



VOIVODE
STEPHEN THE GREAT

TOURISTIC ROUTE



The cultural route of the ruler Stephen the Great and Saint (Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt) in Romania and in the Republic Of Moldova

Stephen the Great and Saint (Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt) was the best and the greatest ruler of Moldova ever. He ruled with the country for 47 years (1457-1504). His qualities as: a good strategist and astute diplomat, the initiatives taken to develop the culture by founding a new architecture style, building an impressive number of churches and monasteries, and the battles waged and won to defend the integrity of the country - have made him a legendary hero.

"The Stephen the Great" route in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova will cross through 20 places in Romania, 9 places in the Republic of Moldova and thirteen wine fields, thus offering tourists a lesson in history and spirituality through the tourist sights represented by the monasteries, the fortified cities, wine cellars, elder than 500 years, whose continuity has been preserved to our days, as well as the museums in which exhibitions with artifacts from the period of reign of Stephen the Great were organized.

During Stephen the Great reign Moldova knew the most flourishing period in its history. As the Ottoman danger increased rapidly after the fall of Constantinople, he increased the army - the "great army" of raiders and peasants. He militarily consolidated the border cities, creating a system of fortifications comprising Fortresses, four of which were situated on the Dniester River: Soroca Fortress, Tighina Fortress, White Fortress and Hotin Fortress, also Orhei - on the Răut River. He led more than 40 wars and battles. Only one of them took place on the territory of the present Republic of Moldova and has remained in history as the victorious Lipnic battle from 1469 against the Tatars.

He took great care for the economic consolidation of the country, stimulating foreign trade relations, which brought him money and fame. One of Europe's most important commercial roads, the "spice road", was passing through Moldova, and The Stephen the Great was the first to fully understand the importance of this great advantage and exploited it for country's favour. During Stephen the Great reign, Moldova had become one of the most important regions for the cultivation of vineyards and wine production in the monasteries. Viticulture reached its peak, and the position of cupbearer at the royal court was set up by Stephen the Great specifically.

Named by Pope Sixtus IV as "Christ's athlete" Stephen the Great paid special attention to spiritual life and cristianity promotion. He was the founder of many monasteries and churches in Moldova, and built an impressive number of places of worship. Popular tradition attributes him the founding of 44 churches. 500 years away in time, we talk about him as if he never died, or even more as he is still alive, somewhere around here, everywhere in Moldova, and his great lessons - of strategy, diplomacy, economy and Christianity remains amazing news even today.

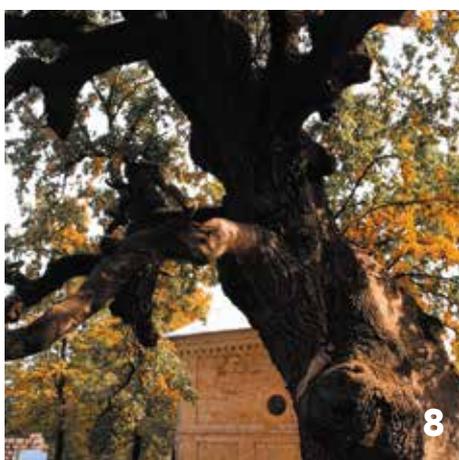
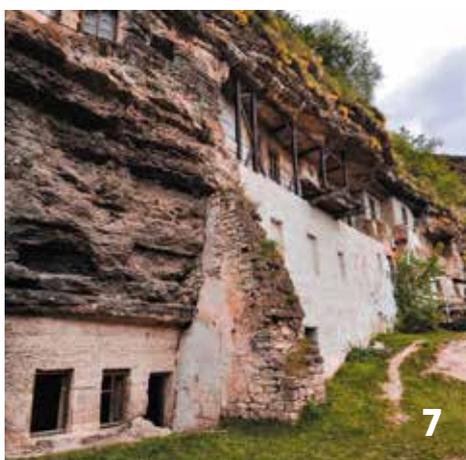
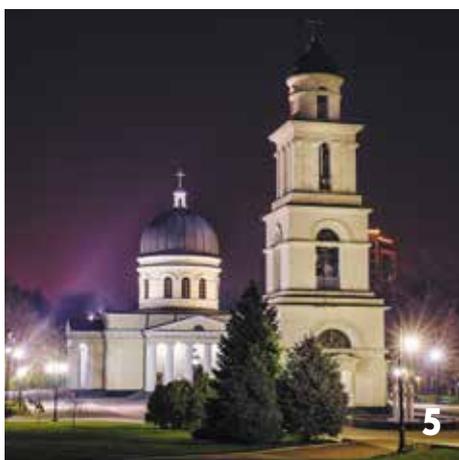
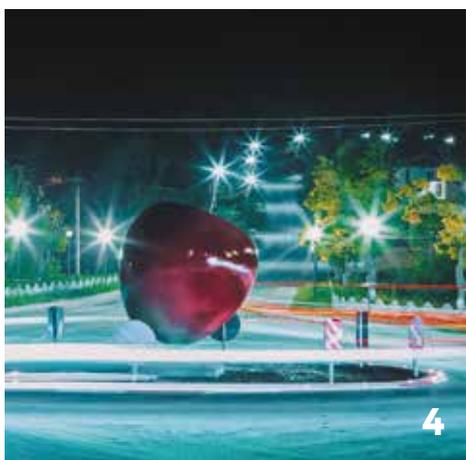
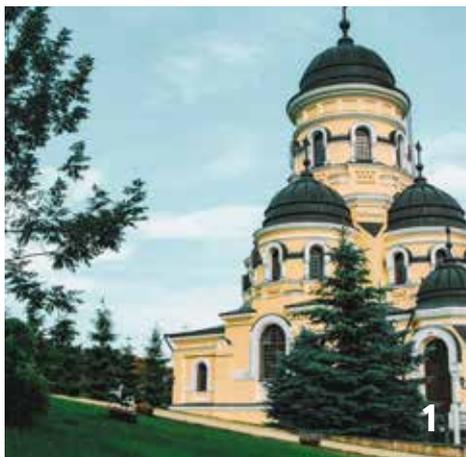




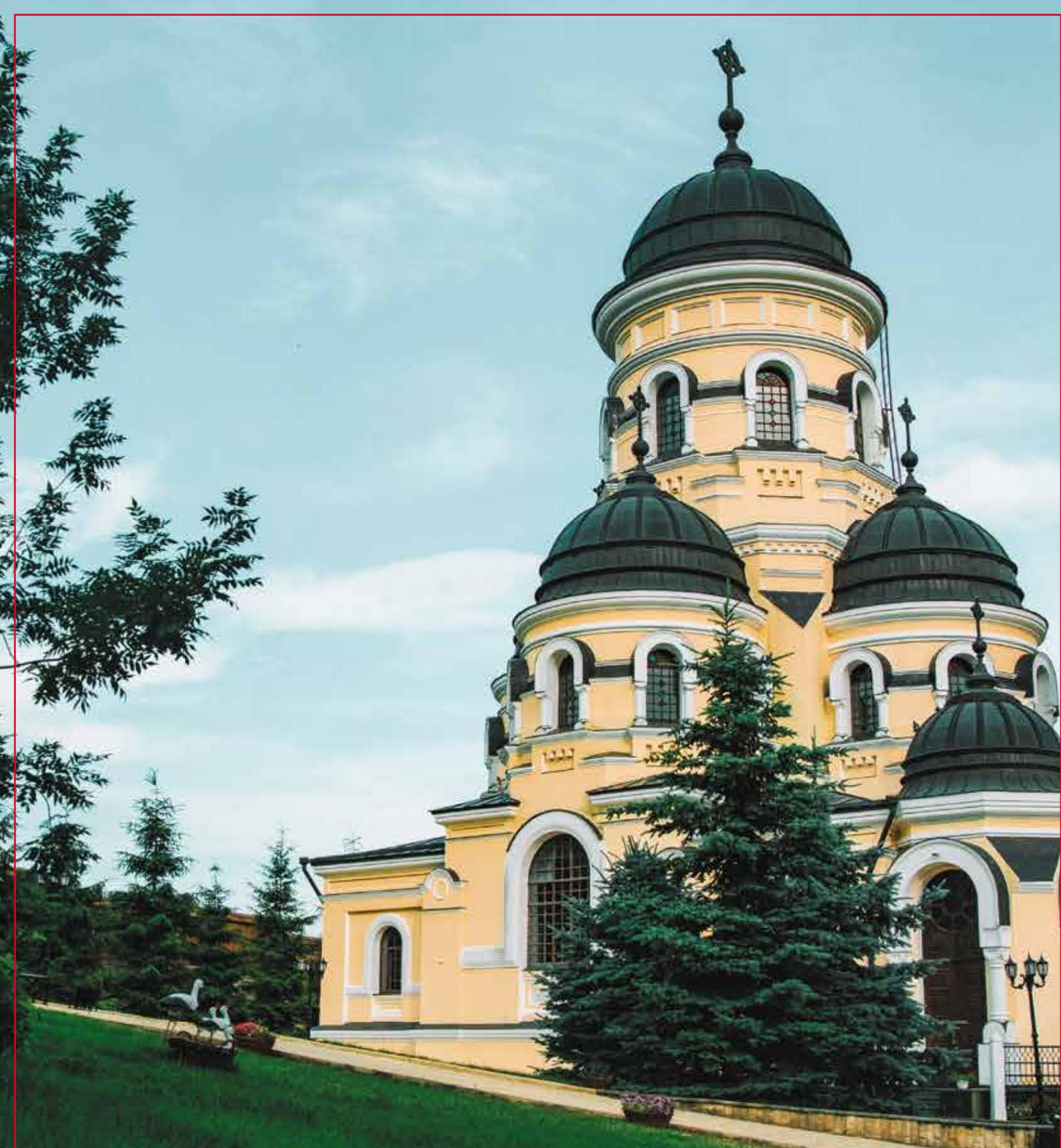
The route of Stephen the Great through Romania and the Republic of Moldova represents an opportunity to raise awareness and to promote a part of the invaluable

heritage that has left us the Symbol of the revival of cultural, spiritual and monastic life on the territory of Moldova, Bessarabia and Bucovina.

The tourist sites in the Republic of Moldova:



1. Căpřiana Monastery, Strășeni District; 2. Natural Cultural Reservation "Old Orhei", Orhei District;
3. "Soroca Fortress", Soroca District; 4. Mereni Village, Anenii Noi District; 5. Chișinău; 6. "Tighina Fortress", Tighina District;
7. "Țipova Monastery, Rezina District; 8. Stephen the Great oak from Cobălea, Șoldănești District;
9. Ștefan-Vodă wine region with protected geographical indication, PGI, Ștefan Voda District.



