



## **WESTERN UKRAINE EXPEDITION**

*Led by Richard Bangs and Rebel Holiday*

*and Sasha Vosk, Ukraine Expert*

**May 15 to 27, 2025**



## Best of Western Ukraine Expedition

### 12-DAY TOUR ITINERARY 2025

#### Our Daily Itinerary

Arrival - May 15	Arrive to Krakow, Poland and overnight
Day 1 - May 16	Travel Krakow, Poland to Lviv, Ukraine
DAY 2 - May 17	Continue exploring Lviv
DAY 3 - May 18	Edem Resort and Emily Resort
DAY 4 - May 19	Lviv to Tustan and Drohobych
Day 5 - May 20	Tustan to Drohobych
DAY 6 - May 21	Bukovel and Verkhovyna
DAY 7 - May 22	Verkhovyna and continue to Chernivtsi
DAY 8 - May 23	Exploring Chernivtsi
DAY 9 - May 24	Chernivtsi to Khotyn to Kamianets-Podilskyi
DAY 10 - May 25	Kamianets-Podilskyi to Chortkiv and Lviv
DAY 11 - May 26	Departure to Krakow, Poland
DAY 12 - May 27	Flights back home from Krakow



*Note: Presumes Western and Northern Ukraine remains safe and ideally with overall cease-fire. Traveler understands that trip may be rescheduled if deemed necessary. Travelers must have suitable insurance, which is inexpensive and will be recommended by our partner.*



# Welcome to Western Ukraine

*Arrival Day to Krakow May 15 – Depart Krakow to Lviv on May 16, 2025*

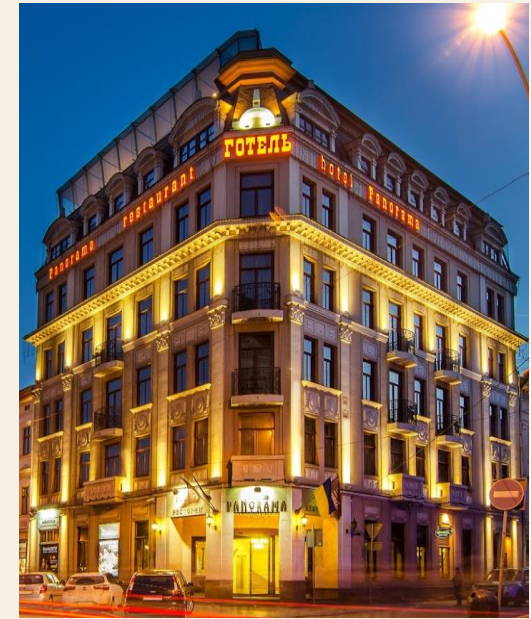
We will visit Ukraine at an important and meaningful time. Our visit signifies our support and goodwill to our Ukrainian friends.

Ukraine shares borders with Poland, and currently the easiest way to travel to Western Ukraine is via Krakow, Poland. We plan to meet in Krakow. When you arrive, you will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel in the city center. After you check-in you will have time to rest or explore beautiful Krakow, considered by many one of Poland's most charming cities. Depending on when you arrive, we can make some suggestions or show you around.

We will have a dinner tonight to meet our fellow travelers. We overnight in Krakow on May 15, then travel to Lviv, tomorrow on May 16.

*Day 1 – Travel to Lviv – May 16*

After a good breakfast at our hotel, we will transfer to the train at the appropriate time. We can train from **Kraków to Przemyśl**, then transfer by car from **Przemyśl** to the **Border Control** point. Cross the border at **Shehyni**, a Ukrainian town across the border from **Lviv**. Once we arrive in Lviv and check-in to the hotel, we will have a Welcome Dinner at the hotel. After our dinner, you will have free time.



## Day 2

Enjoy a delicious breakfast at the hotel to start your day off right. **Guided Walking Tour of Old Lviv Town** - We start out on a guided walking tour of charming Old Lviv. We visit historic churches, fascinating museums, and notable historical sites. Explore other points of interest that highlight this enchanting city's rich cultural and architectural heritage.

We'll take a break for **lunch** at the restaurant **Kryjivka**, celebrated for its patriotic ambiance and delicious Ukrainian cuisine. This is a wonderful introduction to the local flavors and culture. Local food is outstanding due to Western Ukraine's pristine air and water, providing ideal conditions for high-quality food production. The region's cuisine is influenced by its historical ties to Poland, Austria-Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, offering a rich array of culinary traditions and recipes. At some point, we can take a moment to stop for coffee and indulge in some delicious desserts.

