

## **TOURISTIC ORGANIZATION OF TRAILS AND BELVEDERE SPOTS IN THE ALBAC – ARIEȘENI TERRITORIAL SYSTEM**

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**Abstract:** The present study refers to aspects of tourist potential within Albac – Arieșeni territorial system which, through the uniqueness, density and spectacular feature of its touristic objectives, occupies a special place in the gallery of the most attractive touristic areas of the Romanian landscape. By its content and role, tourism represents nowadays a distinct activity domain, a component of utmost importance of the economic and social life. Due to the fact that the touristic resources are practically inexhaustible, tourism represents one of the economic sectors with real long term development perspectives. The scientific research of the touristic phenomenon integrates a wide thematic range, from conceptual clarifications and definition of its place in the development strategy, to the emphasis of determinants, of evolution tendencies and manifestation forms, of market coordinates and mechanisms, as well as to the assessment of its impact in economic, social, cultural, ecological and political levels.

**Key words:** gorges, development of tourism activity, improvement, mountain, belvedere, tourist locations, areas, panorama

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### **INTRODUCTION**

This material represents a continuation of a larger study which was published in 2012, and it refers to certain issues which were not approached at that time. Some suggestions are made regarding the promotion, development and, from touristic point of view, the valorization of this area, especially in what it concerns the setting of panoramic spots in the highest area of Albacului, Mândruțului, Ordâncușei and Gârdei Gorges. The existing natural resources in Albac – Arieșeni territorial system are numerous, they have a high degree of originality and attractiveness, however, the lack of certain necessary conditions, essential to satisfy the needs of the touristic services consumers, which are way below the value of the natural background, limit the touristic flow in the area. In order to provide the development of tourism activity and the superior valorization of touristic patrimony, investments are required, which should focus especially on the development of communication ways, transportation and recreation areas.

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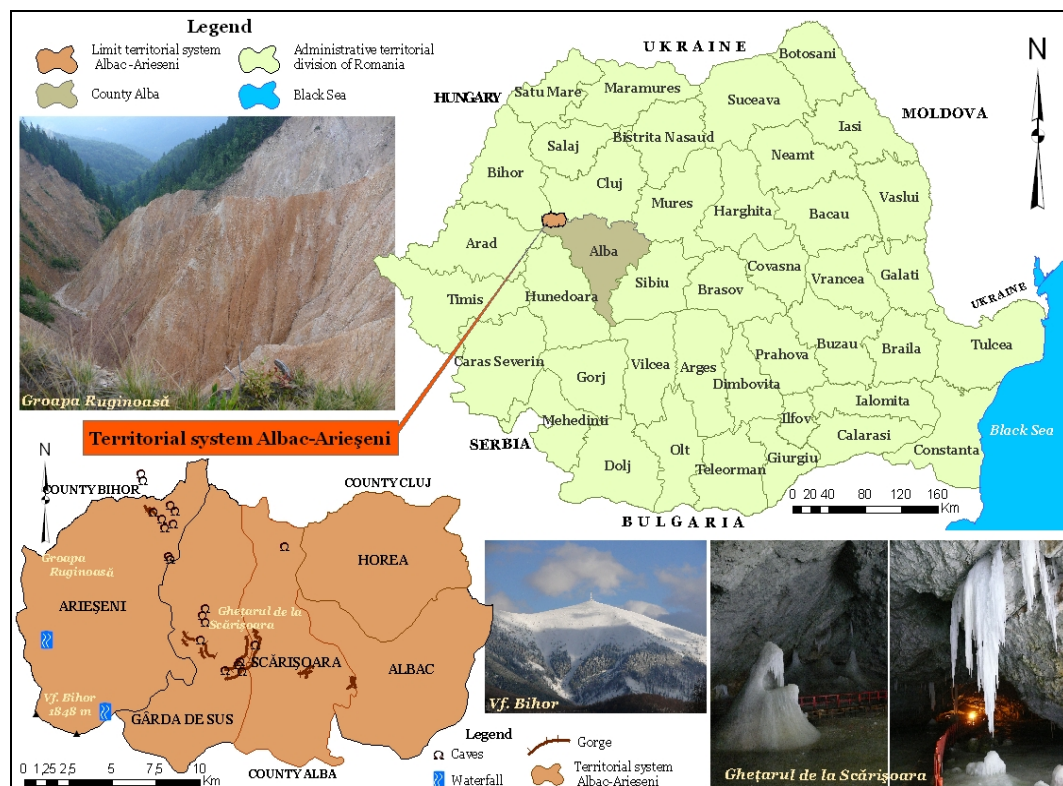
## OBJECTIVES. METHODOLOGY. DISCUSSION

