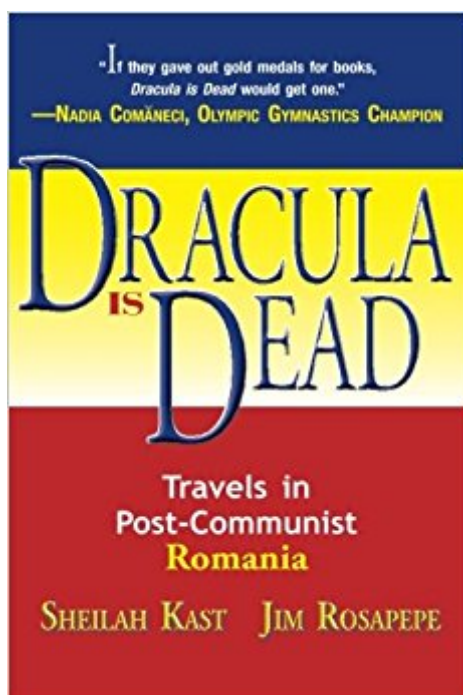


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Dracula Is Dead: Travels In Post-Communist Romania



Synopsis

In December 1989, Romanians overthrew dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, ending more than forty years of Communist totalitarianism. Five years ago, on the twentieth anniversary of the fall of Communism in Romania, former United States ambassador to Romania Jim Rosapepe and his wife, award-winning journalist Sheilah Kast, wrote *Dracula Is Dead*. Now, on the twenty-fifth anniversary, they've updated it in a second edition. The book has achieved an Amazon.com ranking of #5 in the essays/travelogues category and shares thoughtful insights on how Romania has reintegrated with Europe, while preserving its unique heritage. Today, Romania is a thriving democracy, an economic success, and a member of NATO and the European Union. Since 1989, Romania's economy has grown by 220% and its population has shrunk by thirteen percent as the birthrate fell and younger people left for higher pay in Spain and Italy. In 2014, Romania elected an ethnic German as president. Most important, Romania is now a normal European country with largely open borders and confidence that its future is democratic. What's the story behind the Romanian miracle? Join this amazing tour of an amazing land beyond Dracula, beyond orphans, beyond Communism, to the vibrant culture, unique history, and 21st century skills that define modern Romania. In the last decade, Romania became a world class player in IT -- and in cinema. Romanian films such as "Tales from the Golden Age," "12:08 East of Bucharest," and "4 months, 3 weeks, 2 days" all won awards at Cannes in recent years -- and have more fans abroad than at home. You'll travel to Bucharest, the capital city once called the Paris of the East, where centuries-old Orthodox Christianity thrives in tandem with cutting-edge information technology; to Maramureș, in the north, where the Holocaust took a great toll on a once vibrant Jewish community that included Nobel Prize-winner Elie Wiesel; to Transylvania, home not just to Vlad the Impaler, the real-life Dracula, but to the historic struggles between Romanians and Hungarians, now at peace; and to fascinating spots in-between. Along the way, you'll meet people, famous and unknown, who have made Romania -- people like King Michael, who in World War II, at age twenty-two, led a coup to unseat a fascist dictator, only to be forced into exile by the Communists; Ion Iliescu, both a leading figure during Communism and Romania's first democratically elected president; and Judith Katona, a young woman who, like many Romanians, went abroad to study after the Revolution but returned to create the new Romania. More than a travelogue or memoir, *Dracula Is Dead: Travels in Post-Communist Romania* presents Romania through American eyes, taking you with Jim and Sheilah as they discover a remarkable country of boundless hospitality, brilliant skills, and a bright future in a peaceful Europe. Romania's quarter-century since the Revolution has been a bumpy ride -- divisive politics, economic cycles,

and a war next door. ã ã But, through it all, Romania has emerged more free, more prosperous, and more secure. It also has preserved its unique culture -- Romance language, Latin culture, Christian Orthodox religion, tolerant inclusion of ethnic minorities, rural village life, and love for (almost) all things American. ã ã See for yourself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"If they gave out gold medals for books, Dracula is Dead would get one. It's a fascinating, long overdue, and timely look at Romania, giving readers an unparalleled view of my country's many, many layers."Nadia Comaneci,Olympic Champion and Gymnastics coach"If you buy only one book about Romania , Dracula is Dead should be the one. Culture, religion, war, humor, kings, Communists, kids, IT nerds, gypsies -- and Dracula -- they're all here, seen through the eyes of two keen American observers and storytellers."Sam Donaldson,ABC News contributor and anchor"Romania is a living legacy of Rome, as well as a great American ally. Jim and Sheilah are outstanding guides to this country, which is both familiar and exotic."Madeleine K. Albright,U.S. Secretary of State, 1997-2001"To understand how Eastern Europeans moved from Soviet satellites to NATO allies, Dracula Is Dead is a great place to start. Sheilah and Jim know the region well. Their insights are relevant to nations from the Baltic to the Black Sea."Steny H Hoyer,Us House Majority Leader And Former Co-Chair Of The U.S. Helsinki Commission"What a great read! With the eye of the journalist and the ear of the politician, Sheilah Kast and Jim Rosapepe make their Romanian experience so absorbing that you'll want to jump on the next plane to go see for yourself.

But I refuse to believe that Dracula is really dead."Cokie Roberts, author, syndicated columnist, and senior political analyst for ABC News and National Public Radio

Sheilah Kast is an award-winning journalist well known to viewers of PBS, ABC, and CNN, and to listeners of NPR. For ABC, she reported on the collapse of Communism from Moscow and Tbilisi and covered Hillary Clinton's first trip to Eastern Europe. She hosts her own daily magazine show on WYPR, the public radio affiliate in Maryland. Jim Rosapepe represented the United States as ambassador to Romania from 1998 to 2001, bringing to the job experience in American government and business, as well as in the former Communist world. Since returning home to Maryland, he has served on the boards of investment funds and companies active in Europe and the former Soviet Union, as well as the Council of American Ambassadors. He has written on economic and security issues for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Harvard International Review*. Jim and Sheilah have been married since 1983, and live in College Park, Maryland. They can be contacted through the book's Web site, draculaisdead.com.

Sometimes the names of the players tripped me up, but the concepts were clearly stated. I was told about this book from a friend who knows Jim R as a friend. I am glad he did, it makes me want to put Romania on my bucketlist. Definitely worth your time so that you see Eastern Europe in a different light than the focus provided in American media and history books.

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