**Relaxation Time at the Hotel:** Return to the hotel for a brief rest.

**Evening Entertainment – Your Choice!** One option is the Ukrainian Circus at the Lviv State Circus. You may enjoy a spectacular show, similar to Cirque du Soleil, featuring some of the world's best performers. Cirque du Soleil is known for depending on Ukrainian talent.





## *Day 2 (continued)*

**Evening Entertainment** Ukraine is renowned for its musical prowess, with a history of producing world-class musicians. Many famous "Russian" composers, including Tchaikovsky, have deep connections to Ukraine. We can delight in a classical music concert by the acclaimed **Lviv State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet Orchestra** at the elegant Symphony Hall.

**Dine at Mons Pius Restaurant**, one of Lviv's coziest restaurants, celebrated for its family history, delicious food, and an excellent selection of wine and cocktails.



For those wishing to rest, head back to the hotel for a relaxing evening. Other choices include:

### **Guided**

**Night Walk:** For those interested in further exploration, enjoy a guided leisurely walk through the old town, discovering more of its night-time charm.

**Lively Nightlife:** Experience Lviv's vibrant nightlife, including trendy bars, craft beer pubs, nightclubs with live music and dancing, and more. Today we combine cultural immersion with relaxation and entertainment, providing a comprehensive and enjoyable experience of Lviv.





## Day 3 – Edem Resort and Emily Resort

**Breakfast.** Start your day with a hearty breakfast at the Panorama Lviv Hotel, enjoying a variety of delicious options to prepare for the day's adventures.

In the morning and early afternoon, see more of Lviv, including a visit to a museum of choice.

Then embark on a ride to the luxurious **Edem Resort where we can explore!**

At the resort, visit West Ukraine's only open-air **Modern Art Sculpture Museum** and an extensive collection of the region's prehistoric archaeological findings, led by the museum's curator. This tour will provide a fascinating insight into the region's cultural and historical heritage



Next, we'll enjoy a leisurely walk around the resort...



### **Day 3 (continued) Edem Resort and Emily Resort**

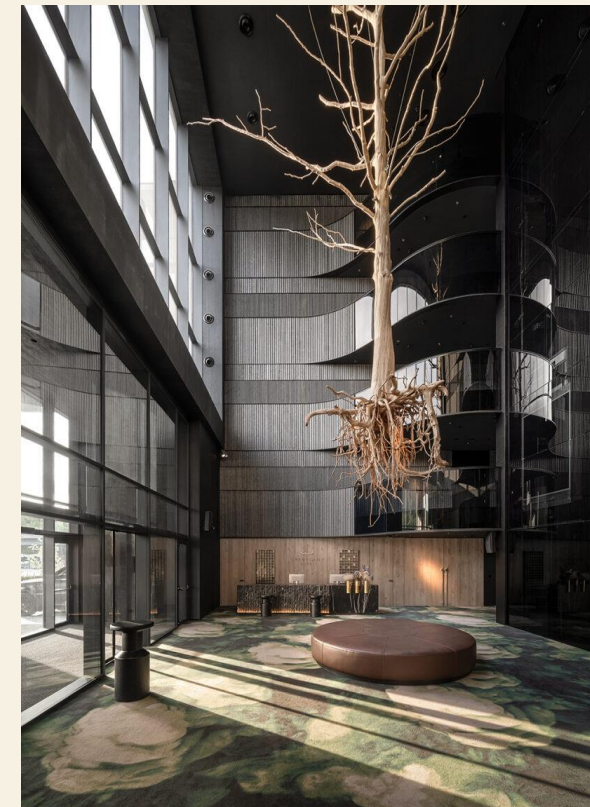
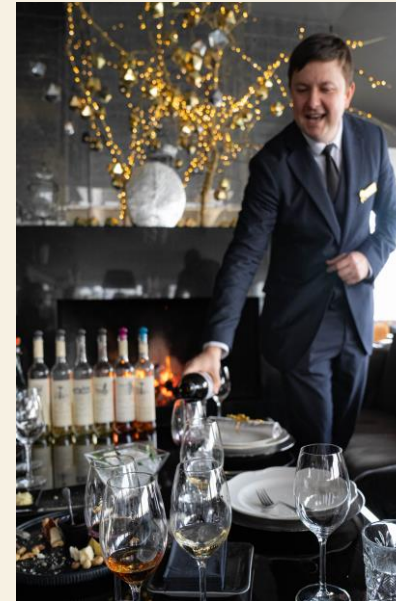
On our leisurely walk around the resort, we will enjoy seeing the vineyards.