The analysis of Albac – Arieșeni territorial system as a component of the Central Development Region emphasized the following configuration of the ranking of tourism types and forms which should be promoted with priority in this region:

- Rural tourism;
- Speotourism;
- Hunting tourism;
- Cultural tourism;
- Mountain recreational tourism (Gozner, 2012).

The research stage that implies the consultation of the bibliography and a study on the specialized documentation sources and on various research papers (Ciangă, 2006; Cocean & Dezsi, 2001; Gaceu et al., 2012; Gheorghilaș, 2011; Hall, 2008; Holden, 2008; Ilieș & Josan, 2009b; Cocean (coord.), 2007; Pop, 2013; Ritchie et al., 2005; Walker & Walker, 2011; etc), the analysis focusing mainly on the types of tourism existing in the investigated region. The relief analysis was carried out also indirectly through orthophotoplans and satellite images, using digital analysis techniques or the processing of digital images. The orthophotoplans allow, with a correct interpretation, the obtention of preliminary information concerning the layout of the landform, its position in the territory and inside the boundaries of the investigated area, its position towards the surrounding areas, the physiognomy of the landscape and its typology, etc.

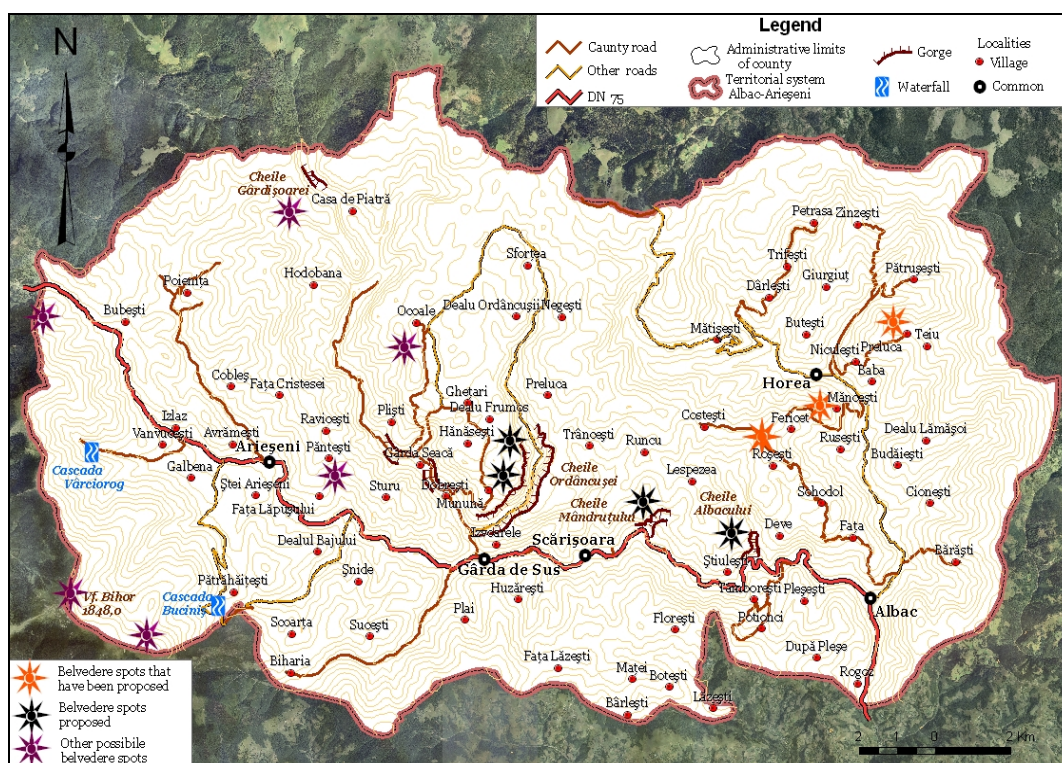
Through the value of the attractive resources, but through modern development which are absolutely necessary, they can satisfy the internal and even international tourist demand, enriching thus the offer for internal and external tourist (Gozner, 2012).



