

MOLDOVA, 27. SEPTEMBER – 3. OCTOBER 2015

This time the trip went to Chisinau, which is the capital of Moldova. Anne Berit has been a member of an association called [Norge – Moldova](#). It is a humanitarian aid organization that helps disadvantaged in Moldova. In summer they sent a message to all the members that they would arrange a trip to Moldova, so that all the members who wanted, could join and get an idea of the work that has been done there. Moldova is considered the poorest country in Europe.



Moldova's position in Europe



Flag



Coat of arms

In ancient times, today's Moldova was populated by [dacians](#). Strategically located on the route between Europe and Asia, Moldova was affected by numerous invasions. Russians, Mongolians and various tribes ravaged the area. In the Middle Ages, today's Moldova with Romanian Moldova was gathered in [the Principality of Moldova](#). The principality was a puppet state during the Ottoman Empire (Turkey), but in 1812 the eastern half (today Moldova) was ceded to Russia. The western part went to Romania together with the Principality of [Wallachia](#).

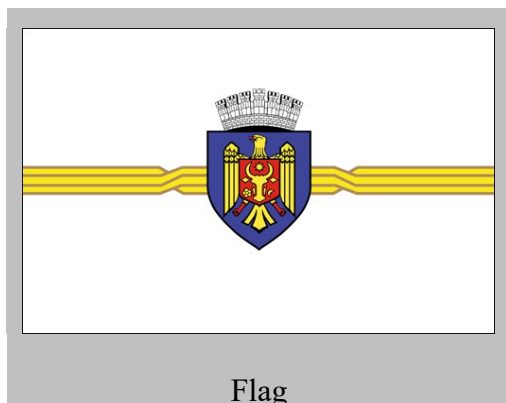
After the Russian Revolution [Bessarabia](#) was an independent state in 1918, but was shortly incorporated in Romania. In 1940, Moldova was occupied by the Soviet Union and the region of [Transnistria](#) was incorporated in Moldova. With support from Germany Romania managed to throw the Soviets out again in 1941. After 2. World War Moldova was again occupied by the Soviet Union. Under Stalin a large number of Moldovans were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan, while Russians were sent to Moldova.

In August 1991 Moldova declared independence and broke away from the Soviet Union. To begin with, there was a strong popular support for unification with Romania, but in a referendum in 1994 an overwhelming majority voted for continued independence. Since 2001, the former Communist Party has had power in Moldova.

[The geography of Moldova](#) is characterized by hilly plains. The highest peak is called [Bălănești Hill](#) and is 430m high. 3/4 of the area is fertile [chernozem](#), but extensive use of pesticides has made the soil and groundwater worse. Deforestation and cultivation of steep hillsides has contributed to erosion and landslides. Earlier, 80% of the country was covered by forests, but now only 8%. The country has over 3,000 rivers, but only 8 are over 100km long. The biggest lake is called Beleu. In addition to the natural lakes there 2519 artificial lakes and ponds that are used for flood control, irrigation and fish ponds.



Chişinău's position in Moldova



Flag



Coat of arms

The capital [Chişinău](#) is positioned in the middle of the country, by the river [Bic](#). The city is considered to be the second largest Romanian urban area in the world after Bucharest.

The place Chesenu is documented for the first time in 1436. There are many versions of the explanation for the name, but the sense of "well / source" recurs in most of them. A symbolic boulder is marking the place where the well was located.



The plane to Moldova was scheduled to depart at 6:45 and the group was supposed to meet at the airport at 5:00. We decided that it was most convenient to travel the day before and stay overnight at [Radisson Blue](#), which is in walking distance from the terminal.

We drove to Gardermoen and parked the car at [Dalen Parkering](#).

We were going with [Austrian Airlines](#), which is the international airline in Austria. It was formed in 1958. It was purchased by [Lufthansa](#) in 2009. The [History](#) of Austrian Airlines.



The plane we were traveling with was a [Fokker 100](#). It is produced by the Dutch airplane factory [Fokker](#) which went bankrupt in 1996.

