



Welcome!
Iasi
Bine ai venit!

*What it is the use of constant regrets
When it is written for us to pass through this world
As the dream of a shadow and as the shadow of a dream?*
Mihai Eminescu

About Iași

Built on seven hills.

One of the leading centres of Romanian social, cultural, academic and artistic life.

One of the oldest and one of the most important sites of the country.

The old capital of the Principality of Moldavia from 1564 to 1859, then of the United Principalities from 1859 to 1862, and the capital of Romania from 1916 to 1918.

Main development pole of the East part of European Union.

Provides inestimable material and spiritual values to national patrimony, and has drawn glorious pages in the history of the country, lasting in people conscience.

The City

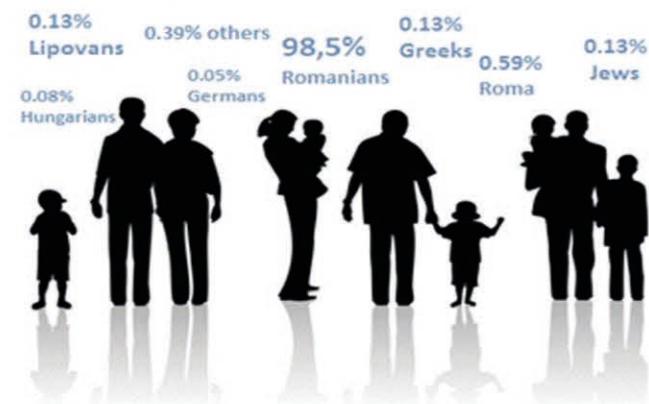


Located in the North-East of Romania between the Iasi Ridge and the Jijia Plain, Iași used to be the crossroads place of the commercial routes that passed through Moldavia coming from Kingdom of Poland, Habsburg Empire, Tsardom of Russia and Constantinople.



Iași is built on seven hills: Cetățuia, Galata, Copou - Aurora, Bucium - Păun, Șorogari, Repedea and Breazu, thus triggering comparisons with Rome. The surrounding country is one of uplands and woods, featuring monasteries and parks. Iași itself stands amid vineyards and gardens, partly on hills, partly in the in-between valley. Iași has a humid, continental - type climate (Köppen climate classification "Dfb" — summer wetter than winter, European subtype) with four distinct seasons. Summers are warm with temperatures sometimes exceeding 32 °C (90 °F) while winters are cold and windy with moderate snowfall and temperatures at night sometimes dropping below -10 °C (14 °F). Average monthly precipitation ranges from about 25 mm (1 in) in October to 100 mm (4 in) in June.

Iași is the fourth most populated city in Romania with 290,422 inhabitants living within the city limits. According to the 2002 Romanian census, there were 109,357 housing units and 320,888 people living within the city of Iași. Additionally there were 60,000 more residents (mostly students) and thousands of daily commuters. Iași Metropolitan Area has a population of 382,484, an area of 808 km² and includes the municipality of Iași and 13 other nearby communities, while the population of the peri-urban area exceeds 500,000 residents. Iași is an important economic centre in Romania. The most important sectors are related to education, health care, banking, research, culture, government and tourism.



Education

Student life in Iași is extremely cool thanks to the high number of national and international students. Inhabitants of Iași are friendly and foreigners are usually made welcome. Iași is a student city and provides an opportunity for training in various fields. Public universities include:

1. "Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University
2. "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University
3. "Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy
4. "George Enescu" University of Arts
5. "Ion Ionescu de la Brad" University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine

The qualifications of the higher education system are: diplomas, certificates, degrees and other official documents of state, confirming the higher education program and graduate professional qualifications. There are: Bachelor degree (BA); Master's degree; Degree of Doctor (Ph.D.). This is the highest academic degree awarded in all areas after 3-4 years of study and original research. It follows the second university degree (master), and grants the title of doctor in a certain field of science or arts.



"Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library of Iași, where the main records of Romanian history are preserved, is the oldest and the second largest in Romania. On February 1, 2006 the library held a total of 2,426,209 bibliographic units that contribute to satisfy the needs of information and research.

