

# **Drobeta Turnu Severin - Mănăstirea Strehaia EN**

## **Descriere**

## **Monastery of Mraconia (old name Mrăcunea)**

## **Descriere**

Located near the town of Orșova, the Mraconia monastery has, according to some opinions, its beginnings in the eleventh century, during the Glad and Ohtum voivodes. It appears mentioned in the historical sources before the end of the fourteenth century. In 1453, because of the Turkish incursions, the monks were forced to leave the settlement. Between 1521-1523, the ruler of Severin, Nicola Gârlișteanu, his wife, Anca, and their daughter, Irina, the wife of the ruler Ubul and their daughter, Nasta, re-founded the monastery. Even so, it was quickly ruined due to the numerous Turkish-Tatar incursions. Between 1658-1665, it was again repaired by monks, supported by the locals. During the wars between the Turks and the Austrians, carried out between 1670-1682, it suffered numerous damages (in 1682 it was set on fire by the martialots). In 1690, the first attempts were made to "convert" the monks from Mrăcunea to "Catholicism". In 1715, a Turkish mob killed almost all the monks (only one escaped). In 1738, it was burned by the Austrian troops, and in 1788, it was destroyed by the Turks. In 1934, through the efforts of the bishop of Caransebeș, Vasile Lazarescu and of the protopop Iosif Câmpianu from Orșova, a new burnt brick church was erected, in the form of a cross and covered with metal sheet, but remained unfinished for a long time. In the first two decades of the communist regime, it functioned as a chism church. In 1968, as a result of the work done at the Iron Gates I hydroelectric power station, the old church was covered by the Danube waters. The present settlement was built after 1989, on a new site, becoming a monastic settlement in 2007.



## Harta



# Monastery „Saint Anne”

## Descriere

It was founded by the journalist Pamfil Șeicaru (1894-1980), between 1936-1939, based on a project by the Bucharest architect Ștefan Peterneli. Due to some misunderstandings arising between the founder and the bishop Vasile Lazarescu (the future metropolitan of Banat), the consecration of the future nun monastery with the dedication "Saint Anne" (after the name of the founder's mother) was postponed. The outbreak of the Second World War and then the establishment of the communist regime made that the monastery remained unconsecrated until December 2, 1990. Between 1993-1997, the monastery underwent restoration work. The architecture of the monastery is in the manner of our old wooden churches, with the inherent modernization brought to the traditional Romanian rustic style. The settlement has the form of the letter "U", in the center being the church, in trilobal plane and central tower; on the two sides are the rooms which, together with the church, close an inner courtyard. In the 70's of the twentieth century, the painting was covered with a layer of lime, today preserved in its original form only in the tower. The iconostasis, carved in lime wood (relocated in 1947, to the Timișeni monastery in Șag commune, district Timiș), like the other wood carvings (including the crosses destroyed by the communists in the years 1960-1965) were executed by the Popa brothers from Bucharest.



## Harta



# Monastery Vodița

## Descriere

It was one of the first monastic settlements with public life erected on Romanian lands, being the first founding of Saint Nicodemus in our country. It was built on the ruins of an older settlement, probably from the time of Litovoi (dead in 1273). The founding act of the monastery dates from 1374; however, it is assumed that it was ready for completion around 1369. According to other opinions, the building began in the spring or summer of 1370, the painting being done in 1371 or in 1372. The ruler of the Romanian Country, Vlaicu Voda (1364-1377) and Lazarus of the Serbs (1371-1389) contributed to its construction. St. Nicodemus lived here for a while. For a while, the abbott of Vodita and Tismana was the same person. Vodita had a shaky existence due to political conditions; located near the Hungarian Catholic kingdom, the Banat of Severin was conquered, on several occasions, by Hungarians. The holy place had much to suffer from these protests, Catholic propaganda hampering the existence of Vodita. The last time it was mentioned in the letter of Radu the Handsome, from July 10, 1464. At the beginning of the 16th century, Vodița has been plundered, burned and crushed by the Turks. Between 1662-1667, some monks from Vodita went to Russia for help. At the beginning of the 18th century, the monks of Tismana tried to rebuild the holy place. It was ruined permanently because of the frequent wars between the Austrians and the Turks. After 1990, through the efforts of the abbot Nicodim Nicolăescu, the current bishop of Severin and Strehaia, the monastery was re-established, receiving the dedication of Saint Anthony the Great, which it had, seemingly, since the time of Saint Nicodemus. The church is built of wood, in the Maramures style and was consecrated in 2001.



