sheep and cows. At one point we rounded a corner to see a very large herd of sheep, preceded by two pack donkeys walking slowly by themselves. Two men and a dog walked with the animals. One was in the front leading the entourage and one was covering the rear. What an amazing animal cavalcade. My oh my! Romania is truely still very traditional in its ways.

We also saw horses being used as forms of transport carting great loads of wood and hay. The funniest scene though was an very old man driving a brand new tractor. He was sitting under cover in the warm cabin. An older woman with a scarf covering her head (no doubt his wife), was sitting in the rickety cart being pulled behind without any cover - the wind and rain beating down on her. We smiled at her as we passed. She smiled back at us.

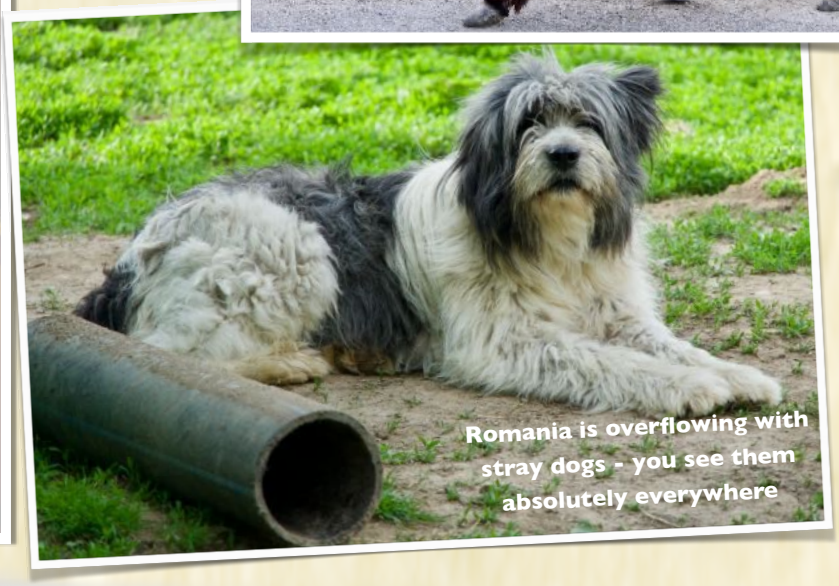
Out in the fields, we noted many people manually hoeing rows of earth. At home we would never contemplate manually working a whole acre or two of paddock - we would hire or buy a machine and get it done in quick time.

When we reached Bran (the home of the famous Bran Castle) we found it extremely difficult to locate the caravan park. After much cursing and U turning we eventually located it and are now warm inside our little home on wheels. We have just arranged to go on our first tour - a one day hike in the local mountains - in two days time. That should be a good change of pace and great fun. Evidently we will be looking for animal tracks and have a reasonable chance of seeing wolf, bear, lynx, wild boar and birds unique to this area. But first tomorrow - a visit to Bran Castle. Legend has it that Vlad the Impaler (more info tomorrow), the inspiration for Count Dracula, was imprisoned there.