Great poet Eminescu was a conscientious director for the Library that bears the name of pride today. He lived more in the Library, from morning till late at night, avidly searching the shelves of books and manuscripts. The Library was built between 1930-1934 by the engineer Emil Pragner. The interior of this architectural monument is worked in Carrara marble and Venetian mosaic, and the exterior is embellished with sober and elevated ionic style columns, pilasters neodorici, small triangular pediments and medallions with the founders of our nation and national culture.

Since its foundation until 1860, the library functioned in the building of Academia Mihăileană (now destroyed). It was housed in the old university building (now the University of Medicine and Pharmacy) until 1897 and in the new university building (now the study hall of the Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iași) until after World War II, when it moved into the building of the King Ferdinand I Foundation's Library, the collections of which it now includes.



Cultural Life

Palace of Culture - the building served as Administrative Palace and then Palace of Justice until 1955, when its destination was changed again, being assigned to the four museums nowadays united under the name of Moldova National Museum Complex. At the same time, the building houses the Cultural Heritage Conservation-Restoration Centre, the main branch of Iași County. The construction, which started in 1906, was partly built on the old ruins of the mediaeval Royal Court of Moldavia (1434), and partly on top of the foundations of the former neoclassical style palace, dated to the time of Prince Alexandru Moruzi (1806), rebuilt by Prince Mihail Sturdza and dismantled in 1904.

The Palace has 298 large rooms with a total area of over 36,000m² (390,000 sq ft), 92 windows in the front part of the building and another 36 inside the building. Decoratively, the central hall shows a figurative mosaic including various representations of a gothic bestiary, concentrically arranged: two-headed eagles, dragons, griffons, lions. The hall is superposed by a glass ceiling room, where initially a greenhouse was arranged.



Major events in the political and cultural history of Moldavia are connected to the name of Iași city. The great scholars of the 17th century Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin and later Ion Neculce, wrote most of their works in the city or not far from it. The famous scholar Dimitrie Cantemir known throughout all Europe also linked his name to the capital of Moldavia. Many great personalities of Romanian culture are connected to Iași: the chronicler Nicolae Milescu, the historians and politicians Mihail Kogălniceanu or Simion Bărnuțiu, the poets Vasile Alecsandri or George Topârceanu, the writers Mihail Sadoveanu, Alecu Russo, or Ionel Teodoreanu, the literary critic Titu Maiorescu, the historian A.D. Xenopol, the philosophers Vasile Conta or Petre Andrei, the sociologist Dimitrie Gusti, the geographer Emil Racoviță, the painter Octav Băncilă, only to name a few.

If you are a connoisseur of classical music and art you can visit The National Opera. One opportunity to relish is the concert of the public Moldova Philharmonics, and ballet, opera, operetta. Go to any of performances in “Vasile Alecsandri” National Theatre, built between 1894 and 1896 in Neoclassic style with Baroque and Rococo inspired painted and sculpted ornaments. To enrich your knowledge of history visit Union Museum. Make sure you also visit the Natural History Museum. Founded on 4 February 1834, it is the first museum of this kind in Romania with over 300,000 items, the most valuable being the collections of insects, mollusk, amphibians, reptiles, birds, plants and minerals.



Religion

It is said that if you throw a rock in Iași, you will break a church window. Despite the fact that Communism outlawed religion, Iași is replete with churches and monasteries. Many of them are beautiful. The majority are of Eastern Orthodox denomination; however, they are richly decorated and sometimes surrounded by lush gardens. As you walk by, imagine the churches a hundred years ago as the centres of farming, peasant communities; the fruit bearing trees while domains around the church supported the clergy and nuns.

Trei Ierarhi Church is completely covered in carvings. The legend says that the church was once covered in gold, which was burned away to be stolen by the Turks.

Metropolitan Church contains the remains of "Saint Parascheva", the protector of the city. If you like chaos and celebrations, go to Iași from 12-16 of October of any year. The city floods with peasants and religious pilgrims from Romania and abroad.

Golia Monastery is surrounded with thick fat walls and has a prominent tower you can climb to the summit.

Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc is a small but beautiful church, located right next to the Palace of Culture. It was built by Stephen the Great in 1491-1492 making it the oldest standing religious building in Iași today, and later renovated around the year 1900. It is well worth a visit to admire the paintings, and perhaps take a break for a little peace of mind.