### **Wine Tasting and Culinary Experience**

You can participate in a wine-tasting session at **Chateau Edem Vinery**, adjacent to the resort, sampling their award-winning wines.

The sommelier will present the wines and answer any questions you may have. This will be followed by an excellent culinary experience featuring a creative mix of local and European cuisines that reflect the region's multi-ethnic heritage. Meet and greet the chef afterward for an insightful discussion on the culinary art.

On the way back to Lviv, we'll visit a different approach and style on a brief tour followed by a gourmet dinner. We'll meet the General Manager and the Chef, as well as the staff and some guests.

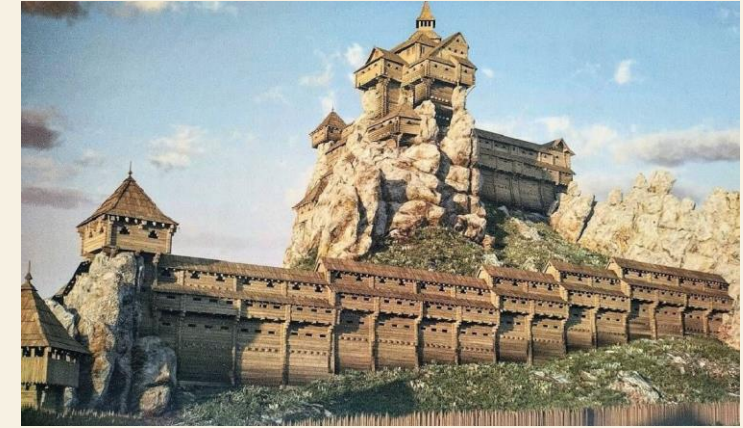




## *Day 4 - Lviv to Tustan and Drohobych*

**Breakfast** at the hotel. This morning we travel two hours from **Lviv** to **Tustan**, a medieval fortress in the Carpathians, near Urych, dating from the 9th to 16th centuries. It served as a defensive and customs point during the times of **Kyivan Rus**. We'll take time to explore the cliff-castle complex and surroundings.

Travel about an hour from **Tustan** to **Drohobych**, **Drohobych** is a historic city, known for its rich cultural heritage and medieval architecture. It was an important center for salt production in the Middle Ages and features UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The city reflects a blend of Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish influences, making it a significant cultural hub in the region



We'll enjoy lunch, then visit key sights, including **St. George's Church** and the **Drohobych Salt Plant**. Afterwards, we return to **Lviv**. Explore the city at your leisure and enjoy dinner at a highly recommended restaurant.



## **Day 5 - Lviv to Bukovel via Ivano-Frankivsk with a stop in Yaremche**

**Breakfast** at the Lviv hotel. Early start to maximize the day

**Departure.** Travel to Ivano-Frankivsk, we'll have a quick **walking tour** of the city center, plus coffee & refreshments. **Yaremche.** Lunch at a local restaurant "У Якова"

Explore key attractions: Yaremche is a scenic town in the Ukrainian Carpathians, known as the "**Pearl of the Carpathians.**" It serves as a popular mountain resort and a gateway to attractions like the **Prut River Waterfall, Dovbush Rocks, Holy Prophet Elijah Monastery, and Yaremche Market** - a must-visit destination for tourists seeking authentic Ukrainian souvenirs and local delicacies.

Late afternoon we depart **Yaremche** for **Bukovel.** We arrive in **Bukovel** early evening and check-in to the hotel. **Bukovel** is the largest ski resort in the Carpathian Mountains. It features 75 kilometers of ski slopes and 17 lifts, making it a popular destination for winter sports enthusiasts. In addition to skiing, Bukovel offers multiple summer activities.

Tonight, you can give your body an ultimate treat: enjoy a traditional Ukrainian steam room "Banya" accompanied with "Banya food" - tasty local smoked fish, cold-cuts, and more (a perfect traditional combo!) Alternatively, we can have **dinner** at an excellent restaurant.



## Day 6 - Continue exploring Bukovel and transfer to Verkhovyna

After **breakfast** at the hotel and check-out. We can ride a **panoramic lift** to the top of the **Bukovel Mountain** to take-in breathtaking views. We'll have time for coffee and photos on the mountain top, then we drive to **Verkhovyna**.