1

Căpriana Monastery,
founder Stephen the Great



Căprian Monastery is one of the oldest and most significant monastic places in terms of spirituality and historical value in the Republic of Moldova.

According to the documents written in the XVII-XIX centuries, Stephen the Great along with other rulers of Moldova as Alexandru cel Bun, Petru Rareș, Alexandru Lăpușneanu and Vasile Lupu is considered one of the founders of the Căprian Monastery.

In 1429, Căprian Monastery received the status of a Royal Monastery.

The "Saint Mary" Church, is the first stone church that was built in the fifteenth century. It represents a classical Moldavian architectural work from the time of Stephen the Great.

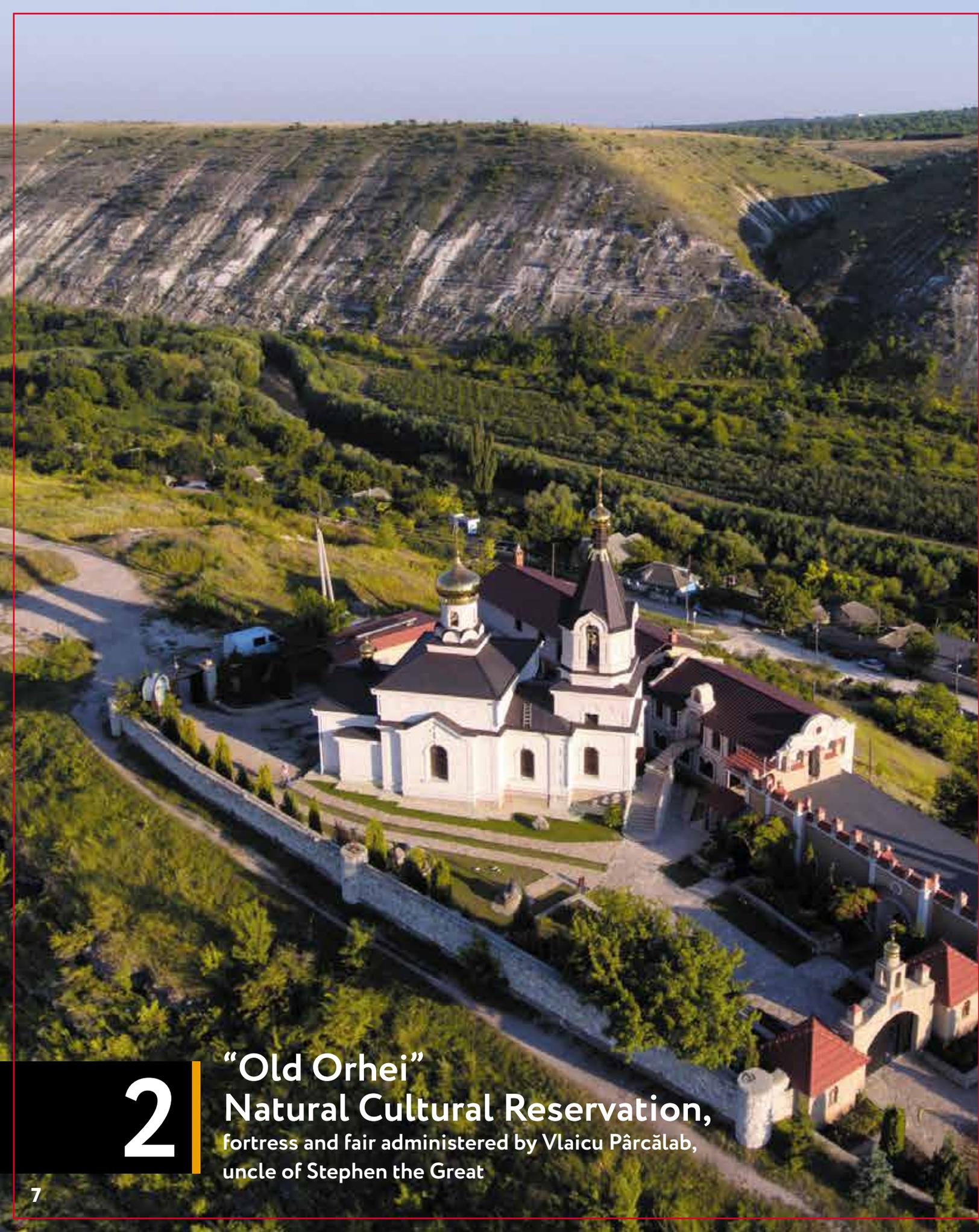
The old church from Căprian was restored by Petru Rareș, in 1542 as a result of the damage caused by earthquakes.

At present, Căprian Monastery represents one of the top visited sites in Moldova.

35

Căprian Monastery
is located in Căprian Village,
Republic of Moldova, 35 km away from Chișinău.





2

“Old Orhei”
Natural Cultural Reservation,
fortress and fair administered by Vlaicu Pârcălab,
uncle of Stephen the Great



“Old Orhei”, with its surprising view that shelter the cells dug in the steep bank by the monks, represents an exceptional archaeological landscape near the villages of Trebujeni and Butuceni, Republic of Moldova.

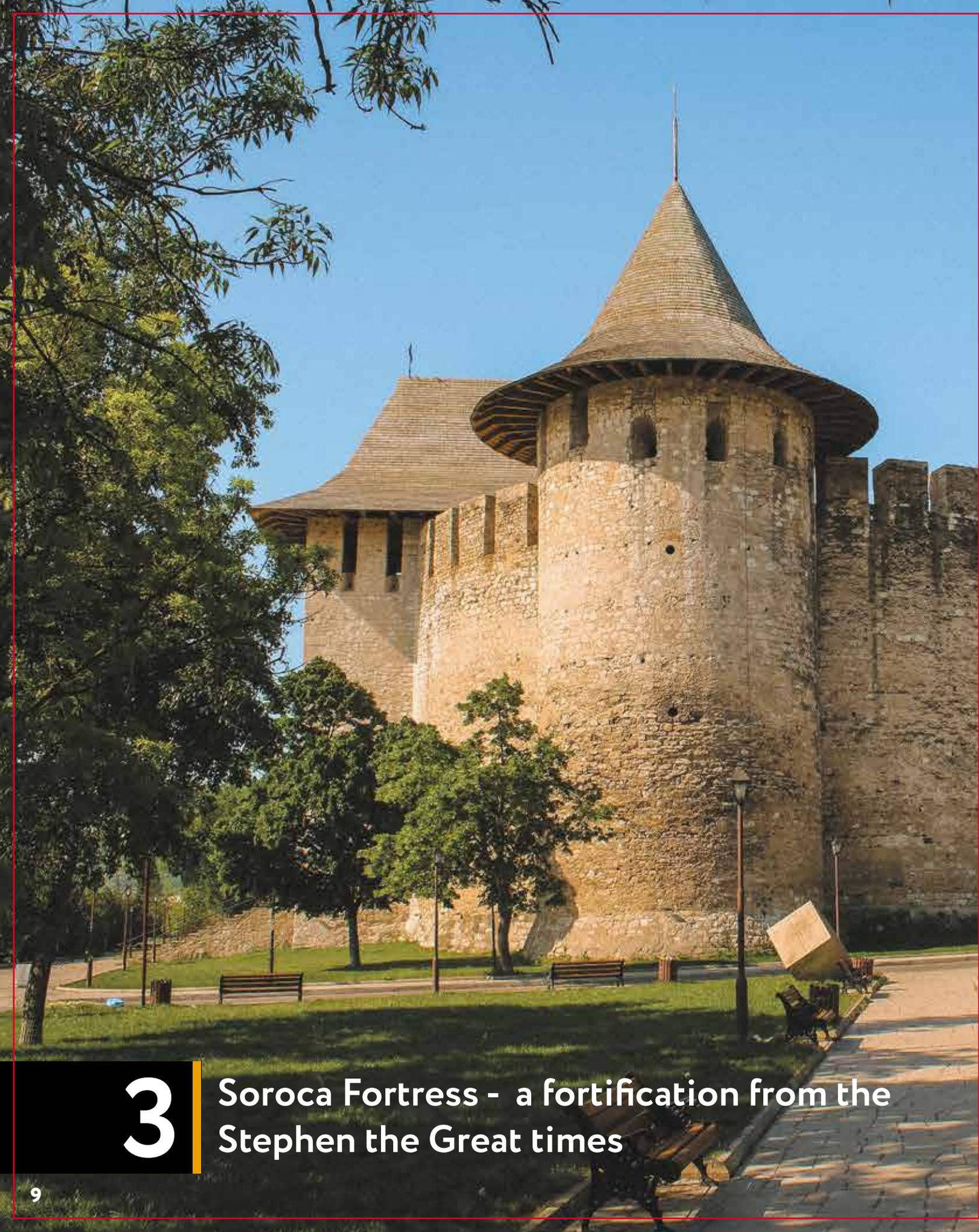
Throughout history, this place hosted multiple Geto-Dacian fortifications (VIth -IIInd centuries BC), old Romanian settlements (Vth-XIIIth centuries), two medieval cities - the Mongolian city Shehr al Jedid (1339-1369) and the city of Orhei (1370-1540), which reaches the peak of its development during the time of Stephen the Great’s reign. Actually, it hosts the ruins of the Orhei Fortified Citadel, built on the eastern border of Moldova by Stephen the Great to strengthen the defense of the country along the Nistru River. Then the Citadel was adapted to the needs of the artillery. There were discovered 2 bronze cannons from that period, which are exposed at the Museum of History in Chişinău.

“Old Orhei” is a unique place, preserving cave monasteries and cultural heritage. Nowadays, it is a famous touristic site of the Republic of Moldova. There, in an unuc landscape, the music & history join together to host the international open-air festival of classical music “DescOperă” organized in the beginning of each summer.

52

“Old Orhei”
is located in the Republic of Moldova,
at a distance of 52 km from Chişinău.





3

Soroca Fortress - a fortification from the Stephen the Great times



Soroca Fortress is a quiet jewel in the North of the Republic of Moldova. It was built on the bank of Nistru River five hundred years ago. Nothing affected it too much, nor wars, nor cataclysms, nor changes of regimes and nor even the indifference of people.

Soroca Fortress was founded by Stephen the Great to strengthen the defense of its regions, especially of the ford near the fortress. The ford was used not only by the invaders, but also by the merchants.

For the first time the fortification is mentioned by Ștefan cel Mare on July 12, 1499.