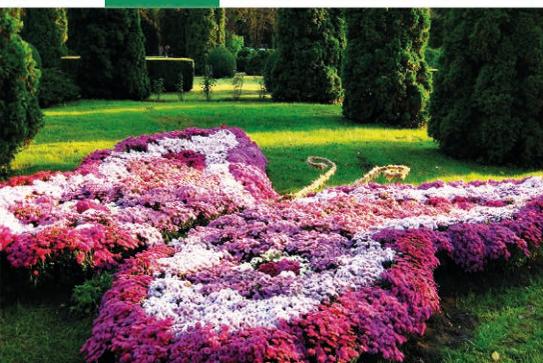
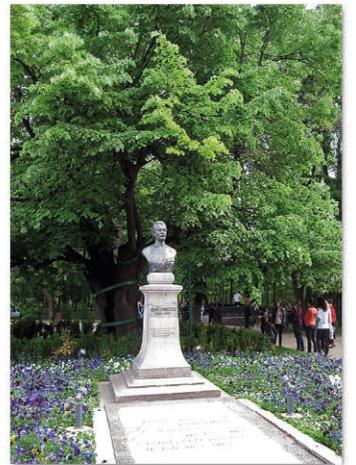
Frumoasa Monastery is in Nicolina, farther from downtown and amidst communist buildings. You can recognise the monastery by the metal roof.

Green Life

Copou Park designed between 1834 and 1848 under Prince Mihail Sturza, this 10-hectare park is allegedly where poet Mihai Eminescu (1850–89) wrote beneath a linden tree. A bronze bust of Eminescu sits in front. There is a 13m-high Obelisk of Lions, which is opposite the main entrance.

The Botanical Garden with 100 hectares surface includes the sector of green-houses with wonderful collections of tropical plants, cactuses, orchids and carnivorous plants. The roses garden with over 800 species from all over the world and a recreational park, with a lake. The botanical garden is a place in Iași where you can immerse yourself in the tranquility and beauty of the plants reading a favorite book or just walking with friends.

Ciric park located in the north-eastern part of Iași is another complex which consists into the park and four lakes. And that is not all...take a blanket, food, wine and go to **Bucium**, **Cetățuia** or **Galata**. There you can see the beauty of the city both day and night. Believe, with that view you will fall in love with Iași!



Food

The central characteristic of the Romanian cuisine is its great variety. It is a cuisine influenced by repeated waves of different cultures: the ancient Greeks, with whom Romanians traded; the Romans, who gave the country its name; the Saxons, who settled in southern Transylvania; the Turks, who for centuries dominated Romania; as well as Slavic and Hungarian neighbors. All of these influences gradually blended into the varied and delicious Romanian culinary tradition.

One of the national dishes of Romania is called *sarmale*, made with rice mixed with hacked meat, all wrapped in cabbage leaves. Soups play an important part at mealtimes and are usually rich and thick. *Mamaliga* (maize flour mush) is often served with cottage cheese and sour cream and is especially associated with the traditional Romanian life. Another specific dish is called *mici* and is mainly made of a mixture of different types of hacked meat. In restaurants and cafés one can find delicious cakes and ice-cream, specific to this area. For example, the dessert *papanashi* is cottage cheese donuts, topped with sour cream and fruit confiture.

Poftă bună!



Drinks

Do not leave Iași without trying the local firewater *țuică*; *Țuică* is a fruit brandy containing about 50% alcohol by volume, made from fermented plums. Usually, *țuică* is served in shot glasses and drunk as an appetizer. In winter, it can be boiled and mixed with various spices, in a fashion similar to that of mulled wine.

Romania is one of the world's top-ranking producers of numerous delicious wines, some of which never leave its borders. Romania's climate and soil are hospitable to the production of many different types of wines, from dry, sparkling whites to rich, aromatic, purplish reds. Don't forget to enjoy a glass of wine!

Romania has a long, proud history of brewing good beer (*bere*), and today there are just 20 breweries in the country. In Iași there are numerous bars, pubs and *berarias* where can drink *halba de bere*.