## Harta



# Monastery Baia de Aramă

## Descriere

It was built, according to tradition, at the urging and with the help of the ruler Constantin Brancoveanu, by Milco Băiașul, the head of the local miners, supported by Cornea Brăiloiu, the big ruler of Oltenia. The building of the church began on May 22, 1699, being erected in a single year (1700). However, due to the delay in painting and the lack of money, the church was consecrated only on May 7, 1703. It is assumed that there was an older monastery here, so we are talking about a rebuilding. The Baia de Aramă Hermitage (sometimes appears in documents as a monastery) was dedicated, before 1718, to the Hilandar monastery at Mount Athos (probably even by Milco Băiașul, a Serbian ). Being a settlement of monks, Baia de Arama remains in history also through its involvement in the Revolution of 1848, the prior Gherasim, abbot of the monastery since 1832, being a fervent supporter of the peace movement. Following the secularization of 1863, the founding of Milco Băiașul became a church of chrism. It was re-established in 2008 as a nun's settlement. From the old edifice there is still the church and traces of the surrounding wall of the monastery, probably erected at the end of the 18th century. The painting by Neagoe and Partenie (the last being a hieromonah in Tismana), still shows us the faces of the founders: Milco Băiașul, Mara, his wife, their four sons (Milco, Gheorghe, Nicolcea and Semen) and the family of the great boyard Cornea Brăiloiu: the wife Stanca and their two sons, Barbu and Constantin. All of them are painted on the walls of the church in Baia de Arama together with the ruler Constantin Brancoveanu.



## Harta





# Monastery Strehaia

## Descriere

The church of Strehaia monastery, contrary to the general rules that require churches to be pointed with the altar to the east, is 42 degrees toward the south. This fact seems to be either due to a design error or was intentionally constructed in this way. Following the restoration work carried out in 1963, it was found that the feudal house and the church belong to special stages of construction, the house being dated in the first half of the sixteenth century, in the glory era of the Craiovan boyars, and the church together with the strong walled enclosure, with the rooms and the other monastery buildings, were from the time of the reign of Matei Basarab, more precisely around 1645. It was also established that neither the house, the church nor the other buildings were preceded by any other construction phase. At the beginning of the 16th century, probably by 1510, in Strehaia was built a headquarters of Oltenia's ruler, documented in the time of Vlad Călugărul, by a document dated May 16, 1589. In the seventeenth century, the ruler Matei Basarab remodeled the house (erected more than a century ago), built a church, cells, annexes and a defensive wall in the same place. Regarding the reasons that determined Matei Basarab to transform into a monastery the foundation originally conceived as a typical boyar court, most historians believe that the mountain ruler followed the example of Vasile Lupu, the ruler of Moldova who, around 1640, turned the Citadel of Neamt into a monastery so that he would not have to tear it down, as the Turks demanded. Probably, for the same reasons, Matei Basarab also preferred to turn a boyar court into a monastery and not tear it down. If needed, the monastery could also serve as a defense fortress. In the second half of the seventeenth century a porch was added and the house was also enlarged. In 1693, the abbott Silvestru built a surrounding stone wall. Between 1716-1718, at the Strehaia monastery the Austrians (at war with the Turks), at a distance varying between 10 and 50 m, built a pentagonal fortification of land with a wave and a ditch, with semicircular bastions in the corners surrounding the enclosure wall of the monastery. An important moment in the past of the Strehaia monastery took place in the second half of the seventeenth century, when the prince Grigore Ghica (February 1672 - November 1673) established the third bishopric of the Romanian Country, but for a short existence, of about six years (1673 -1679). It had only one bishop, Daniil. All abbotts and monks from the Strehaia monastery did not had too quiet times over time. The Turks, the Austrians, and then the Turks again, have repeatedly broken the peace of the monastic settlement. In 1821, on his way to

Bucharest, Tudor Vladimirescu strengthened the monastery Strehaia, as he had done also in Tismana and Gura Motrului, giving it the role of a fortress of defense. The involvement of the monastic settlement in the Revolution of 1821, seems to have had adverse consequences for the monks from here, who, for fear of reprisals, probably left the monastery. The settlement is undergoing major repairs, being re-painted, after 118 years, both outside and inside. All rooms, houses, fountain, stables and roof are restored. In 1846, the buildings of this settlement, the church and the annexes were in a deplorable state. The monastic life ceased in 1864, after the law of secularization of the monastery assets, when the old monastery from Strehaia becomes a chism church. In 1925, the place fell to the thieves who stole almost everything. And after the establishment of the communist regime, the monastery suffered, in 1957, the services were forbidden. However, renovation works have been initiated (starting in 1957). Until 1990, the monastery was organized as a museum. Only after the communist regime was abolished, the ancient founding of the Craiovan boyars became again a monastic settlement. The Strehaia monastery belongs to the category of fortified monasteries, being provided with strong defensive walls. The enclosure consists of four sides, having a rectangular shape, towards the middle of which is the church. The entrance to the monastery is made below a tower that seems to still guard the silence of the people. On the right side are the rooms and on the left side the gazebo that once served as an observation point. The church can be considered one of the last original artistic creations of the 17th century mountain school, having three parts: altar, nave and pronaos, to which is added the porch, a later creation, from the time of Constantin Brancoveanu (1693). Regarding the painting, there are two different layers. The first, perhaps the original, is very well cared for, and the second seems to mimic the old iconography with differences in size and nuance. It probably dates from the year 1826. On the left side of the nave are portraits of Matei Basarab and Mrs. Elena, and next to the door are painted the founders Barbu Craiovescu and "*Jupan Pârvu biv Vel Vornic*". Figures of benefactors of the holy place are also painted in the pronaos.



## Harta

