TOP MOLDOVA WINERIES TOUR

DAY 1

Day 1: Arrival day

On arrival at Chisinau International Airport, you will be transferred to your accommodation in Chisinau. After settling in, you can have a walk through downtown and explore the city centre on your own.

DAY 2

Day 2: Discovery of Château Vartely winery

The first stop of this day will be at Curchi Monastery. The monastery is surrounded by a high wall of stone, set with towers at each corner, creating the impression of a fortress. The Nativity of Virgin Mary Church built in 1775 by Iordache Curchi is an example of neo-byzantine style, while St. Nicholas Church has monumental forms built in classicism style with baroque elements.

Next, you will set off on a time travel to Orheiul Vechi (Old Orhei) to see a natural amphitheater revealing a territory which was first inhabited 40 000 years ago. The Cultural, Natural and Landscape Reserve Orheiul Vechi includes a series of historical and cultural monuments as well as natural landscapes in the gorge of the Raut River. Ancient fortifications, cave monasteries, monks and hermits – here you can follow the history of this region. The originality of Orheiul Vechi landscape is due to the gorge of the Raut River, dug under the form of a canyon in the limestone layers of the former Sarmatian Sea, about 14 million years ago.

You will continue your journey to Château Vartely winery in Orhei town. Château Vartely is a modern complex, which comprises 4 hotel-type houses, 2 restaurants, 3 tasting rooms, and a huge inner yard. In the cellars and then in tasting rooms you will be acquainted with the particularities of Château Vartely wines, you will learn how they are made, kept and served. Here, you will have the opportunity to taste some of them including the Ice Wine made of grapes frozen even on the vine with aromas revealing notes of exotic fruit. After the grapes are pressed, the pure and sweet grape juice turns into an unforgettable wine.

After having lunch at Château Vartely winery, you will return to Chisinau where you will enjoy a city tour. Chisinau is the main administrative, scientific and cultural centre of Moldova. During the tour, you will discover pieces of history and culture of the city such as the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, the Bell Tower, the Arch of Triumph, the Monument of Stephen the Great, etc.

During dinner at the restaurant, you will be enveloped in the traditional atmosphere, created by the traditional style of the restaurant, the traditional dishes and of course the traditional live music show – the special flavor of the restaurant.

HIGHLIGHTS: Curchi Monastery, Orheiul Vechi - a 40 thousand years-old natural amphitheater, Château Vartely winery, Chisinau city,

DAY 3

Day 3: Visit in the south-east region of Moldova and discovery of Et Cetera and Château Purcari wineries

In the morning, you will visit Et Cetera family winery in and take part in the excursion and wine tasting carried out by the owner of the winery who will inform you about the methods of wine production and maturation. At Et Cetera winery, you will enjoy a lunch prepared from products of the region and Crocmaz village.

After lunch, the trip will continue to Château Purcari winery in Purcari village. If you are a wine enthusiast or just love to be in beautiful, pristine surroundings and listening the songs of birds, Purcari estate is definitely the place you need to visit. The old mansion's galleries feature great collections of Purcari wines, some bottles dating back to 1948.

The winery is famous all over the world due to the legendary wine "Negru de Purcari" - the elixir that in 1878 was highly appreciated on the international arena by being awarded the gold medal at Paris World Exhibition. In the tasting room, decorated in royal style, you will have the opportunity to taste Purcari wines, including "Negru de Purcari" and "Rosu de Purcari" wines, which have been the choice of some of the world's most recognized dignitaries.

You will have dinner at a restaurant in Chisinau where you will enjoy dishes specific to European cuisine.