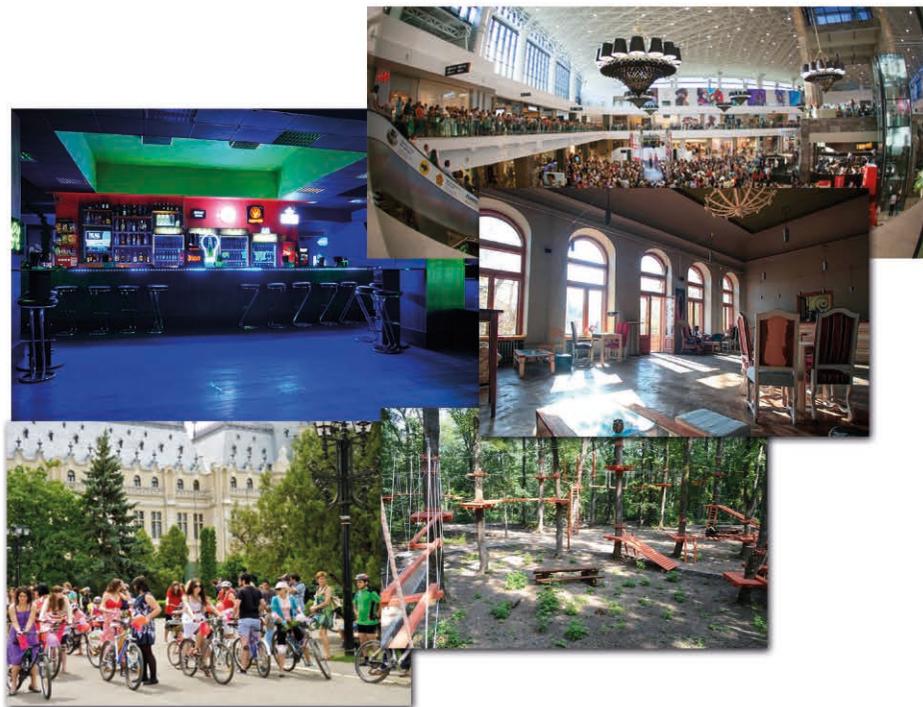
Free time

There are many places in Iasi where you can spend your free time. For example, **Palas Mall** where you can find everything from clothes to the best ice-cream and cakes. Have fun and play games, get drinks and food.

If you like to get to know the city, there is opportunity to rent a bike. Also, there is a place called **Hamak**. There you can practice all sports and games they know willingly.

With Iasi being the temporary home of 70000 students, it's quite hard to imagine you'll ever get bored, especially at night-time, when pubs, cafés and clubs become overcrowded.

You can chill, have a drink, dance or watch a game. Most popular discos and clubs are full until morning during University periods. So, brace yourself and let's party!



"I went to Iasi because I wanted a new experience in my life, something totally different from West Europe and I got the experience that I was looking for!"
Alberto, Spain

"From my own point of view and my own experience being a student in Iasi was the best thing I ever did. Amazing student life, made lots of friends."
Erasmus experience

"When I came to Romania, the first thing that caught my eyes was the forests and trees, because in Egypt we have a lot of deserts and it's not common to see a lot of beautiful trees everywhere like in Romania."
Abozaid, Egypt

"The city is full of young students, and many of them foreigners. The city is very safe. The leisure life in Iasi is very rich, there are many activities for students, many bars, clubs, coffee shops, restaurants, cinemas, Karaoke parties, music shows, theatre and other things to do."
Vered, Israel

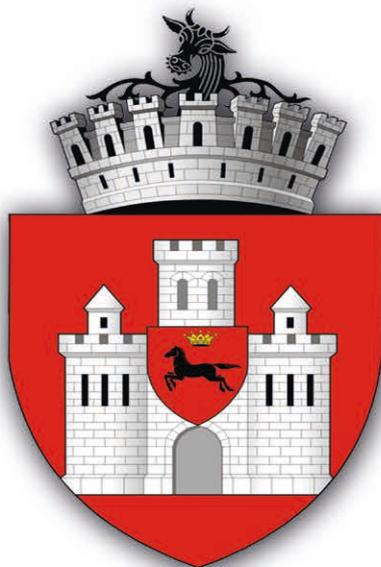
"You know what they said that is not important the place, but the people with who you are. I think that I'm lucky one and I have the both: beautiful city and amazing friends. And if you have unforgettable memories together, part of your heart always will be there..."
Tsvetelina, Bulgaria

"Iasi is my best European experience so far. It's a very nice city with a lot of interesting places and historical places too, people are so nice and warm and they always here for your help, streets are amazingly organized and empty most of the time. No traffic jam. I really wish to stay here forever!"
Ahmed, Egypt



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