The wooden and earth fortress continued to operate with the same status and purpose during the reign of Bogdan III, Stephen the Great's son and even in the first reign of Petru Rareș. Later, on the remains of the old fortress, Petru Rareș built a new fortress, made of stone, which is still preserved today in an exceptional state.

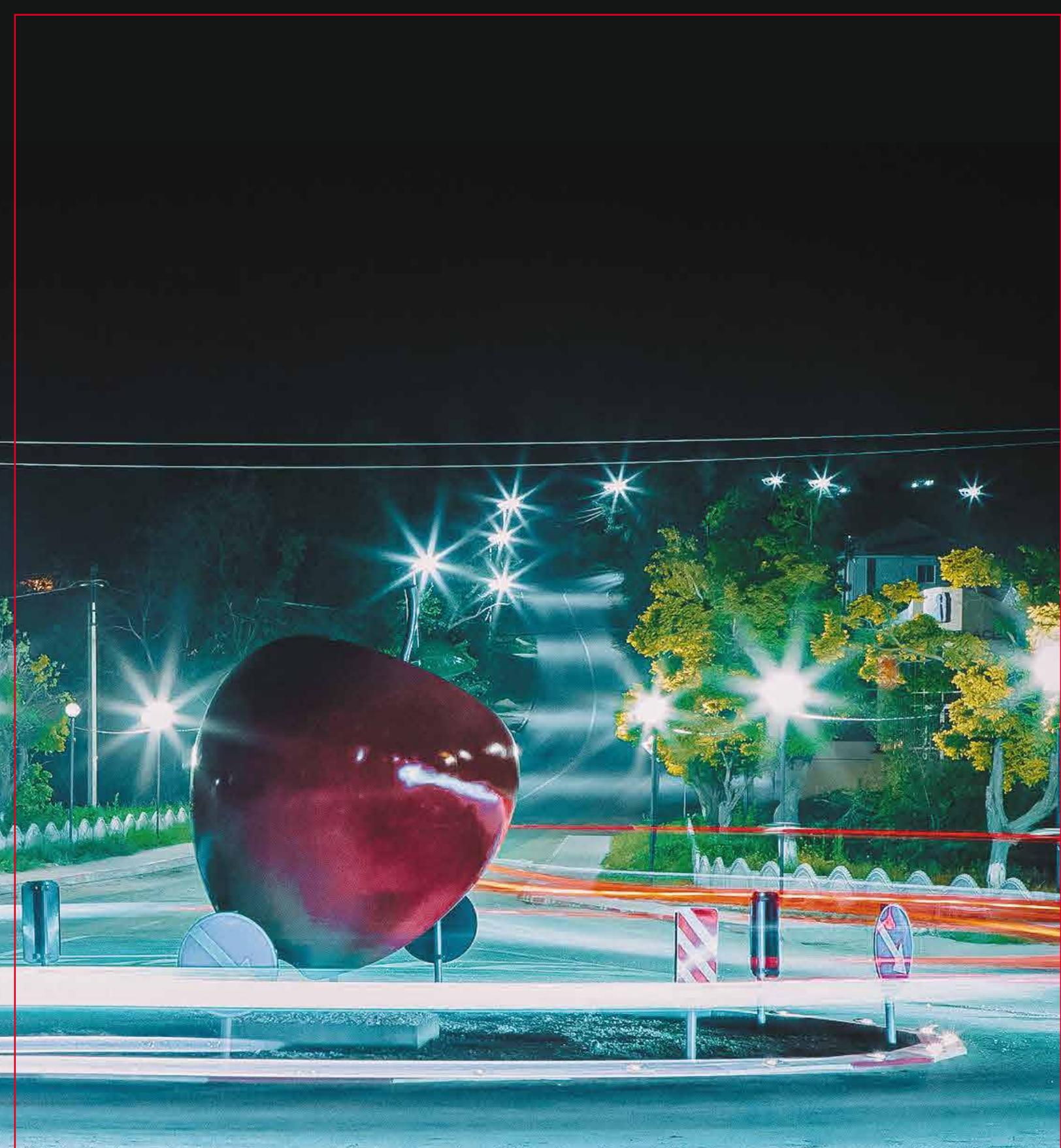
Also, at Soroca, on the steep bank of the Nistru River, visitors can see the Candle of Gratitude that rises as an arrow perched in the sky. It is a monument dedicated to the author of the "Miorița" Ballad. Those who dare to climb the 654 steps up from the river bank, are rewarded with a spectacular view of the entire city.

Another attraction of this city is the "Sfinții Martiri Brâncoveni" Wooden Church, situated on the bank of the Nistru River and made into Maramures style.

155

Soroca Fortress
is located at a distance of 155 km from Chișinău.





4

Mereni Village, Anenii Noi district,
founded by Stephen the Great in 1475



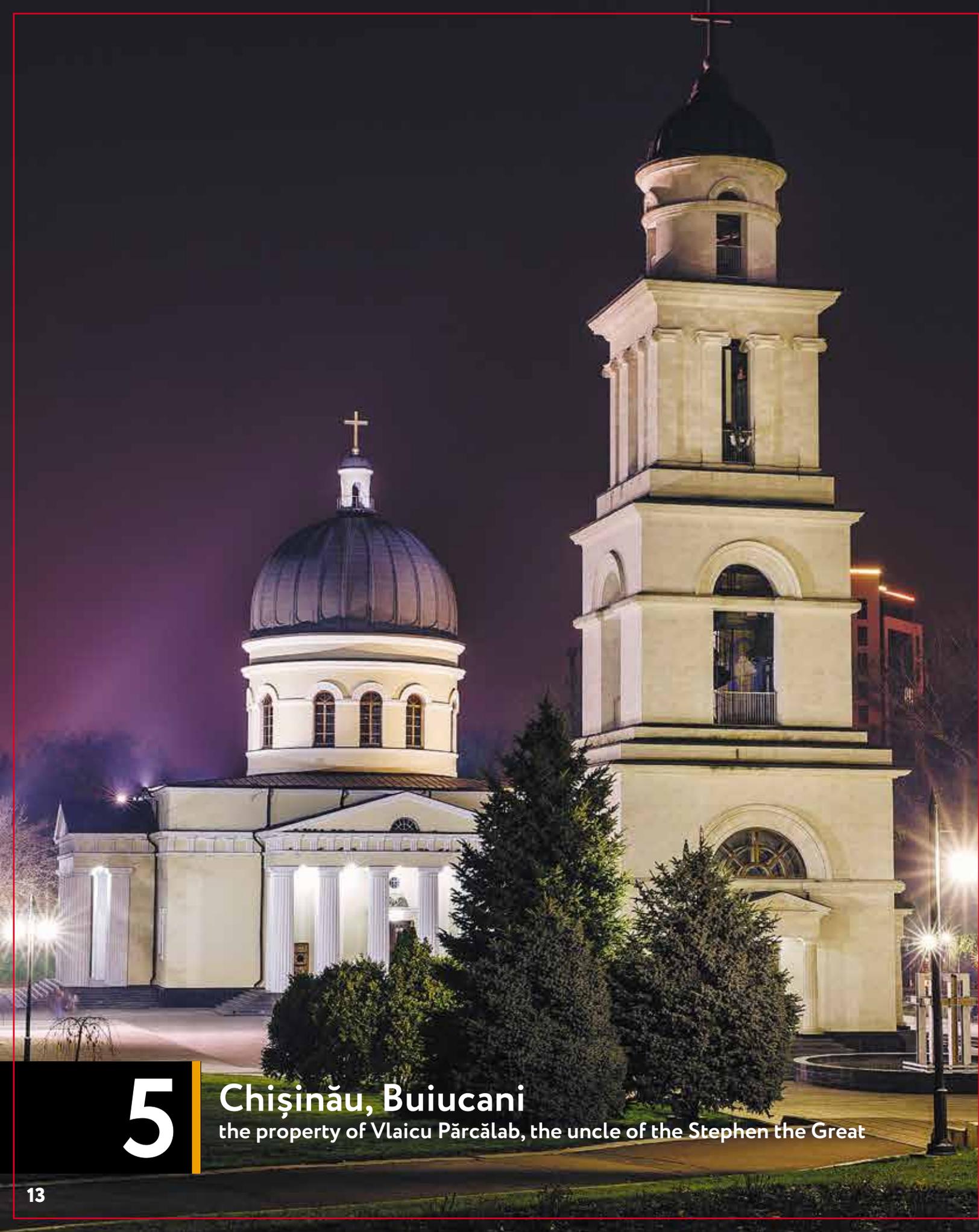
The written history of the village of Mereni begins in 1475, when the Ruler of the Moldova, Stephen the Great, gives the villagers a document stipulating the rights of the villagers on the land.

The local Museum of History and Ethnography, arranged in a historical building from the beginning of the XXth century, exhibits pottery vessels from IV-III centuries BC, tips of silver and bronze arrows, iron swords, daggers, coins - all found near Mereni Village.

25

The village of Mereni is located at a distance of 25 km from the city of Chişinău.





5

Chişinău, Buiucani

the property of Vlaicu Părcălab, the uncle of the Stephen the Great



Chișinău the capital of the Republic of Moldova, appears in documents starting with July 17, 1436. Later, in 1466, through a document issued at the court of Stephen the Great, the Land of Chisinau, from the Albișoara Well, together with the mill, was given to Vlaicu Pârcălab, Ștefan cel Mare's uncle. So, Vlaicu-Pârcălab (whose name is given to one of the central streets) was, as they say, the owner of the future capital, which then returned to his sons and grandchildren for about a hundred years.

