

## IDENTIFICATION OF TOURISM RESOURCES IN THE DANUBE CLISURA

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**Abstract:** *Clisura Dunării, an area full of natural charm and history, where the river meets the mountains in the most spectacular way possible, officially lies between the entrance point of the Danube River in Romania at Baziaș and Gura Văii or the so-called Danube Basins. Clisura Dunării has a rich and diverse tourist offer and the best use of it is a great opportunity for the area's development.*

**Key words:** *touristic offer, touristic resources, Clisura Dunării, gorge, touristic area.*

### **Introduction**

Clisura Dunării is a geographical region located along the northern bank of the Danube in southern Banat. The region is limited to the west by the river Nera and the Danube Basins to the east. The largest settlements along the Clisura Dunării are the two cities, Moldova Nouă and Orșova. Other towns like: Socol, Pojejena, Coronini, Gârnic and Sichevița from Caras-Severin County, together with: Berzasca and Svinița, Dubova Eselnita, Ilovița and Breznița-Ocol from Mehedinti County, are also part of the Clisura Dunării. The region is inhabited by Romanian and Serbian people, some municipalities even having a Serbian majority. They are overrepresented in Socol, Pojejena and Svinița. There is also a Czech community, especially around the village Garni, specifically in the rural region of Eibenthal Bigar. A large number of Germans can be met in Orșova. Archeological discoveries made in the area show that this territory had been lived on in ancient times by people, and it can be demonstrated with certainty that they were our ancestors, the Dacians. Geto-Dacian communities had been settled here because of the area's wealth and its strategic significance. Traces of Dacian settlements have been found in the coastal towns of Bazias, Divici, Pojejena, Coronini, Gorn and Liubcova.

### **The touristic potential of this area**

#### **Relief**

The relief of the region presents a series of steps descending from north to south. The highest level is the south-eastern extensions of the Godeanu Mountains, which guard the lofty Cerna Valley. Along the Cerna Valley are the peaks of the Mehedinți Mountains (much lower), which hinder the Timis-Cerna corridor. Beyond this passage there are the lower heights of the Almăj Mountains, which are bordered to the west by the Locvei Mountains.

### Climate

Geographically fragmented landscapes and natural settings, with wide influence from the Danube corridor, this area has a temperate continental climate with local nuances.

Air temperatures in most of the area are higher than in the rest of the country, frosts are rare and of low intensity.

In terms of rainfall, annual average quantities display quite large differences between certain sectors: 670-615 mm in the Danube Gorge, 1000-1100 mm in the Mehedinți mountains and 700-1000 mm in Cerna Valley. The highest amount of rainfall is recorded during the months of May-June and in November, while from August to September and in February this area is very poor in precipitations.

### Vegetation and fauna

The area meets a rich and interesting vegetation characterized by abundance, rarity and scientifically important species of plants. Only the portion of the Danube between Orsova and Simian includes 1253 species, plus 841 species in the Danube Gorge. The Domogled Mountain is a true botanical garden, being considered the place with the richest flora in Europe.

The fauna is characterized by species for hunting and also endangered species like: the Hermann tortoise, the horned viper etc. In the Danube lakes we can meet little egret, ducks and geese, black stork, but only a few. The Danube provides a habitat for numerous fish populations like: the chub, the bleak, the pike, the carp and the barbel.

### Sights:

**Bazias** - here the Danube river enters Romania; the first railway was built in Romania between Bazias and Oravita; there are traces of Roman camp Lederata;

**Moldova Veche** – Moldova Nouă is a township port on the Danube. There was here the Dacian Mudava fortress, where the Romans built a fort, on top of which during 1427-1428 there was a city that has been destroyed by the Turks in seventeenth century;

**Coronini** – at the entrance in the village (from Orsova) there is located the fortress of St. Ladislaus (Castle Manor), on the hilltop, about 50 meters above the Danube. The fortress was named after the famous arpadian king Ladislas I (1077-1095), canonized in 1192, who fought here against the Byzantines, attempting to take from them all the territories near the Danube river. Here lies Ostrovul Decebal Island in the middle of the Danube, which cannot be inhabited because of the floods;

**Rock Baba Caia** - rears 7 meters above the water, and here begins the Danube canyon, the most spectacular section of Clisura Dunării;

**Cave "hole to bite "**- has a total of 254m and is free of spectacular calcite concretions. What is specific to this cave is the penetrating odor of ammonia caused by the large amount of bat guano produced by the colonies that populate this cave.