We arrived at [Chişinău Airport](#) outside Chişinău. [Hjemmesiden](#) to the airport.



We had to change planes at the airport in Vienna. There was a few hours to wait for the plane to Chisinau. It was then sufficient time to eat and have a beer.



When we go out of the plane, we see the arrival and departure hall of the airport. It opened in 2002, so it is relatively new.



Adjacent is the air traffic control tower and the oldest terminal buildings, which was also renovated in 2002



On the outside of the arrival hall while we wait for our bus.



We were accommodated at [Hotel Cosmos](#), a bit south of the city. It is a large tourist hotel with 22 floors. In floors 2 to 4 are various offices. The hotel was simple but okay.



Beside the hotel there is a casino with shops and restaurants.



Across the street and roundabout there was a large shopping center.



In front of the hotel there is an equestrian statue of [Grigori Ivanovich Kotovski](#) (1881-1925). He was born in Bessarabia and became a general in the Red Army and a member of the Soviet Central Committee.



View from our room. Right below, we see a large roundabout where the traffic at times looked quite chaotic.



Here we look in the direction of the major shopping center.



To the right the street is going in the direction of the center of the city.



Wall mural beside the hotel.



Mihai Eminescu Theater is the oldest theater in Moldova.



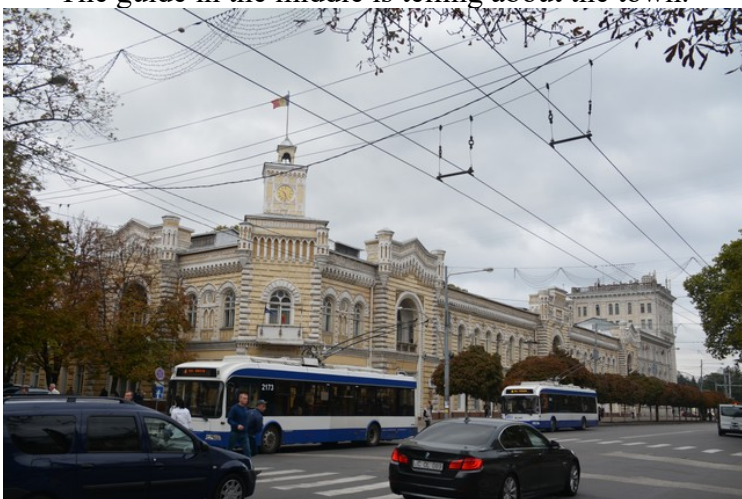
The Organ Hall It was at first a bank which was completed in 1910. Today there is held concerts here.



The guide in the middle is telling about the town.



We are listening.



Chișinău City Hall.



This is a bust of Alexander Bernardazzi, which is put on the wall of the town all. He is famous and has designed the city hall and several other buildings.



The main post office in Chișinău.



Signs on the wall at the front door.



Here we see the cardinal directions.



Street musician.



Government House.



Outside Government House is a demonstration camp for those who want Moldova into the EU.



The guide is telling us more.



Triumphal arch was built in 1840 to commemorate Russia's victory over the Ottoman Empire.



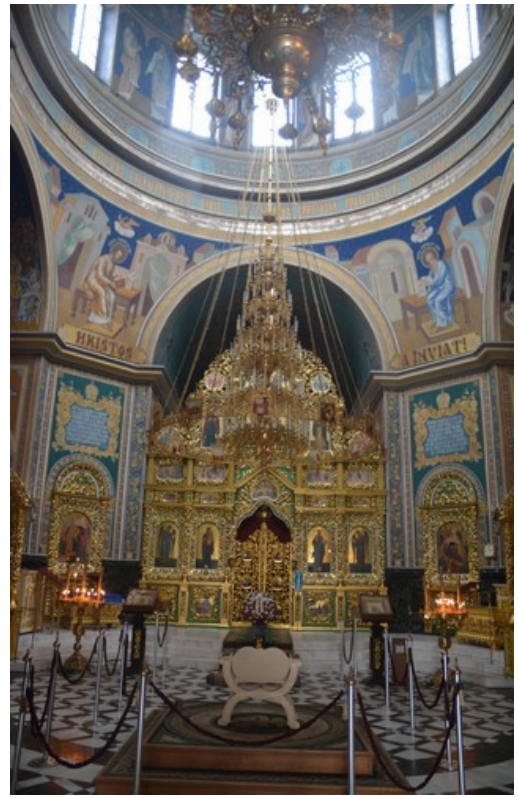
The Nativity Cathedral. This is the main cathedral of the Orthodox Church in Moldova.