Once in **Verkhovyna** spend the rest of the day delving into the rich culture of the Hutsul people, who have called this region home for centuries. This experience combines scenic beauty, cultural learning, and hands-on activities. Upon arrival, you'll meet local Hutsul families who will share insights into their unique traditions and lifestyle.

Experience an authentic **Hutsul Wedding Ritual**, where you can participate in the vibrant customs and celebrations that define these events. The Carpathians are renowned for their cheese, particularly **Hutsul bryndza**. **You'll have the opportunity to** observe the traditional cheese-making process firsthand learning how this beloved delicacy is crafted at home.

You can try your hand at traditional **Hutsul arts and crafts**, allowing you to connect with the local culture in a creative way.

Or, join a **cooking session** where you'll learn to prepare staples of Hutsul cuisine, such as **borscht** and **varenyky**. Savor the delicious dishes you've helped create in a warm and inviting atmosphere, which will also serve as your **dinner**.

Tonight, we'll rest well in preparing for the next day's activities.





## Day 7 - Verkhovyna continues and a transfer to Chernivtsi

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and check-out.

**Enjoy a Variety of Summer Activities.** Experience the thrill of summer in the Carpathians with exciting activities such as **rafting and tubing** on the **Prut** and **Black Cheremosh rivers**, **hiking** through scenic trails and **mountain biking**.

For a unique adventure you can try **quad ATV riding** or **horseback riding in the mountains**.

Enjoy a relaxing time **fishing**, or take a **sightseeing jeep trip** across the mountain tops to see the view.

During a break in the activities, enjoy a **picnic lunch** consisting of local goodies such as **banush**, **varenyky**, **deruny**, and **assorted local cheeses**.

Early evening we'll drive about two hours to **Chernivtsi** and check-in at the hotel.

Tonight we'll have dinner at one of the two best local restaurants.

Back at the hotel for a good night's rest.



## *Day 8 - Exploring Chernivtsi*

**Chernivtsi** is a historic city celebrated for its diverse cultural history and stunning architecture. Once the capital of **Bukovina**, it features a blend of influences from Moldavian, Austrian, and Romanian rule, earning it the nickname "**Little Vienna.**" Today, it remains a vibrant cultural and educational center.

We have breakfast at the hotel and begin our day.

Savor a full day exploring one of Ukraine's most attractive cities. Visit architectural landmarks such as the former **Metropolitan's Residence**, now **Chernivtsi University**, is listed on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Enjoy dining at the second-best of Chernivtsi's restaurants.

After dinner you will be free to explore the city's exciting nightlife.





## Day 9 - Chernyvitsi to Khotyn

**Breakfast** at the hotel and check-out. This morning we'll drive to **Khotyn Fortress** and discover the fascinating history of Khotyn, the city, which celebrated its 1000th anniversary. Explore this impressive medieval fortress with stunning views of the Dniester River.



Next we enjoy an afternoon drive to **Kamianets-Podilskyi** where you can immerse yourself in the picturesque landscapes of western Ukraine. After arriving, we'll have **lunch** and enjoy the view of the **Castle**. After lunch we check-in at the hotel.



**Discover** the enchanting beauty and historical significance of **Kamianets-Podilskyi**, often referred to as the "**Flower on a Stone.**" Marvel at the natural wonder of the **Smotrych River Canyon**, which surrounds the city like a folk-tale citadel. Step inside the fortress for a captivating journey back in time.

Try your hand at archery or cross bow shooting and explore museum's exhibitions dedicated to the castle's defense, immersing yourself in an atmosphere rich with adventure and history. As evening approaches, dine at one of the city's cozy, authentic restaurants or cafes. Afterward, take a leisurely night stroll along the old streets and admire the majestic view of the illuminated castle in the distance





## Day 10 - Kamianets-Podilskyi to Chortkiv and Lviv

After a good breakfast at the hotel, early morning departure from **Kamianets- Podilskyi to Chortkiv**

**Chortkiv** feels like the setting of a classic fairy tale. Stroll through the city and marvel at the picturesque half-timbered town hall. Highlights include a visit to the 17th-century **Dominican church**. We'll see the majestic "**old synagogue**" nestled in the Jewish quarter. We will see the wooden **Church of the Ascension** as we explore this enchanting city.