**Figure 1.** Geographical position of the Albac – Arieșeni territorial system

The Albac – Arieșeni territorial system is integrated in the administrative boundaries of Alba County (Figure 1), in its north-western extremity, at the contact of three mountain units: Bătrâna Mountains in the north and Biharia Mountains, respectively Arieșului Mountains in the south, connected by Vârtop saddle (1160 m). The mountain has represented and it still represents a special touristic attraction and the mountain related tourism is an opportunity to practice tourist activities throughout the entire year. The highest or the lowest form of relief are equally endowed with quality from the perspective of touristic discovery, the lower part being the target element for viewing, while the highest part is the accessory, the means, through which the tourist/visitor, generally the observer, focuses attention upon the element of the touristic resource of interest (Dincă et al., 2012).

Any touristic destination should have at least one spot of belvedere for observation, making videos, taking pictures. „Where the natural conditions do not provide proper places for organization, special constructions can be built” (Ilieș, 2007, 2009). In the case of Albac – Arieșeni territorial system, we propose three belvedere spots and a belvedere trail situated in the highest areas of Albacului, Mândruțului, Ordâncușei and Gârdei Gorges (Figure 2). In 2012, as mentioned above, three belvedere spots and a belvedere trail were proposed for Horea locality, in areas where tourists can admire a special view from a height of about 1,200 meters. In addition to these belvedere spots, a second group of panoramic spots is distinguished (Casa de Piatră, Ocoale, Arieșeni, Vf. Bihor, Vf. Cucurbăta Mare) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Location belvedere spots proposed in the territorial system Albac - Arieșeni

The belvedere, viewing function of the relief is given by the heights of its forms and their position compared to the neighbouring relief units. It is provided by dominance in

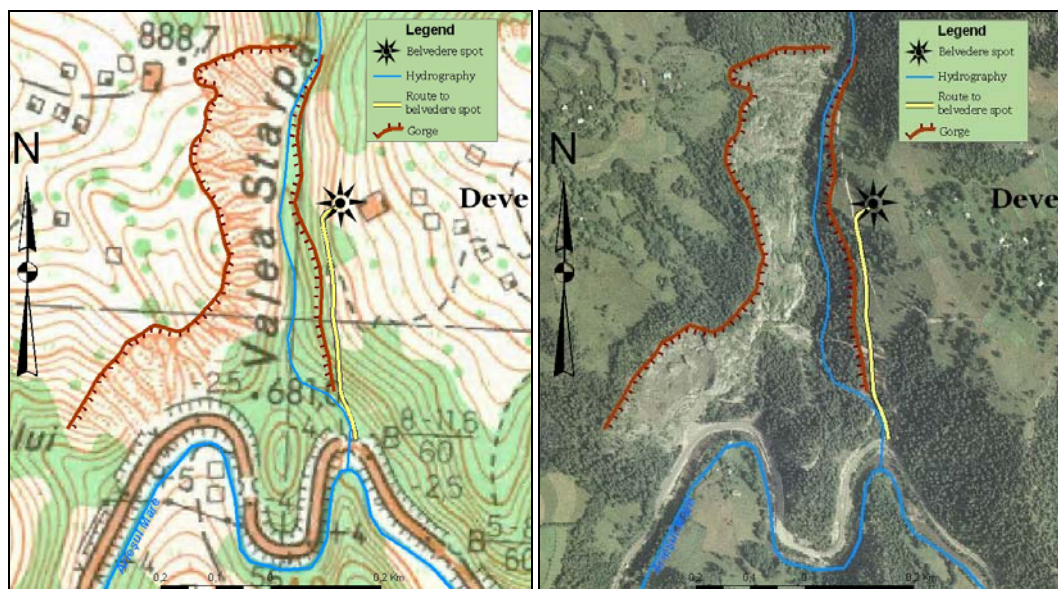


altitude, the reception angle being the more open the more accentuated the difference in levels is and the wider the spatial unfolding of the lower units it is (Gabriela Cocean, 2011). In the areas which provide remarkable panorama we should have many belvedere spot like mountain areas from Austria, Switzerland, France, Germany etc.