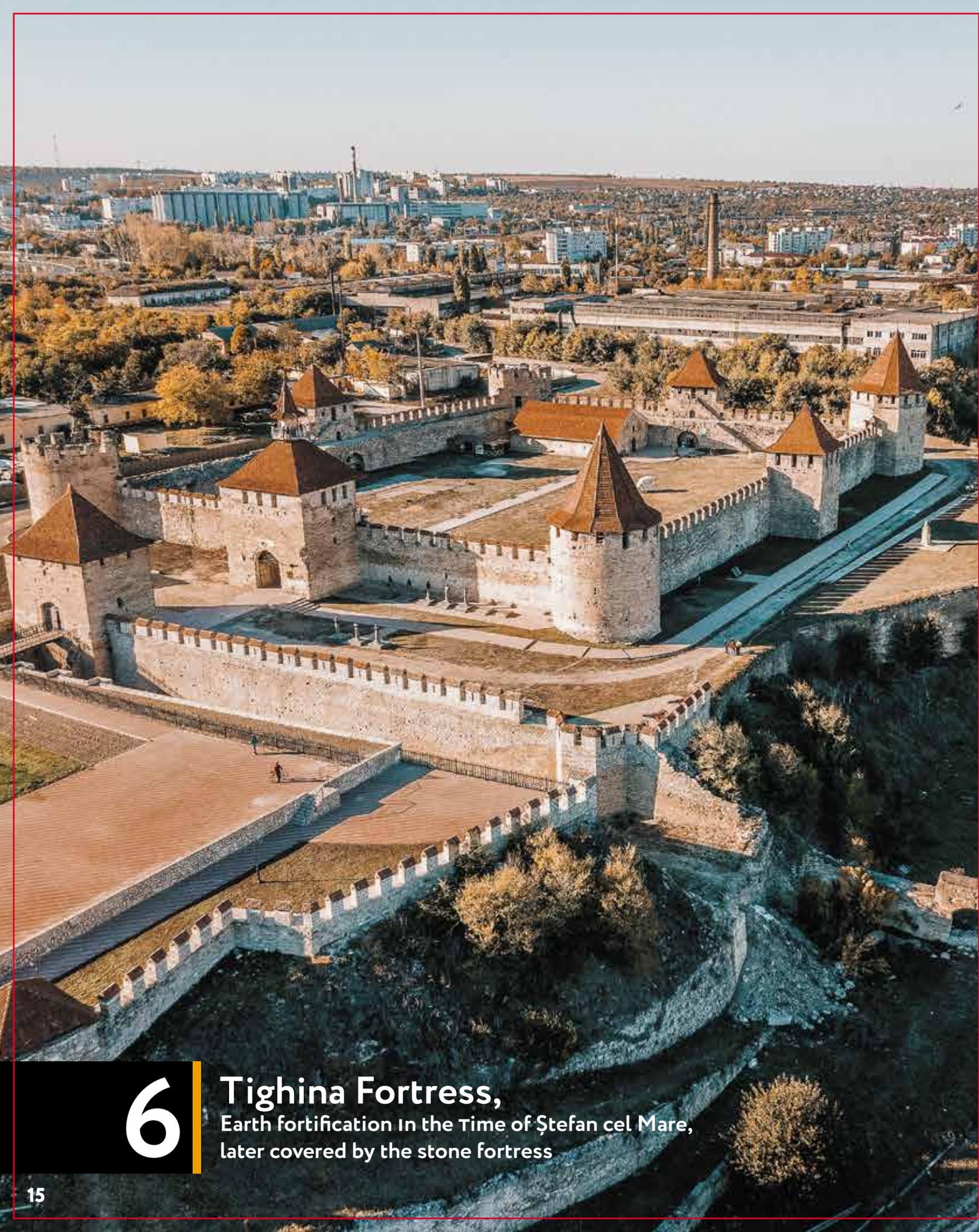
The lower part of the city is built in medieval style, with streets in the form of rays, scattered around the Old Market.

The statue of Stephen the Great was inaugurated on April 29, 1928, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Unification of Bessarabia with Romania. This is one of the most important works of the famous Bessarabian sculptor from the interwar period, Alexandru Plămădeală. The statue was twice evacuated to Romania during the Second World War. Only, on August 31, 1990, at the celebration of a year since the Romanian language was proclaimed as the state language, the statue was placed in the actual place - the place where it all starts, both for the inhabitants of the capital and for its guests.



The geographical monument, historic and cultural “the kilometer “o” represents the place where the local residents and guests start their journey





6

Tighina Fortress,
Earth fortification in the Time of Ștefan cel Mare,
later covered by the stone fortress



None of the cities of Moldova had such a tumultuous life as Tighina. Tailored and twisted, conquered and lost, it has withstood the times, cannons and carelessness of people for over 500 years.

In the fifteenth century, Tighina became an important point in the Moldovan commercial road that connected Western Europe with the East, also called the Tatar Road.

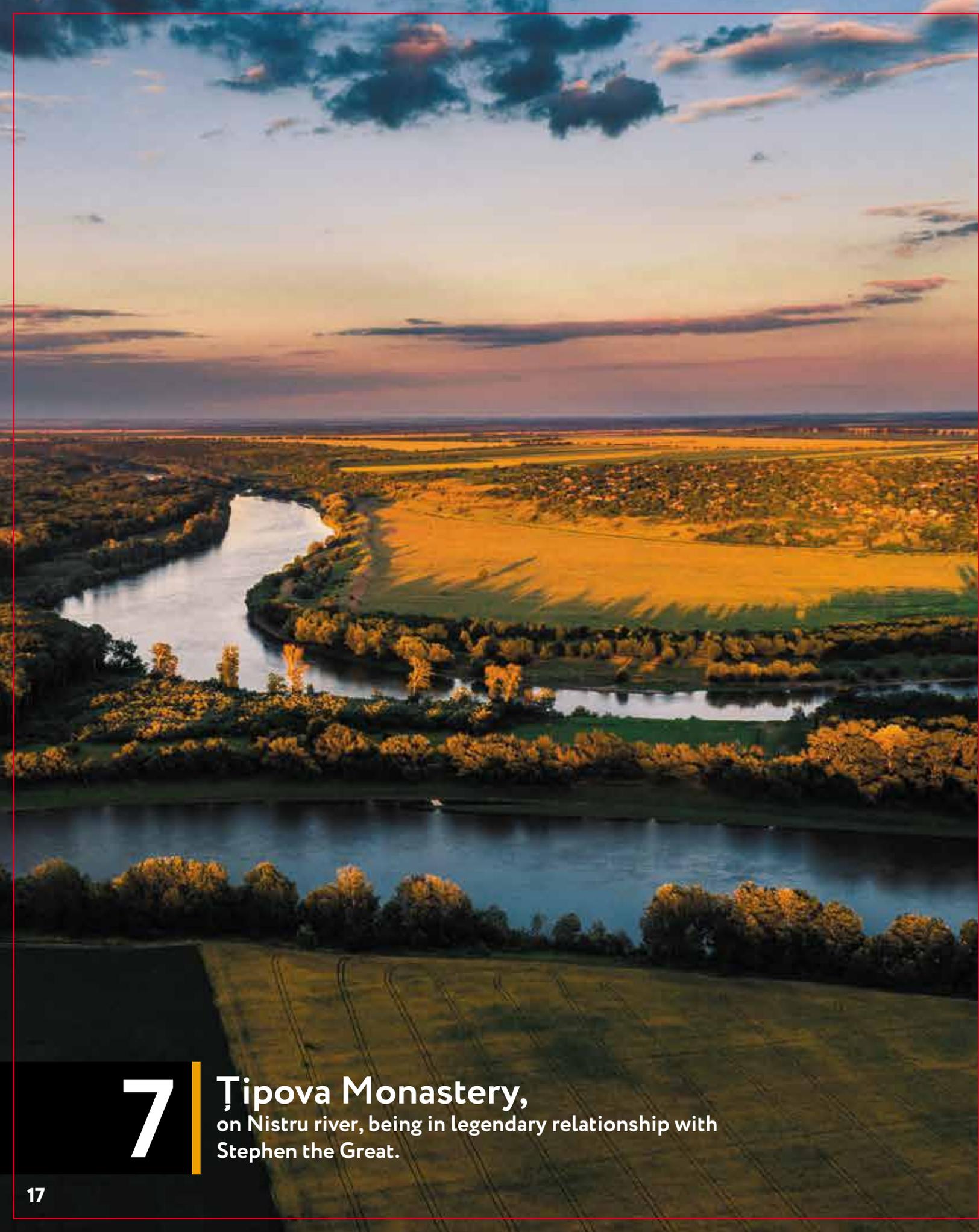
This road was not important only for merchants. It was also a ford for Moldova's defence. As the Tartar hordes were attacking the country more and more virulently, and Stephen the Great was forced to build a fortress in this ford of the Nistru River. First, it was built from the ground and wood, with a moat and a wave of defense. Later, it was reinforced more and more, so that the fortress came to be considered as the most fortified in the whole defence system of Moldova during the entire reign of Stephen the Great.

In the summer of 1538, Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent entered Moldova and occupied Tighina. Tighina is renamed Bender – (in Turkish reinforced passing or port). The Turks fortified the fortress of Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt by building stone walls. Despite repeated attempts of Moldova's rulers to defeat the fortress, Tighina was no longer recovered by Moldova.

51

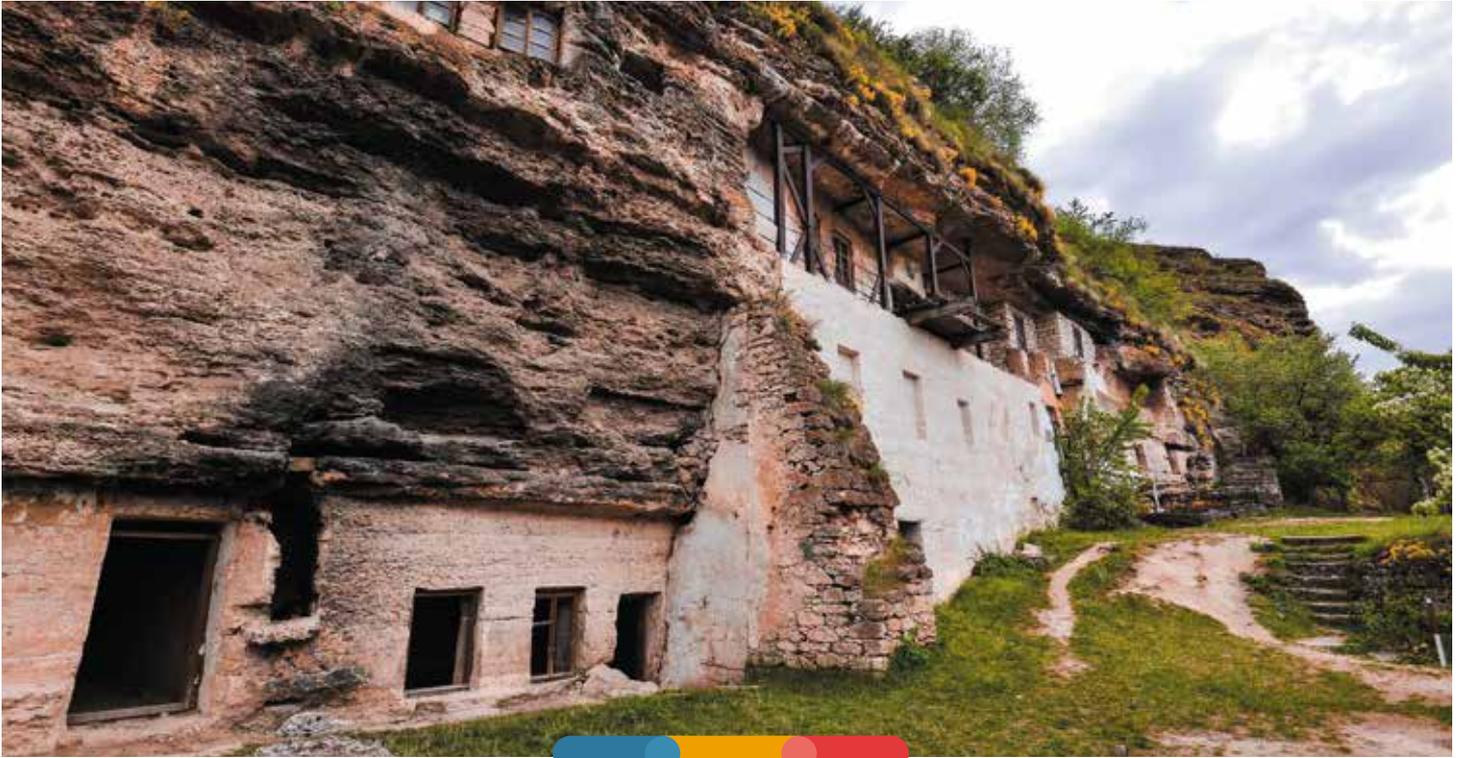
The Tighina (Bender) Fortress is located at a distance of 51 km from Chișinău.