After lunch, we'll drive to **Olesko Castle**. **Olesko Castle**, a historic fortress dating back to the 13th century and is famous for being the birthplace of Polish King Jan III Sobieski. Now a museum, it features over 1,500 exhibits of 16th-17th century art, including notable works like Martino Altomonte's "Battle of Vienna," making it a key cultural site within the "**Golden Horseshoe**" of **Lviv Region**. We will enjoy visiting the castle and its exhibits.





**Day 10 - (continued) Kamianets-Podilskyi to Chortkiv and Lviv**

After seeing the castle, in late afternoon, we depart **Olesko Castle** for **Lviv**. When we arrive back in **Lviv**, we'll check into our hotel, Eurohotel, conveniently located in the heart of the city. After dinner at the hotel's Terrace Restaurant, enjoying a beautiful view of the city, we can reflect on the adventures of the trip. Take the time to rest and relax, getting ready for your journey home the next day



## *Day 11 – May 26*

Today we travel back to Krakow for our Farewell Dinner and will overnight in Krakow. We'll celebrate all the extraordinary experiences we've just had -- for we will have come to know Ukraine in a very special way. We now have many memories to treasure of our time in Ukraine.

## *Day 12 - May 27*

This is Departure Day. After breakfast in our hotel, you may look around Krakow until time to go the airport. You will be transferred to the Krakow airport for your flight onward.





## ***WESTERN UKRAINE – EXPEDITION DETAILS MAY 15 -27, 2025***

**Co-led by Richard Bangs and Rebel Holiday and Sasha Vosk**

**Expedition Details – May 15-27, 2025**

***All Inclusive per person:*** \$6,250 (\$2,650 deposit to register; then 2 payments)

**Register:** [ETC Western Ukraine Expedition May 2025](#)



***All Inclusive:*** Highly experienced expedition leaders and English-Ukraine speaking guide for the duration. The best lodging, authentic, and delicious meals with the group, water, coffee, wine and beer at meals, all group activities and excursions in the itinerary, and double or single accommodations from May 15-27 (check-out). All transportation during expedition, including trains and airport transfers.

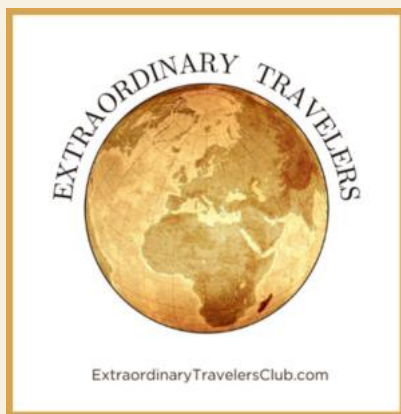
***Cost Excludes:*** International flights. Any meals, services, or activities not with group. Personal items: laundry, alcohol (beyond that served at meals), and gratuities.

***Travel:*** If you do not have a travel agent, contact us for a recommendation.

***Travel Insurance and Refunds:*** Full refund of payment on the condition of a fully-paid acceptable replacement for you. We strongly recommend trip cancellation insurance. A travel agent can assist you with this. There is also specialty insurance to visit Ukraine, that is very cost-effective, currently around \$4 per day.

**Contact Richard Bangs** [richardbangs@extraordinarytravelersclub.com](mailto:richardbangs@extraordinarytravelersclub.com) or **Rebel Holiday** [holiday@wheelerwindsorexpeditions.com](mailto:holiday@wheelerwindsorexpeditions.com)

***Important caveat:*** Every effort will be made to adhere to the itinerary above. Due to the nature of travel, the itinerary may need to be altered. Participants agree to accept any modification with a cheerful mindset.



**Richard Bangs, Co-Founder,  
Extraordinary Travelers  
Club**



**Rebel Holiday, Co-Founder,  
Extraordinary Travelers  
Club/Wheeler Expeditions**



**Sasha Vosk, President,  
Rebuild Ukraine  
Foundation**



### **Our Expedition Leadership Team – Richard Bangs and Rebel Holiday and Sasha Vosk**

**Richard Bangs** has many decades of leading adventure travel and authoring books. Rebel Holiday has led expeditions with Wheeler Expeditions on all 7 continents. This extraordinary adventure takes you to the sites and highlights of Western Ukraine. You will be captivated by the natural beauty, long history, culture, and first-hand experiences with native Ukrainians.

Sasha Vosk, a Ukrainian, based in U.S., President of Rebuild Ukraine Foundation, has collaborated to design our trip and has graciously offered to be our guide in Ukraine. Visit: <https://rebuildukrainefoundation.org/>

We will share this life-memorable experience as a group of 10-12 adventurers. Join us to experience it!