PHOTOS

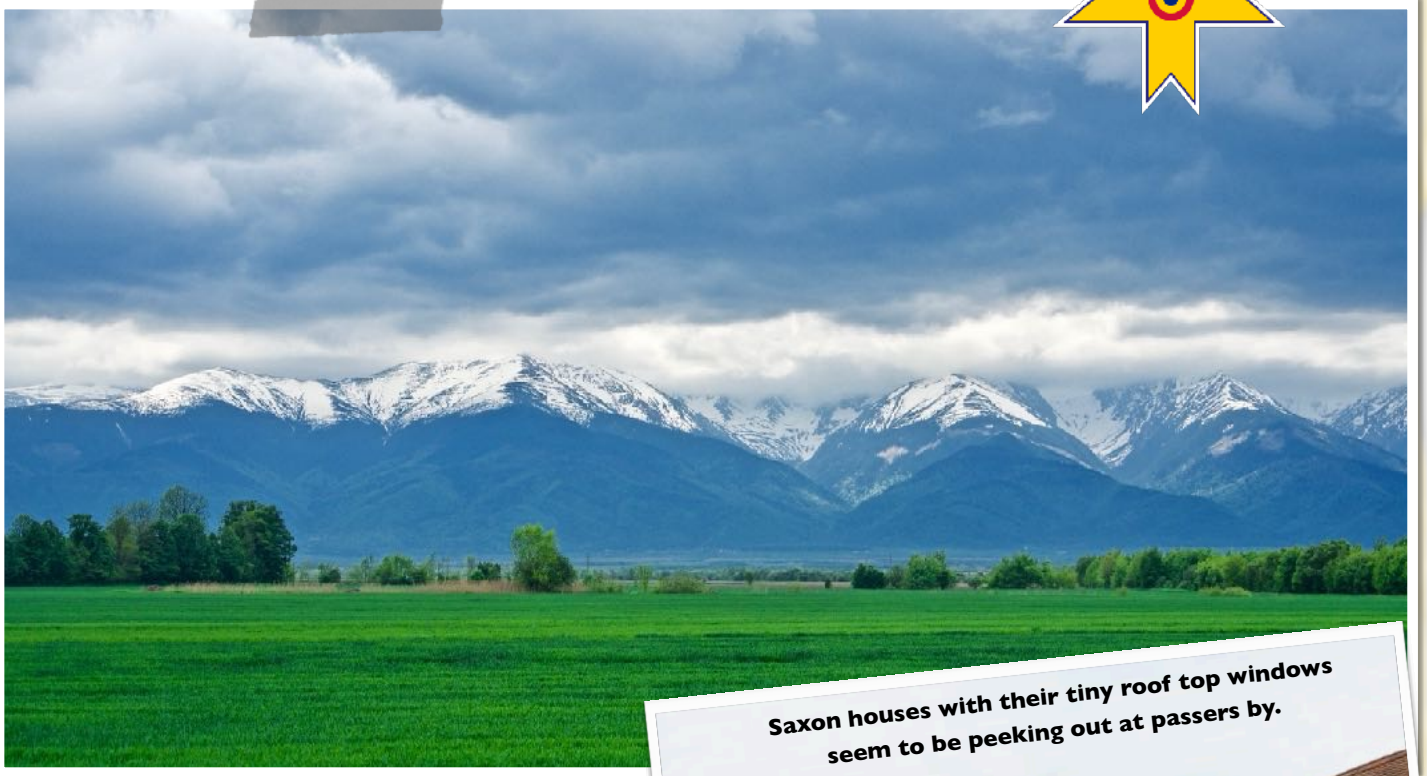
Cisnadie main street

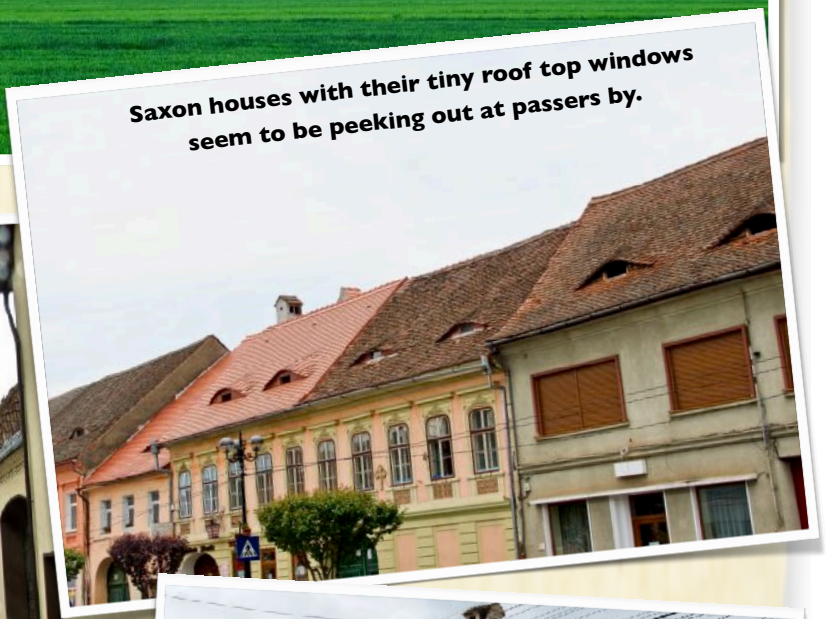
One horse power overloaded



Romania is overflowing with stray dogs - you see them absolutely everywhere

PHOTOS





Saxon houses with their tiny roof top windows seem to be peeking out at passers by.

PHOTOS

Bran Castle
Tomorrow's visit