7

Țipova Monastery,
on Nistru river, being in legendary relationship with
Stephen the Great.



Țipova Monastery is a rock monastery on the bank of the Nistru River. It was dug in stone on the high and steep bank, 100 meters above the level of the Nistru, near the village of Țipova and a stream bearing the same name.

Țipova is a place of pilgrimage and tourism, being very attractive with its cave galleries and local waterfalls.

As the oral tradition says, Ștefan cel Mare got married here in St. Nicholas Church with his 3rd wife Maria Voichita.

The cave monastery in Țipova, closed in 1949 and reopened in 1994, consists of three monastic complexes:

The first is "Saint Cross" Church and a few cells, established XI - XII centuries.

The second is "Saint Nicolae" Church, dug in XIV - XV centuries. The third comprises 18 rooms from the XVI - XVIII centuries, joined by internal crossings, with stairs, open galleries and balconies.

92

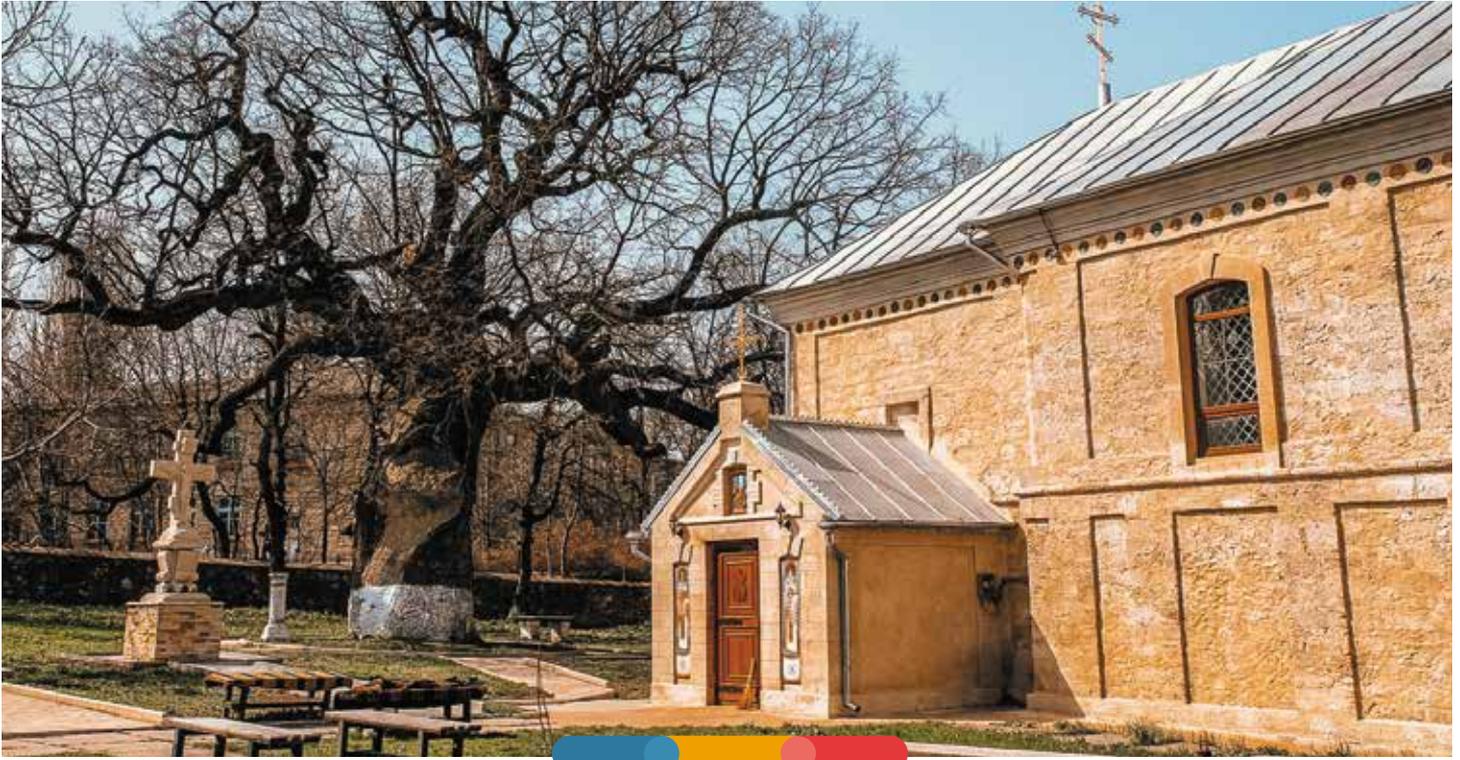
Țipova Monastery
is located 92 km away from Chisinau.





8

Stephen the Great oak tree
from Cobalea village.



Stephen the Great oak is a natural monument, having a history that few living beings could have had. It is mentioned for the first time in the documents of the place in 1456, one year before the beginning of the reign of Stephen the Great.

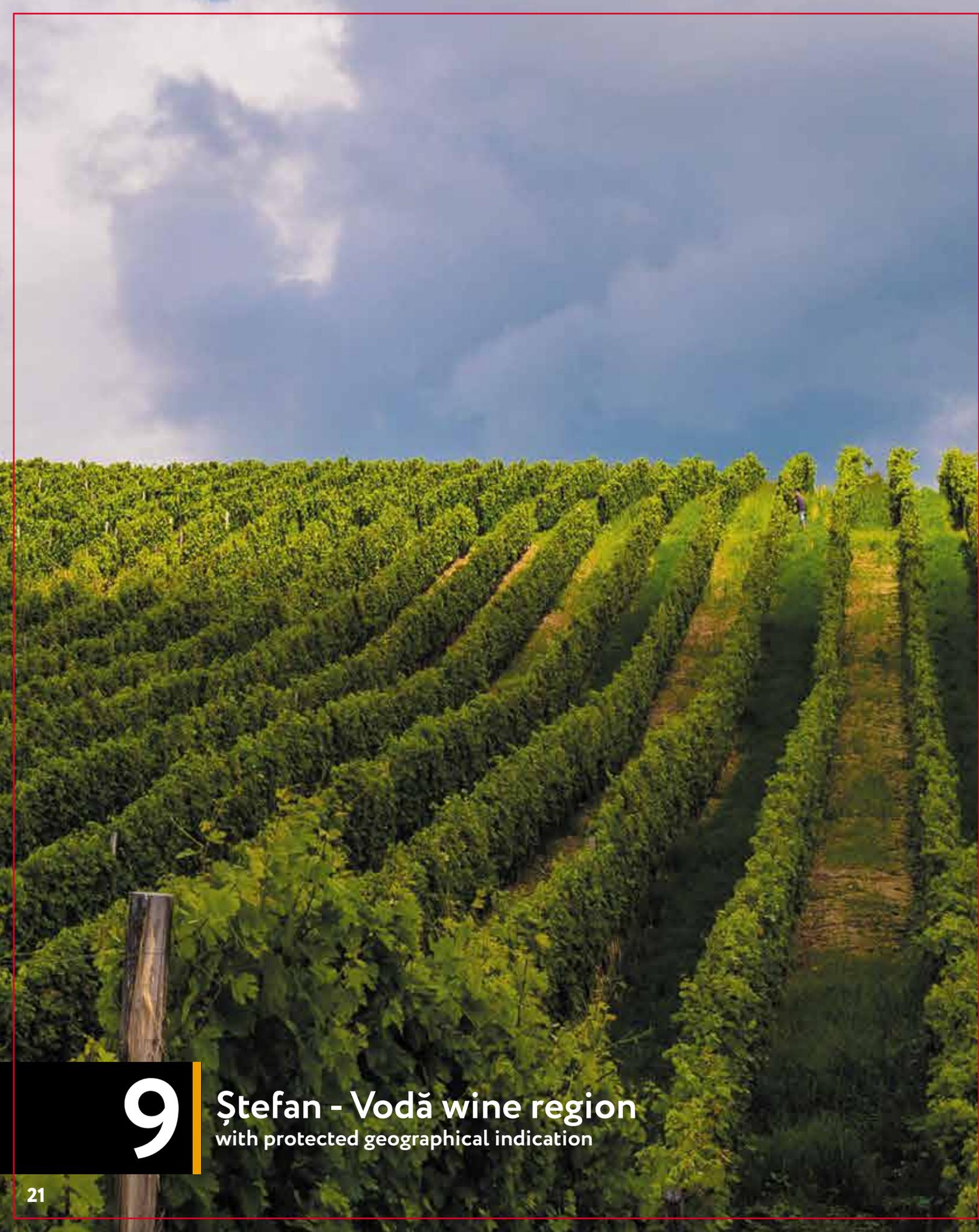
The Legend says that after a fight near the village of Cobalea in which the Tatars were defeated, Stephen the Great ordered to erect a church, as he was accustomed, after each victory. So, this little church was erected on the edge of the village, near this oak tree, in the shadow of which Stephen the Great rested after the fights. He had passed here many times, because this was the road to pass the Nistru River to Vadul Rascov.

Surrounded by whispers, mysteries and legends, the oak still holds the storms, and offers us a life lesson of dignity, showing that "it is not a must to break under the weather, you can make the weather break under you".