Big chessboard on the church square.



The cathedral was built in the 1830s. It was bombed during World War II, and the bell tower was destroyed by the local Communists in 1962. The new bell tower was built in 1997. During the Soviet period, worship was forbidden and the cathedral was turned into an exhibition center. Below are some pictures from the church.



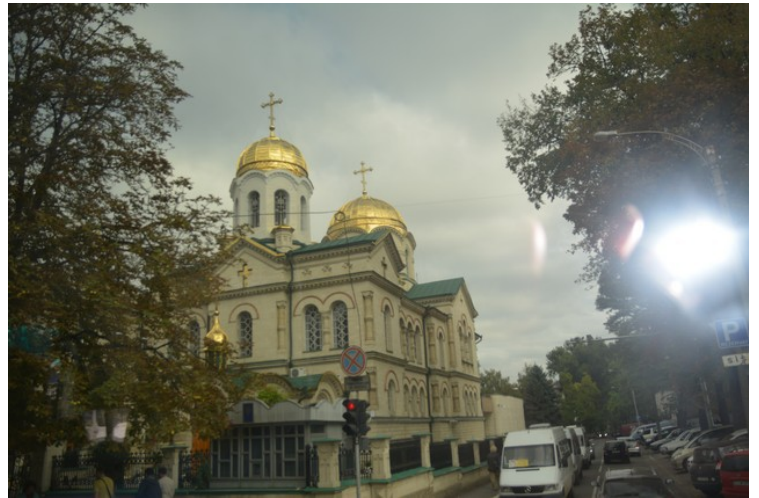


This girl was on the church square begging. She got some money from us too.

The bus is waiting for us.



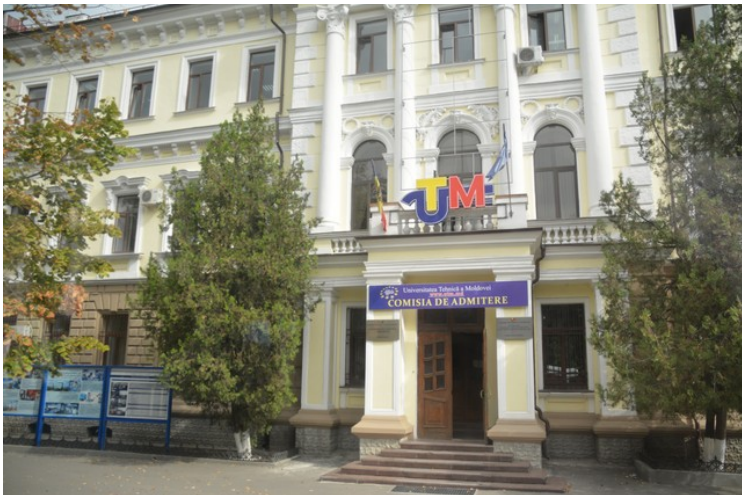
A little further down the street there was a camp of protesters who want Moldova closer to Russia.



Moreover along this main street called Boulevard Ștefan cel Mare there are many large buildings. We took photos of some while we drove past in the bus.

The church above is the Orthodox Cathedral of the Transfiguration of Jesus.

To the left we see the building of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry.



This is one of the buildings of the Technical University.



This is the entrance to [Ștefan cel Mare Central Park](#) with a statue of [Ștefan cel Mare](#). The park is the oldest in Moldova and was made in 1818.



Here we can have a look into the park.



Then it was time for lunch. We'd eat at [La Taifas](#).



Anne Berit was absolutely horrified when I took her picture. She is accustomed to that it is she who takes pictures of people, and that I'm taking pictures of houses.



