ROMANIA

Caravan Parks

There are not many caravan parks in Romania and those that are listed are not guaranteed to be open. What's more, even when on a list, finding them can be a nightmare. But the ones that we have found (usually with great relief at the end of a long day) have been a god send - the owners that is! The current caravan park is no exception. It took some finding because the address was very perplexing, even for our GPS. You see, there are a lot of roads in Romania that do not have a name. Why? Because they are the Main road or Principle road running through the town - so why give it a name. Anyway, back to our caravan park owners. They could not be more welcoming and more helpful. They went with us into town to help find a battery, gave us inside info on local tourist attractions (and quickest route to get to them). They even cooked us a traditional Romanian 3 course meal (with local wine). Our stay here has been memorable because of their hospitality.

Bucovina

Fine at last. No more snow, so off to look at some monasteries for which this area is famous. Most of the monasteries here date mainly from the 15th and 16th centuries when Moldovia (as it then was) was battling to prevent domination by the Ottoman Empire. The monasteries are essentially churches that have been fortified in order to help protect the area from the advancing Turks.

The one we saw today was Moldovita Monastery. It was built in 1532. It has huge walls with round towers that surround the central church. One side of the church is totally covered in frescos (the other weathered badly due to prevailing wind and sun). It is amazing that the frescos have endured over the centuries. The inside is incredibly ornate. It too had paintings on every conceivable surface and a very high dome. The floor was once again covered in rugs. We could not help but admire the workmanship of the place.

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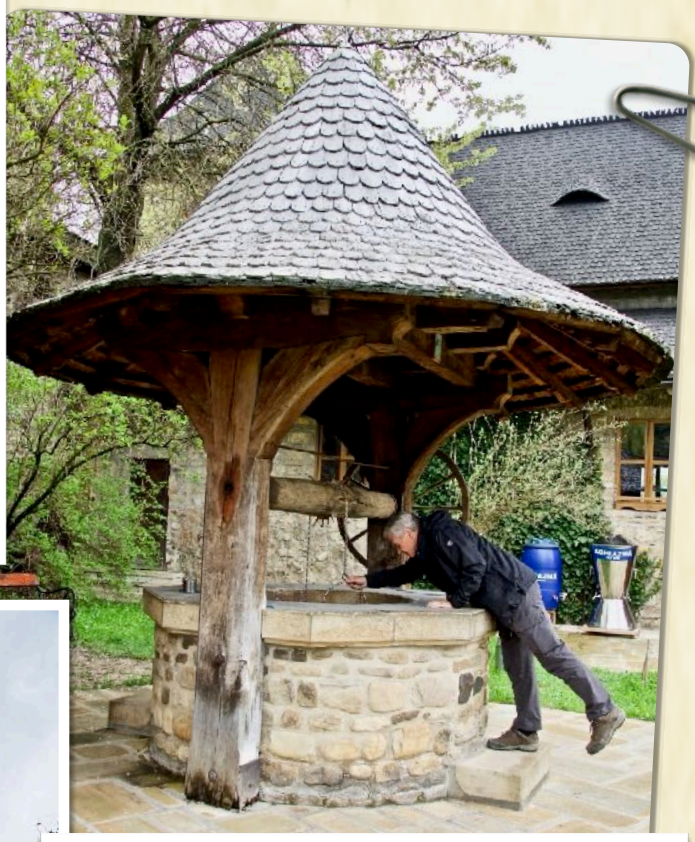
Painted eggs and monastaries. …….

Our intention was to continue on to two more monasteries further up the road, but as we kept getting higher and higher and into more snow laden areas we decided that we should turn around.

We found an interesting tourist attraction at the foot of the mountain called the "Egg Museum". Yes, it does indeed display eggs but these have been painted in the most skilful manner. The museum houses 10,000 examples of these eggs of all sizes and shapes painted by a local resident - Lucia Condrea. The eggs mix traditional Romanian Easter and holiday motifs with Slavic, Ukrainian and folk influences. They were displayed in a way to show how she had used various ideas like the weave of a particular rug or lace as a spur to her imagination.

The most fun for the day was driving around the local area enjoying the scenery. The landscape looked fabulous with the snow in the distance and we kept coming across horse drawn vehicles. It was a dash to see if we could get a good photo. We regularly waved to the people and got great responses with smiles and waves returned. I often think it is us that are the oddity. We look at them but they look at us just as much.


3 friends?



PHOTOS