125

Stephen the Great oak is located in the village of Cobalea, Șoldănești District, at a distance of 125 km from Chișinău.





9

Ștefan - Vodă wine region
with protected geographical indication



Ștefan Vodă – the town has acquired the name of the best ruler of Moldova in 1990.

It is also the name of a region with Geographically Protected Indication (GPI). The geographical region covers an area of 10000 ha and is expanding yearly.

It is considered the area where they grow the Rara Neagra variety of grape, - known under different names – Babeasca Neagra, Cracana, Caldarusă.

One of the favourite wines of Stephen the Great (known from the chronicles of Ion Neculce) was “Crăcana de Nicorești” being known as “a drink for sinful saints like us”.

The name of Babeasca Neagra de Nicorești was given by Stephen the Great after he tasted a glass of wine served by one of his soldiers, who took it from an old lady from Nicorești (Galati).

Not far from Ștefan Vodă, in Causeni there is one of the oldest and most valuable churches in the Republic of Moldova “The Assumption of the Virgin Mary” Church. The church is half buried in the ground, to be as discreet and less embarrassing in front of unbelievers.

The interior murals represent the last stage in the development of the medieval fresco in Moldova. The acoustics of the church are incredibly authentic and alive, because in the vaults of the church, from place to place, the architects have built clay pots, like old secrets of acoustics. Now the church is living a second life, being in the process of restoration.

87

The Church of Causeni
is located 87 km away from Chișinău.



Other tourist attractions in the Republic of Moldova:

STRĂȘENI DISTRICT

1. The "Saint Mary" Church;
2. The Ethno Cultural Complex "Vatra";
3. Zamfirache Ralli Mansion, Dolna;
4. "Chateau Cojușna" Winery;
5. "Poiana" Winery.

ORHEI DISTRICT

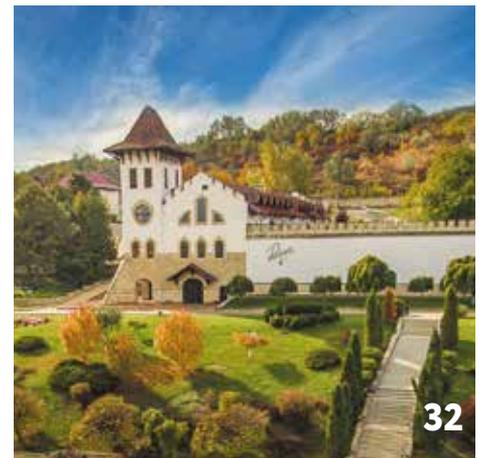
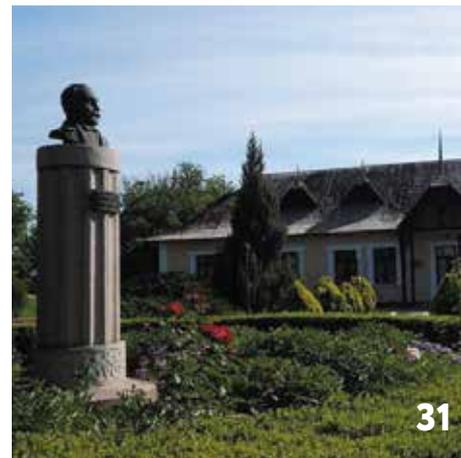
6. Stone Cave Monastery;
7. The Guest Houses in Butuceni and Trebujeni;
8. The Crafts Complex "Rustic Art", Clișova Nouă;
9. "Alexandru Donici" Museum;
10. "Brănești" Winery;
11. "Chateau Vartely" Winery.

SOROCA DISTRICT

12. Museum of Soroca;
13. The Candle of Gratitude;
14. Gypsy Hill;

HINCESTI DISTRICT

15. Manuc Bei Manor;
16. The Village Museum of History and Ethnography;
17. The Memorial Complex "Cap de Pod Șerpeni";
18. "Asconi" Winery;
19. "Mimi" Castle Winery;



CHIȘINĂU

- 20. "Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt" Monument;
- 21. National Museum of History of Moldova;
- 22. National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History;
- 23. National Museum of Art of Moldova;
- 24. Chișinău History Museum - Water Tower;
- 25. "Cricova" Wine cellars;
- 26. "Mileștii Mici" Wine cellars;

TRANSNISTRIA

- 27. Tighina Fortress;
- 28. "Piața Eroilor" Memorial Complex;

REZINA DISTRICT

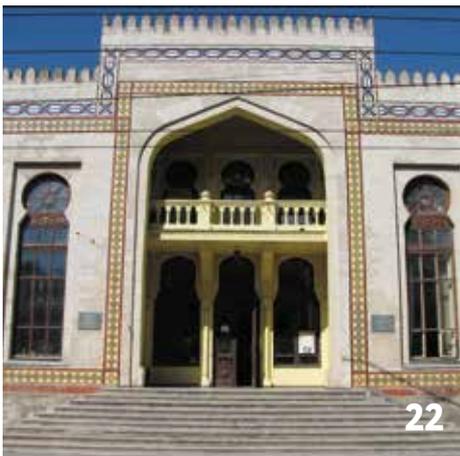
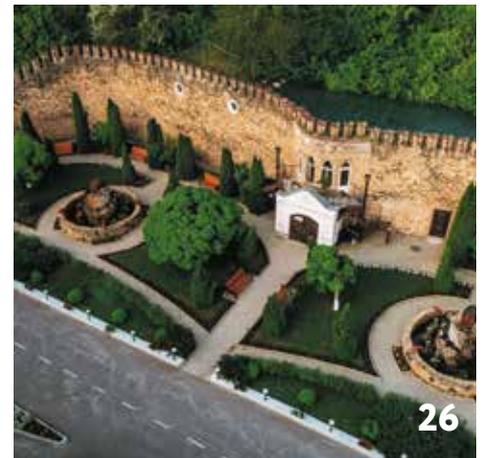
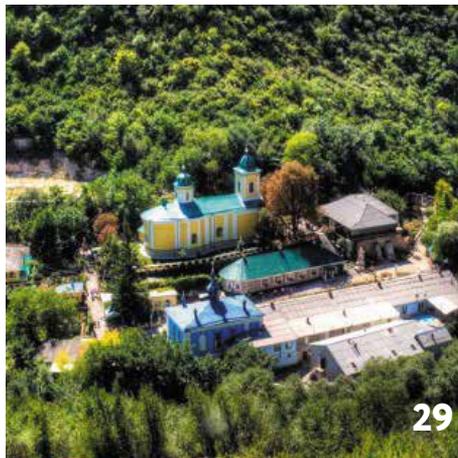
- 29. Saharna Monastery;
- 30. Hanganu's inn, Lalova;

OCNIȚA DISTRICT

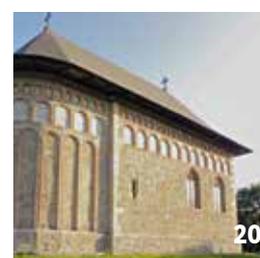
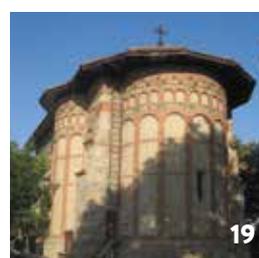
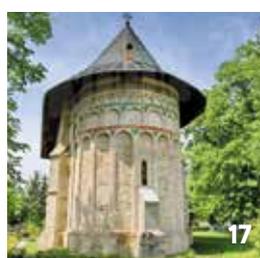
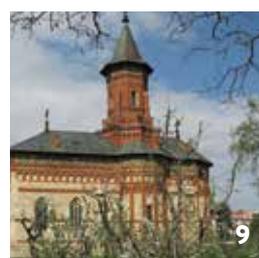
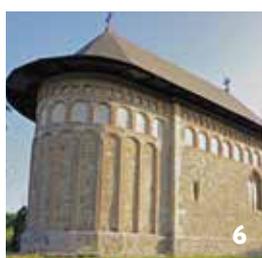
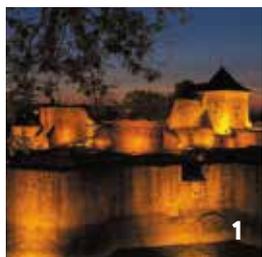
- 31. Constantin Stamati's mansion;

ȘTEFAN VODĂ DISTRICT

- 32. "Purcari Winery", Purcari tourist complex;
- 33. "ET Cetera" Wine Complex;
- 34. "Pavel Taranu" folk craftsman household, Cioburciu Village.



The tourist sites in Romania:



- 1.** Suceava Fortress, Suceava County; **2.** Putna Monastery – The "Saint Mary" Church, Suceava County; **3.** The " Holy Cross" Church in Pătrăuți, Suceava County; **4.** The "Sfântul Gheorghe" Church of the former Voronet Monastery, Suceava County; **5.** The "Saint John the Baptist" Church from Reuseni, Suceava County; **6.** The " Holy Cross" Church from Volovăț, Suceava County; **7.** The "Saint Ilie" Church in Scheia Commune, Suceava County; **8.** The "Saint Nicolae" Monastery, Popăuți, Botosani County; **9.** The "Saint Gheorghe" Church in Hârlău, Iași County; **10.** The "Cuvioasa Parascheva" Church and the Ruins of the Domino's Winery in Cotnari;
- 11.** The Palace of Culture, Iasi; **12.** The "Saint Nicholas" Church, Iasi County; **13.** The " Holy Spirit" Church of the Dobrovăț Monastery, Iasi County; **14.** Neamț Fortress - "Medieval Moldova Nest of Eagles", Neamț County; **15.** The Royal Court and "Saint John the Baptist" Church - from Pietra Neamț, Neamț County; **16.** Neamț Monastery, Neamț County; **17.** Războieni Monastery, Neamț County; **18.** "Podul Înalt Monumental Complex" - Vaslui (related to the battle from Vaslui 10.01.1475, Băcăoani village, Munteni de Jos commune) **19.** The Assembly of the Royal Courts of Vaslui and of the Royal Church "Saint John the Baptist" in Vaslui;
- 20.** The " Saint Mary" Church from Borzești-Bacău, Bacău County;

1

Suceava Fortress

- never concured by a foreign sword!