Here we look into one of the halls of the restaurant.



This is the first room we enter.



The staff is making the tables ready for us.



Here we are in place around the tables.



The first thing we get served is chicken soup. It is a very common traditional appetizer.



Then some pictures from the interior of the restaurant.







Small wine barrels in the bar.



The restaurant has received a certificate from tripadvisor.



This is one of the many electrical [trolleybuses](#), which run scheduled traffic criss-crossing the city.

Finished the lunch.

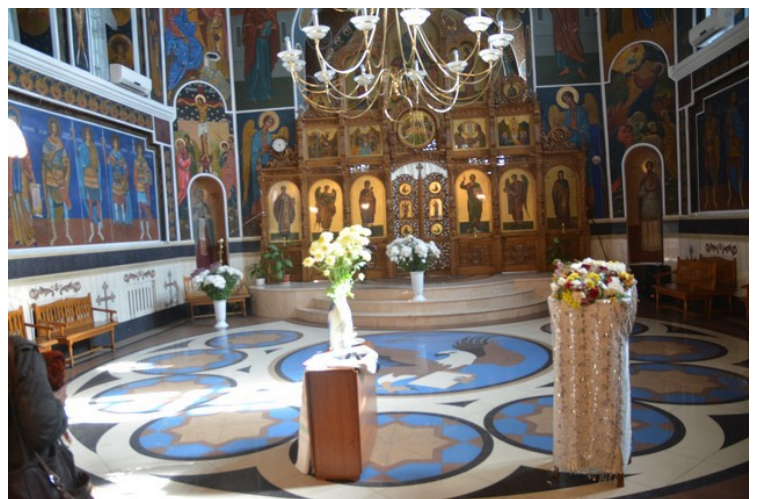
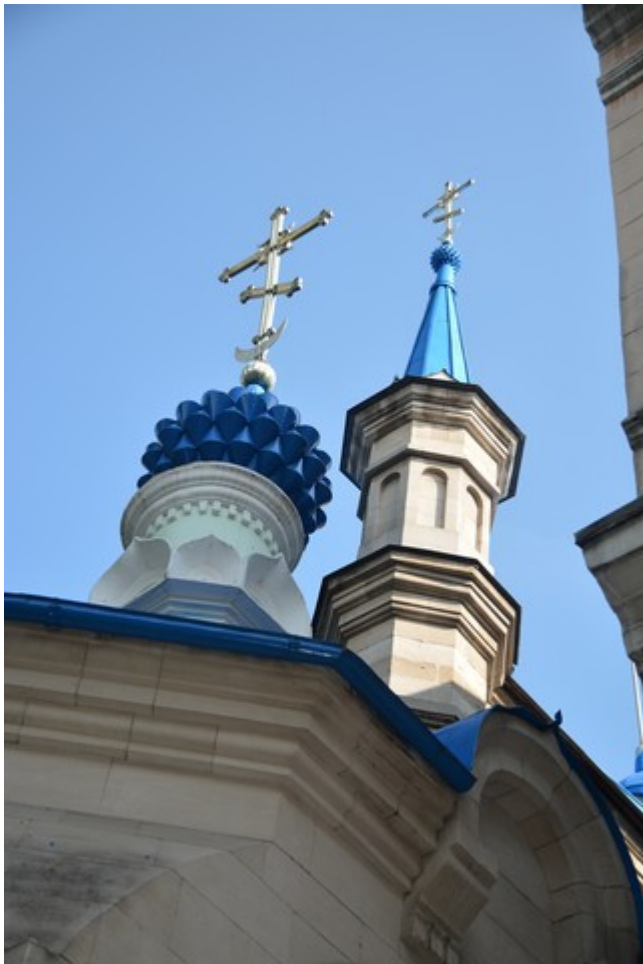


Right next to La Taifas is the Romanian Embassy.



