

## **Record Attendance at the Largest Romanian Festival in America: Over 12,000 People Experienced the Spirit of Romania in Washington**

**July 15, Washington, DC:** Over 12,000 people filled the charming Wharf promenade in Washington, D.C., from July 11 to 13, 2025, for the largest Romanian festival in the United States: *Romanian Weekend at The Wharf*. Part of a week-long series of events celebrating the Strategic Partnership between Romania and the United States, organized by the Embassy of Romania in Washington, this fourth edition of the festival has become Romania's most important cultural diplomacy project in North America—both in terms of the quality of the artistic program and the number of visitors.

“Each year, our festival has grown larger and more engaging, attracting more and more Americans and Romanian-Americans, who are drawn to the diversity of performances and the chance to interact with Romanian artisans. They leave with an unforgettable experience. This festival is also part of our broader celebration of the Strategic Partnership between Romania and the United States, launched on July 11, 1997—a testament to the deep and long-standing friendship between our two countries,” said Romania's Ambassador to the United States, Andrei Muraru.

Organized by the Embassy of Romania in the United States and the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York, in partnership with the City of Timișoara, the festival brought Romanian traditions to the American public, with a special focus this year on the region of Banat and the city of Timișoara.

For three days, visitors enjoyed a rich program of traditional music and dances performed by the *Timișul* Ensemble from Timișoara and engaged directly with artisans who demonstrated crafts such as hand-stitching traditional Romanian sandals (*opinci*) by Banat's last remaining *opincar*, Ciprian Mert, glass icon painting by folk artist Alin Pater, and macramé techniques by artist Daniela Epure. The presentation of Timișoara was curated by Visit Timișoara, offering a glimpse into the city's architectural heritage, cultural diversity, cosmopolitan spirit, and creative potential.

The musical program featured a standout performance—*ROots*, a creation by David Ciente that blends traditional Romanian music with modern electronic sounds, performed live by Maria Chivu and the Jianca Group. The lineup also included performances by the *Bucovina* Ensemble from Atlanta, the *Carpathia* Romanian Folk Dance Ensemble from the U.S., and soloist Andreea Rebălteșcu.

Attendees also enjoyed a unique exhibition dedicated to traditional Banat folk dress—*Threads of Tradition*—and a display of contemporary design pieces brought together under the brand *Ce Fain!*, showcasing creations inspired by reimagined folk aesthetics. Wine lovers were treated to presentations and tastings of some of Romania's best wines, while those in search of authentic food products found a wide variety of options.

A special moment was the celebration of Universal Romanian Blouse Day (*Ziua Iei*), organized in partnership with Romanians of DC—a tribute to traditional Romanian dress and the Romanian-American community. During the event, the Proclamation issued in 2015 by Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser was read on stage—marking the first official recognition of the Romanian blouse (*ie*) by a foreign public official. On this occasion, proud wearers and admirers of the traditional linen blouse from the U.S., Romania, and the Republic of Moldova gathered on stage to honor this cherished symbol.

*Romanian Weekend at The Wharf* is an initiative of the Embassy of Romania in the United States and the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York, organized in partnership with the City of Timișoara, and generously supported by sponsors from Romania: eMAG, Banca Transilvania, BCR, CEC Bank, Dedeman, Global Vision, Kaufland, and Revolution Residence.

**Embassy of Romania to the United States of America**