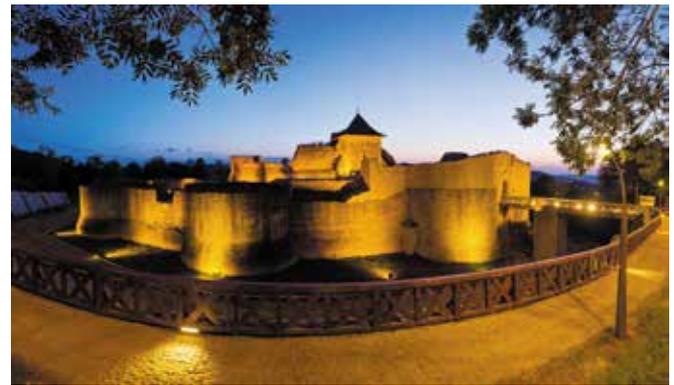
Suceava Fortress is situated in Suceava Municipality. It was built at the end of the 14th century, being the first residence of Moldova rulers for almost 200 years. Today it is declared a historical monument of national interest.

Suceava Fortress was built during the rain of Petru I Mușat but the maximum development is known during the Voivod's Stephen the Great power.

The medieval architectural ensemble, made up of castle and defense walls, was consolidated and completed within a vast project with European funding in 2010-2015, rendering it an imposing aspect, by entering in the legend with a sublime splendor of the past.

Due to the permanent exhibition made in an accessible and attractive way for the general public, with interactive multimedia systems (virtual guides, holograms, virtual book, etc.) and with nationally unique sound and light shows, the Suceava Fortress is holding annually almost 200,000 visitors.

Every year, in the middle of August, the Suceava Fortress hosts, the Medieval Art Festival " Stephen the Great ". This festival is attended by medieval orders and troops from the country and abroad, and attracts tens of thousands of spectators, being the largest festival of this genre in the country. It is followed by "Bucovina Rock Castle", an important international rock festival, which takes place in a unique location - the defensive fortification of the Suceava Fortress - and is enjoyed by over 9000 spectators.



2

Putna monastery – the “Saint Mary” church

The Putna monastery, named by the poet Mihai Eminescu “The Jerusalem of the Romanian People”, was founded by Stephen the Great between 1466 and 1469, being conceived as a Royal Necropolis.

The tomb of Stephen the Great, as well as thirteen other tombs belonging to the Mușatin's family can be found in the "The Assumption of the Virgin Mary" Church.

The Putna Monastery Museum displays artifacts that belonged to Stephen the Great. Among them, one may see the miracle-maker icon of the Virgin Mary brought from Constantinople in 1472 by Mrs. Maria de Mangop, the wife of Stephen the Great, and the Holy Ghenadie Cranium dressed in gilded silver, given to the monastery by its founder in 1488. Putna Monastery is located 72 kilometers from the Suceava Fortress, in Putna commune, Suceava County.



3

The "Holy Cross" church in Pătrăuți

The "Holy Cross" Church in Pătrăuți was founded in 1487 by Saint Voivod Stephen the Great. The Church in Pătrăuți is considered to be the oldest preserved church among those founded by Stephen the Great. It is the oldest Orthodox church in Romania, which was included in the list of UNESCO Heritage from 1993 (in the group of Painted Churches in the north of Moldova). It is the oldest church built in the Moldavian style, which is still preserved today in its original form.

The church was painted on the outside, only on the west wall, around the Gothic portal of entrance to the church. The scene depicted

is "Doomsday". The colors used are yellow (ocher).

The "Holy Cross" Church is situated in the village of Pătrăuți, 13 km from Suceava.



4

The "Saint George" church of the former Voroneț monastery – Sistine Chapel of the East

Founded by Stephen the Great in 1488, the Voronet Monastery with the church dedicated to "Saint George" is among the jewels of Bukovina and has been included since 1993 in the list of UNESCO World Heritage.

The fame of the Voroneț Monastery is due to the amazing frescoes depicting biblical scenes, painted in harmonious colors. The predominating blue sky of Bukovina in the frescoes, gave it the name of "Sistine Chapel of the East", under which, it is known throughout the world.

It is noteworthy that, after 530 years since its foundation, the church of Saint George of the Voronet Monastery in which was buried in 1496 Daniil Sisastrul, the spiritual counselor of Ștefan cel Mare continues to amaze her visitors with its rare and full of refinement beauty.

The Voronet Monastery is located 36 km from Suceava city and 4 km from Gura Humorului.



5

The "Saint Ioan the baptist" church in Reuseni

The "Saint John the Baptist" Church in Reușeni is considered to be the last founding of the Stephen the Great because it was built between 1503-1504.

The church is located in the village of Reuseni in the commune of Udești, at a distance of about 15 km south-east of Suceava.



6

The " Holy Cross" church in Volovăț – the stone church

The "Holy Cross" Church was founded by Stephen the Great between 1500-1502.

The church is located in Volovăț commune from Suceava county and is 35 km away from Suceava municipality.



7

The " Saint Ilie", church in Suceava

The "Saint Ilie" Church was founded by Stephen the Great in 1488. Today it is a church of chrism.

The church is located in Sf. Ilie village of Scheia Commune, at a distance of about 1.5 km from Suceava.



8

The "Saint Nicolae" Popăuți monastery

The Monastery of "Saint Nicolae"- Popăuți was founded by Stephen the Great in 1497. The monument is representative for the "Moldovan style" (a combination of Byzantine and Gothic elements).

The ensemble of the Popăuți Monastery was included on the List of historical monuments of Botoșani County in 2015, having the classification code BT-II-aA-01929 and being made up of the following 2 objectives: "St. Nicolae" -Popăuți Church - dating from 1496, having the code BT-II-mA-01929.01 and the Bell Tower - dating from 1496, having the code BT-II-mA-01929.02.



9

The "Saint George" church, in Hârlău

The "Saint George" Church in Hârlău, was founded by Stephen the Great in 1492 and is considered part of the whole Royal Court of Hârlău.

The Royal residence in Hârlău was one of the favorite residences of the Moldovan ruler, especially towards the end of the reign. On July 12, 1499, Stephen the Great signed here the Treaty of Peace with the Polish of King John Albert.

It is located in the city of Hârlău (Iași County), at a distance of 74 km from the city of Iași.



10

The "Devout Parascheva" church in Cotnari

The "Devout Parascheva" Church in Cotnari is attributed by tradition to Stephen the Great (1457-1504). The inscription was destroyed, so no data regarding the construction of the place of worship is known.

The year 1493 appears as the year of its construction in the List of historical monuments from Iași County.



11 The Palace of Culture in Iași

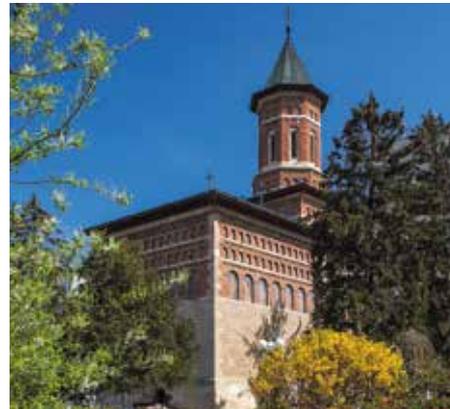
The Palace of Culture in Iași is an emblematic building, built between 1906 - 1925, in the perimeter of the former Moldovan Medieval Royal Court, on the site of the former Royal Palace.

Today, the Palace of Culture is the headquarters of Moldova National Museum Complex, which includes the History Museum of Moldova (1916), the Ethnographic Museum of Moldova (1943), the Art Museum (1860), the Museum of Science and Technology (1955), as well as the Conservation-Restoration of the Cultural Heritage Center (1975).



12 The "Saint Nicolae" from Iași

The "Saint Nicholas Lordly" Church was built between June 1, 1491 - August 10, 1492 by Stephen the Great, representing Moldovan architecture. It is situated in front of the Palace of Culture in Iași.



13 Dobrovăț monastery the "Holy Spirit" church

The church of Dobrovăț Monastery was built between 1503 - 1504, being the last founding of Stephen the Great. It's nave painting is considered the most beautiful in Moldova.

The church is located in Dobrovăț commune, 25 km southeast of Iași and 35 km north of Vaslui.



14

Neamț Fortress “The vulture nest of medieval Moldova”

The Neamț Fortress is one of the most impressive fortresses in Romania, which has been guarding the Neamț River valley for six centuries.

The Neamț Fortress was built in the 4th century, during the time of Peter I. It was fortified in the Vth century by Stephen the Great, to strengthen the fortification system built in Moldova for defense against the Ottoman Empire.

There were written important pages of heroism, like the 8 days of resistance against the Ottoman siege, led by the dreaded Sultan Muhammad II after the battle of Războieni (1476) or the glorious episode, written with their own blood, by only 19 frontier guards, against the Polish army led by Ioan Sobieski, in 1691.

The Neamț Fortress is located near the town of Târgu Neamț, 46 km from the city of Piatra Neamț, and is part of the Romania medieval monuments, of an exceptional value.

In 1866, the Neamț Fortress was declared a historical monument.

This has been subject to several restoration efforts. After the last intervention from 2007-2009, the Neamț Fortress offers visitors 21 spaces: The Trial and Judgment Hall; The Secret Chamber; Weapons Hall; the Black Jail; the Frontier Guards Room; “St. Nicolae” Chapel; The Ladies' Room; the Lapidarium; the Kitchen; the Supply room; the Mint; Chamberlain's room; the Prison, divided into two rooms and others.

All these areas take visitors through the medieval times history full of glory and charm.

The day of the Neamț Fortress is the 2nd of July, the Birthday of Stephen the Great.



15

The royal court and "Saint John The Baptist" church from Piatra Neamț

The first documentary attestation of the Royal Court of Piatra Neamț appears in a document issued in 1491. The Royal Court of Piatra Neamț fulfilled its functions as the Court of the Rulers of Moldova until the seventeenth century.

The beautiful creation of Stephen the Great is still preserved today in the city of Piatra Neamț, being known as the historical center of the city. Located on a plateau around which the present city has developed, the architectural complex is made up of the "St. Ioan Lordly" Church, the Bell Tower and the Enclosure Wall with the Museum of the Royal Court.

The "Saint John the Baptist" Royal Church from in Piatra Neamț, founded between July 15, 1497 - November 11, 1498, represents the most valuable edifice in the Royal Court Complex. The church stands out through the elements' characteristic of the Moldovan Architecture style.



16

Neamț monastery

According to the historical sources known so far, the Neamț Monastery dates back to the 14th century as an Orthodox monastic organization. Located in the village of Vânători in Neamț County (near the town of Târgu Neamț) in a wide-open valley of the Nemțișor stream and surrounded by forested peaks, this monastery is the oldest in Moldova.

With a rich treasure, the Neamț Monastery offers visitors a rich collection of religious objects, paintings, manuscripts and different types of typographic pieces of great historical and artistic value. Here, we can also find the oldest monastery library with 18,000 volumes, thus having a special contribution to the development of medieval Romanian culture and art.