Below the rock Baba Caia is located, about 30 m high in the limestone wall, up the road, next to a spring of drinking water;

**Sichevița** - here there are preserved even a few mills buckets (therefore it is considered to be a horizontal wheel with radial buckets) that are over 100 years old. Those are still used by the locals to green different seeds. The town is a Roman fort; there are remains of Paleolithic Age, Neolithic, Eneolithic, transitional, Bronze, Iron, Dacian, Roman, medieval;

**Berzasca** – from the Danube waters rise out to the lights the ruins of the Drencova fortres, built in 1450 by John Hunyadi, demolished by the Turks and the ruins were partially covered by the Danube's waters;

**Danubes Boilers** - are located in the south-west and the north-east of Dubova city, between Ogradena Valley and Turks Ogas. In this area the Danube river crosses the narrowest and most grandiose place of the Danube gorge, the Large Boilers being separated from the Small Boilers by the Dubova basin. Through the Danube boilers we understand the area between gorge zone from the mouth flow of the Plavisevita river in the south and the Ogradena river in the north, forming a geomorphological unit well individualized. The Miocene basin from Dubova divides the Danube boilers into two distinct parts: Large Boilers and Small Boilers. Between the Dubova basin and the Plavisevita river, the Large Boilers are located. Having a length of 3.8 kilometers, they are formed from the Ciucaru Great Hill (318 m), whose step walls edge the left side of the river, and the Starbatu Great Hill (768 m), located on the territory of Serbia. Between the Ogradena basin and the Dubova basin there are the Small Boilers with a length of 3.6 km. They consist of the Ciucaru Small Hill (313 m) and the Stârbatul Small Hill on the Serbian territory (626 m);

**Mraconia Monastery**-is located on the road from Orsova to Moldova Nouă, in the Mraconia Valley, near the Old Ogradena village. The old construction is hidden in a magnificent landscape in front of the old Traian road from the Serbian bank were we can find „Tabula Traiana”. Over the years, the monastery was known under different names: the Danube Valley Monastery, the Mracuna Valley Monastery, the Monastery from Old-Ogradena, the Monastery on the Clisura Dunării, the Monastery from Orsova, the Mracuna monastery. Nearby, there are the „Danube Boilers ", the most beautiful and charming area of the Danube river.

**Decebal Statue** – sculpted in rock, it is located on the mouth flow of the Mraconia river in the Danube and it can be seen on road 57, which links Eselnita and Dubova, and it can also be seen from the Danube river. It was placed here as a replay of Traian Tabula monument, which is located a few kilometers before the Danube Serbian shore. The sculpture is 55 meters high and 25 m wide. Effigy proves to be the exact copy of the image of the Dacian King Decebal, bearing the title: DECEBALUS REX.

**Traiana Tabula**-is located on the Serbain shore, near the Small Boilers, next to the former village of Ogradena. On the opposite bank passed the old Roman road protection fences. Tabula is fixed on the rock and on it two dolphins and an eagle hovering in the sky are being represented. The figurines and ornaments are carved in

relief, and the writing is carved in the stone. Tabula Traiana was built by the Romans to commemorate the military obstacles they encountered when trying to cross the Danube river in 101 BC. Tabula is also considered a reminiscent of the scale works which the Roman administration made in the region at that time. Over time, tabula suffered from natural weathering, and is high above the lake in the same time with the construction of the hydroelectric "Iron Gates I".

**Ponicova Cave-** the largest in the whole Danube gorge (galleries totaling 1660 m) can be accessed on land or on the river Danube by boat. It is accessible to less experienced people; equipment can be one of the circumstances. It is recommended as an active gallery (Ponicova River) and the archaic one (colonnade of the Great Snake). The Cave Mouth Ponicova presents several levels of galleries, the lower still being active. From the galleries that can be visited, the most spectacular are the Concretionary Gallery and also the Room of Columns. Here, the water and time have created stalactites and stalagmites of different shapes and sizes, domes and columns, floor, white calcit, holes, pearls caverns, curtains, etc. You can also find in this cave bones of a bear and of the hienă fish of the halstatian culture;

**Orsova** - here is the St. Anne Monastery, placed on the Santa hilltop that dominates Orsova city. This monastery has had a very special history, being built by the well-known journalist Pamfil Șeicaru, who fought wars in Orșova as a young lieutenant of Infantry Regiment 17 in the first world war. In recent years, several guesthouses appeared on the Danube bank, which, especially in summer, are occupied by tourists from all over the country. Due to its uniqueness in Europe, this area may attract large numbers of tourists.

## Conclusions

Romania represents for the tourist sector a valuable economic potential for development, untapped with even enough and can become a beacon of attractions for both foreign investors and tourists. Clisura Dunării is an area less known on the Romanian touristic map, although it is one of the most picturesque areas of Romania, it is less exploited in terms of tourism and economy. It is necessary that the government, including the local authorities, consider tourism as a means of pushing forward the local and national economy. Tourism should be viewed as a basis for a higher economy and new opportunities for economic development in this area. Therefore, measures should be considered so that the Clisura Dunării becomes a touristic area with a maximum tourist attraction for Romanian and foreign visitors.

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