HIGHLIGHTS: Et Cetera winery, Château Purcari winery,

DAY 4

Day 4: Cricova winery - the pearl of Moldovan wine-making

You will start the day by travelling to Cricova winery – the only wine enterprise that was awarded the highest state prize "The Order of the Republic" and has been declared by law a national cultural heritage. During the excursion at Cricova winery in the tourist train, at a depth of 80 m, you will discover the wonders of this place. Cricova underground galleries are formed by over seventy streets covering an area of nearly 120 km, each bearing Bacchic names: Sauvignon, Cabernet, Cahors, etc. The jewel of the underground treasure is the National Collection, including over 600 types of wine totaling about 1 million bottles. Here you will admire the oldest bottle of wine - "Jewish Easter Wine", dating from 1902 and discover the tastes of Cricova wines.

In the afternoon, you will return to Chisinau where you will have lunch at the restaurant.

The day will continue with the excursion at the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History built in 1905 in the oriental style, thus being a unique building of this kind in Moldova. Here, you will discover famous archaeological treasures, carpets, national costumes and other valuable exhibits and you will be able to see the "millenary smile" of the nicest deinotherium of Moldova.

After the excursion at the museum, you will enjoy a wine tasting and dinner at a wine bar in Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Cricova Underground Wine Galleries, National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History,

DAY 5

Day 5: Asconi family winery and Castel Mimi winery – architectural masterpiece in the world of wine

The first stop of the day will be at Asconi winery founded in 1994 and located in Puhoi village. The winery achieved a lot due to modern wine making technologies. Nowadays at Asconi estate European varieties are grown, but special attention is paid to indigenous varieties such as Rara Neagra, Feteasca, etc. One of the features of Asconi winery is that they pick up the grapes mechanically at night when the grapes are still cold. During the excursion and wine tasting at the winery you will be able to discover the wonders of this place.

Next stop will be at Castel Mimi winery located in Bulboaca village - a destination of interest unique in Moldova. Castel Mimi is currently listed among the most beautiful architectural masterpieces in the world of wine. The story of the castle begins at the end of 1893, when Constantin Mimi, the last governor of Bessarabia, plants the first grape vines on the place that would become legend over the years. Here, you will taste Castel Mimi wines, including Rosu de Bulboaca wine, an incomparable wine with outstanding features and elegant flavor. Lunch will be served at Castel Mimi restaurant and will culminate with a local desert.

After lunch, you will return to Chisinau, where you will have some free time to rest or explore the city at your own pace before dinner.

HIGHLIGHTS: Asconi winery, Castel Mimi winery,

DAY 6

Day 6: Milestii Mici winery – the jewel with the biggest wine collection in the world registered in the Guinness World Records

Today, you will travel to Capriana Monastery, founded in medieval Moldova, which is one of the oldest monasteries in the country. It is located in Capriana in a picturesque forested area once called Codrii Lapusnei. The first significant reference dates from a document issued in 1429 that gave Capriana the status of royal monastery on behalf of Alexander the Good. During a long period, Capriana Monastery acted as the residence of the Moldovan archbishop. Being closed and devastated in the post-war years, it was one of the first monasteries that reopened in 1989, becoming soon the symbol of national revival.

In the afternoon, you will take a ride to Milestii Mici winery located at a depth of 40-85 m in Milestii Mici village. Measuring about 200 km, all underground streets make up the largest network of caves ever dug by a human being, which appeared after the extraction of limestone deposits. The winery holds an impressive collection of more than 2 million bottles. The "Golden Collection" of Milestii Mici winery, which has over 1,5 million bottles, is the pride of the whole country, as in August, 2005, it was registered in the Guinness World Records as the biggest wine collection in the world. You will feel like a king/ queen here, admiring the beauty of this place, tasting wines in which you will feel the fire of sun and vigor of earth and enjoying national cuisine dishes.

After lunch, you will return to Chisinau where you will have some free time to enjoy on your own before dinner served at the hotel.

HIGHLIGHTS: Capriana Monastery, Milestii Mici winery,

DAY 7

Day 7: Departure day

On departure day, you will be transferred from the hotel to Chisinau International Airport. If your flight is in the afternoon, you will have the option to explore Chisinau for a while on your own in the morning and buy some souvenirs.