At the Neamț Monastery, there is also the "Virgin Mary, the Miracle" Icon, dating back to 665. The icon is a protective one that over time has maintained the godliness of believers and monks.



17

"The Saint archangels Mihail and Gavril" Războieni monastery

Located in the middle of the village with the same name, the Războieni Monastery, founded by the ruler Stephen the Great in 1496, was erected in the honor of the Moldovan soldiers who fell in the fight from the White Valley against the Turks (1476).

The inscription on the southern wall of the "Saint Archangels Mihail and Gavril" Church describes the moment of Moldova's defeat in the war for the country and faith. The very reason for its construction - the preservation of the memory of the soldiers - makes the monastery unique in the series of church constructions of Stephen the Great. This is constituted in a mausoleum that houses the bones of the fallen soldiers under the altar and the pronaos.

Războieni Monastery is located in Războieni commune, 26 km from Piatra Neamț and 35 km from Târgu Neamț (DJ 208 Piatra Neamț -Tupilați- Hanu Anciei), Neamț County.

**18**

"Podul Înalt" monumental complex - Vaslui

The monumental complex "Podul Înalt" from Băcăoani, Vaslui County, is a symbol offered by Vaslui to pay tribute to one of the great battles in which Stephen the Great took part. The battle is considered the greatest victory of Christianity obtained by him against the Ottomans, because with only 40,000 soldiers he defeated 120,000 Turks on January 10, 1475. After the "Podul Înalt" battle, Stephen the Great received the title of "Champion of Christ" and at the same time he consecrated the status of Moldova as the Gate of Christianity.

It is located approximately 12 km south of Vaslui, in the village of Băcăoani, on the road that connects Vasluiul to Bârlad. At the place of the battle, a monument was erected representing Stephen the Great as a Rider. The statue was unveiled on October 25, 1975 on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the victory of the Moldovans against the Ottomans, and it is part of the monumental bridge Podul Înalt, located on DN24, in the southern part of Băcăoani village, at approx. 300 m from the town.



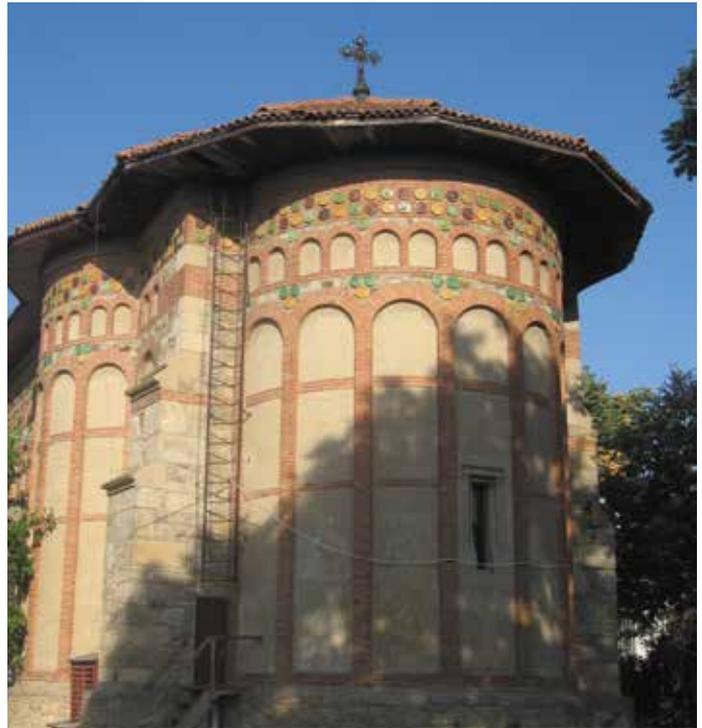
19

The assembly of the Royal Courts of Vaslui and of the Royal Church “Saint John the Baptist”

Situated at the crossroad of the commercial roads linking the Black Sea with the Baltic Sea, Vaslui consolidated its position as a commercial and urban center during the reign of Alexander the Kind, who established the Royal Court here. In the 15th century it was given the status of the capital of Moldova. At that time Vaslui represented an important centre because it hosted the Royal Palace, handicraft workshops, courtyard houses, pottery workshops, weapons workshops, stables and other handicrafts.

Affected by the Tatar attacks, the Royal Court from Vaslui is refurbished during the Stefan cel Mare period, who built the “St John the Baptist” Church (1490) as a chapel, in the honor of the Victories at Podul Inalt battle. According to inscriptions of those times, the church was built in a few months and is the oldest in the group of city churches of that period.

The interior painting made during the Stephen the Great reign and the exterior painting made during the reign of his son Bogdan or even Petru Rareș have been preserved until now, representing an attraction for tourists.



20

"Saint Mary" church from Borzești, Bacău

Stephen the Great was born and spent his childhood in Borzești, Bacău County. The “Saint Mary” Church was built on his initiative between July 9, 1493 and October 12, 1494, together with his son Alexandru-Voda, in the memory of his childhood friend, Gheorghita, killed here by the Tatars.



Other tourist attractions in Romania:

SUCEAVA COUNTY

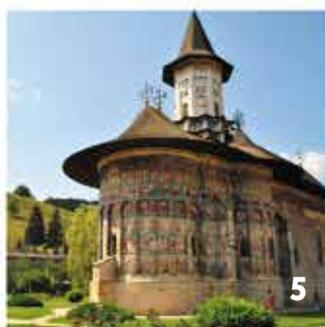
1. "Saint John the Baptist" Church in Arbore Commune. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993.
2. "Virgin Mary" and "St. Gheorghe" Churches of the Humor Monastery, in Humor Monastery Commune. They were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993.
3. "Probota Monastery", Probota Village. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993.
4. "St. Gheorghe" Church of the "St. Ioan cel Nou" Monastery from Suceava. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993.
5. "Sucevița" Monastery Church. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2010.
6. "Moldovița" Monastery Church in the Vatra Moldoviței Commune. It is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.
7. The Royal Inn in Suceava.
8. "Ciocănești"- Commune
9. The "Black Ceramics" Center in Marginea.

IAȘI COUNTY

11. "Metropolitan Cathedral"
12. "Holy Three Hierarchs" Monastery
13. The "Copou" Park
14. "Golia" Monastery
15. The Union Museum
16. "Cetățuia" Monastery
17. "Ruginoasa" Palace

BOTOSANI COUNTY

18. The archaeological site from Ripiceni - The mysterious "City" on the banks of the Prut River is a part of a huge settlement of Cucuteni culture, considered among the largest ever discovered on the territory of Romania.
19. "Vorona" Monastery
20. "Coșula" Monastery
21. "St. Dumitru" Wood Church, Vorniceni
22. "Saint Dumitru" Wood Church, Ionățeni, "Assumption of the Virgin Mary" Wood Church, "Saints Voivodes" Wood Church, "Birth of the Virgin Mary" Lipovenian Church
23. Dorohoi Wood Church
24. "Agafton" Monastery
25. Ipotești - observer - Blue Codrii Lake



VASLUI COUNTY

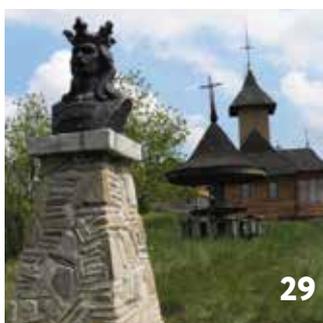
26. The Huși Wine Museum
27. The Eparchial Museum of Religious Art
28. "Ghica" and "Mavrocordat" Houses
29. The Botanical Reservation "Movila lui Burcel"
30. The fossiliferous place "Hulubăț Sand"
31. The Museum of Traditions
32. The "Copou" Park

NEAMȚ COUNTY

33. "Vânători Neamț" Natural Park
34. "Ceahlău" National Park
35. "Cucuteni Eneolithic Art" Museum
36. "Ion Creangă" Memorial Museum, Humulești
37. "Agapia" Monastery
38. "Văratec" Monastery
39. "Secu" Monastery
40. "Sihistria" Monastery

VRANCEA COUNTY

41. "Mărășești Heroes Mausoleum" - is a monument dedicated to the heroes of the First World War
42. "Soveja Heroes Mausoleum" - the monument is located in the village of Dragosloveni, Soveja Commune. It is dedicated to the heroes who have fallen in the battles of the Șușița valley.
43. "Mărăști Heroes Mausoleum". It is located in the village of Mărăști, Răcoasa Commune. The mausoleum was erected on the site of the battle of July 9-17, 1917 and it is a part of the Historical Field from Mărăști, along with other historical objectives;
44. "Focsani Heroes Mausoleum"
45. "Cheile Tișitei" -Tișița Natural Reservation;
46. "Living Fire" Natural Reservation
47. "Vrâncean Village Museum"



The route of Stephen the Great in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova

The route of Stephen the Great in the Republic of Moldova and Romania will cross through 9 places through the Republic of Moldova, as well as 20 places in Romania. It will cover approx. 2000 km and will promote the tourist objectives represented by:

- Fortresses like: Suceava, Soroca, Neamț, Tighina;
- Fields of vine growing and wine production, vineyards and wine cellars like: Cotnari, Mileștii Mici, Cricova, Purcari, Et Cetera, Panciu-Odobești etc;
- Monestries & Churches like: Putna, Pătrăuți, Voroneț, Volovăț, Reuseni, "Saint Ilie" Church, Dobrovăț, "Saint Nicolae" Church - Hârlău, "Saint Nicolae" - Popăuți, "Devout Parascheva", "Virgin Mary" Borzești-Bacău, Căpriană, etc.
- Museums: The Museum of Vine and Wine in Hârlău and the Museum of Stefan cel Mare in Vaslui, the Museum of History and Ethnography of Mereni, the Palace of Culture in Iași, built on an old foundation of the voivodship, Royal Courts from Tg. Neamț and Vaslui, the Natural Rock landscapes of Țipova, Orhei, Saharna and the monument of Stephen the Great from Chisinau, as well as Podul Înalt complex built in the honor of

The introduction of the vineyards and wine cellars in the route of Stephen the Great in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova was due to the fact that Statal Moldova in the Middle Ages was one of the most important regions for growing vines and wine making. The vineyards were owned by the Rulers of the country. According to historians, viticulture reached its peak in the fifteenth century during the Reign of Stephen the Great. He created the position of Cupbearer at the Royal Court, brought new varieties of vines, set up vineyards and modernized the wine production process within the monasteries, which have become winemaking centers, and wine - a part of the mystery of Communion.