The first belvedere spot proposed is situated in Albac commune, Deve village, at an altitude of 750 m, on the left bank of Valea Stearpă (feeder of Arieș River), which dug in the Triassic and Jurassic limestones Albacului Gorge (Figure 3). This place allows a good view on the surroundings of Albacului Gorge which has a length of 3.5 km. In order to get to the first belvedere spot from Albacului Gorge, a distance of approximately one kilometer has to be traveled through (Figure 4), starting from the national road DN 75.



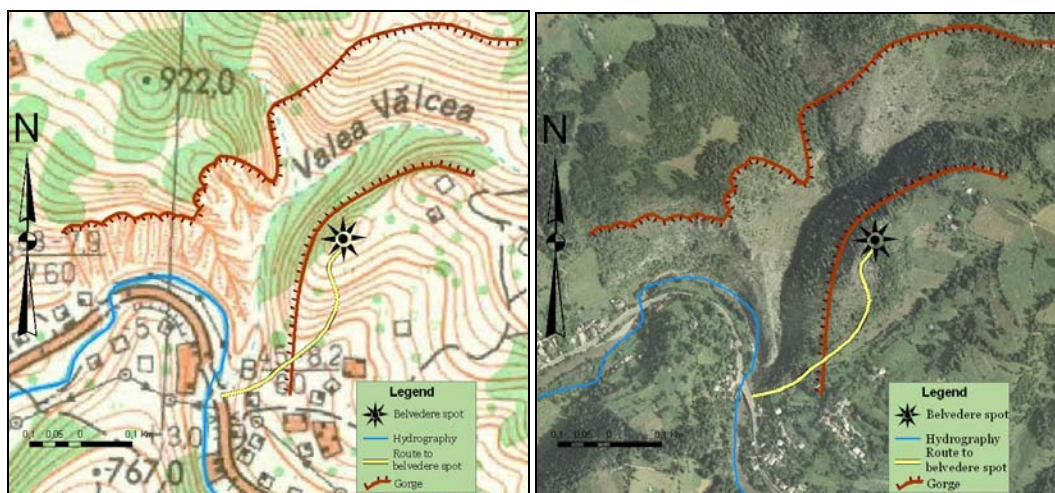
**Figure 3.** Albacului Gorge



**Figure 4.** Location belvedere spot proposed in the Albacului Gorge  
(Source: processing on topographic map 1: 100000 and orthophotomap)

The second belvedere spot which we propose to be set up is situated in Scărișoara village, Scărișoara commune, at an altitude of 830 m. Arieșul Mare River, through its right side feeder, sculpted downstream of Scărișoara village a Gorge sector named

Mândruțului Gorge with a length of 350 m. In order to reach the second belvedere spot from Mândruțului Gorge, a distance of approximately one kilometer has to be traveled (Figure 5, 6), also starting from the national road DN 75.



**Figure 5.** Location belvedere spot proposed in the Mândruțului Gorge  
(Source: processing on topographic map 1: 100000 and orthophotomap)