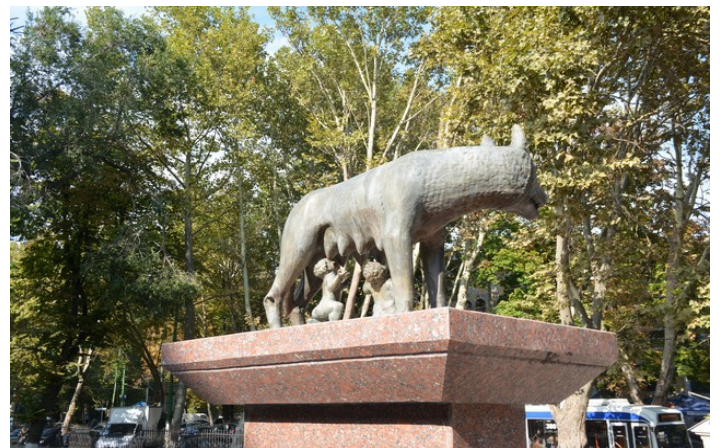
Right beyond the restaurant is a church named [Sfinta Cuvioasa Teodora de la Sihla](#). It was built in 1895.

Below are some pictures from the church.





Crocheted flowers outside the church.



The next post in the program was [National Museum of History of Moldova](#).

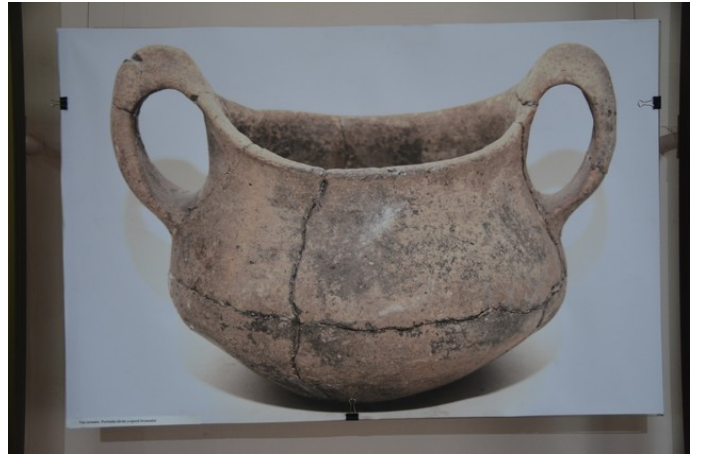
Outside the museum there is a statue of the [Capitoline Wolf](#) with the twins Romulus and Remus, who are regarded as the founders of Rome. It is a replica of the one in Rome.



It is prohibited with firearms in the museum.



Inside the museum there is an image of old Orhei.
Below are various pictures from the museum.





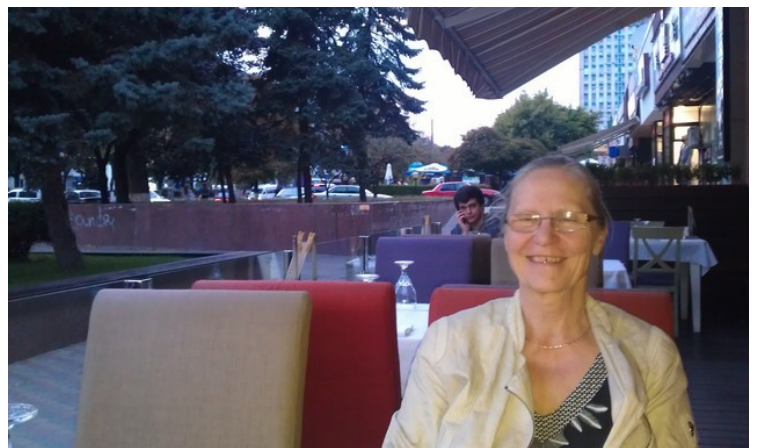


The museum was created in 1983.
There are over 322,172 objects in the museum and they cover the entire period from prehistoric times to the present.





This picture from the last world war covers one wall in a huge hall.



In the evening we ate at this restaurant called Kommunalka. The first night we sat outside, such as the pictures show.

The first night, we thought the food was so good, and the waiter so nice that we went there this evening too. This evening it was colder, so the tables outside were packed together and we sat inside.