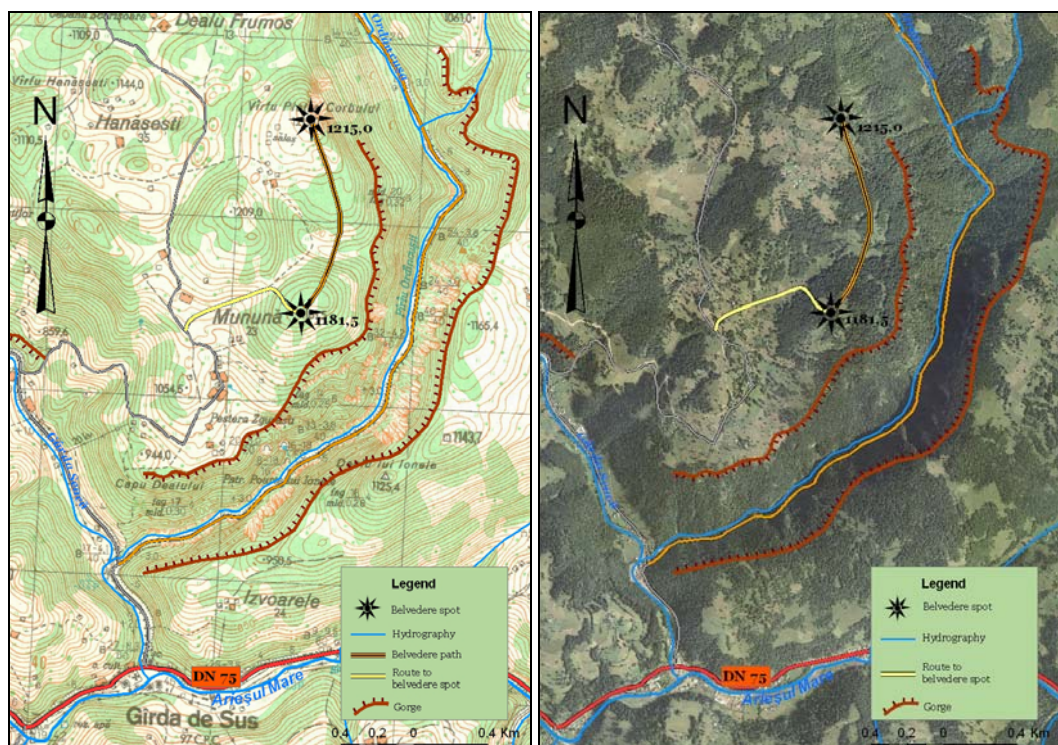


**Figure 6.** Mândruțului Gorge

The third belvedere spot is situated on the highest part of Ordâncușei Gorge, at an altitude of 1181 m, in Munună, Gârda de Sus commune. Ordâncușei Gorge (Figure 7,8) is situated in the south-east of Bihor Mountains (Gârda de Sus commune), at the confluence of Ordâncușa rivulet with Gârda Seacă. It is one of the narrowest gorges in Romania (4-6 m wide in certain places). The narrowing sector can be admired step by step from the road which crosses it (DJ 750), from one end to the other. In the limy, rocky and woody walls there are 70 caves, vaults, portals, out of which the caves Poarta lui Ionele and Peștera de sub Zgurăști are declared spelean reservations (Cocean, 2000, 2010; Bleahu & Bordea, 1981; Bleahu, 2004). The third belvedere spot proposed for setting up provides a view with 360° opening towards Bihor Peak (1848 m), Ordâncușei Gorge and the scattered villages of Gârda de Sus and Scărișoara communes. In order to reach the third belvedere spot from Ordâncușei Gorge, the communal road 132 must be traveled, road



which leads to the Glacier from Scărișoara, over a distance of approximately one kilometer (figure 7, 8), also starting from the national road DN 75.



**Figure 7.** Location belvedere spot proposed in the Ordâncușei Gorge  
(Source: processing on topographic map 1: 100000 and orthophotomap)



**Figure 8.** Ordâncușei Gorge

If by going on a certain itinerary there is a permanent panorama towards various areas of interest, it is considered that it is a belvedere trail. In the case of Gârda de Sus commune, a belvedere trail can also be proposed, which should start from Munună village from an altitude of 1181 m, and the final spot would be on Piatra Corbului Peak which has an altitude of 1215 m (Figure 9).



**Figure 9.** Ordâncușei Gorge (Source: processing on Google earth)

The settings up which should be accomplished would be a footpath 1.5 – 2 m wide, paved with stones, resting places set up with wooden benches and tables with rustic aspect, made of logs or boulders, as well as wooden brackets from which the tourists will be able to admire the view, also serving as shelters from rain. The markings will be remade, there will be made boards with the map of the area and a few plates presenting information about the plants and trees encountered along the trail, and the information boards should be made of perforated sheet.

There can also be made some sportive-applicative tracks with apparatuses of various degrees of difficulty for all age categories. In the above images, there are presented some examples of setting up the sportive-applicative tracks. Every here and there, there will be placed sports apparatuses and an explanation referring to how to be used. The children will be amused and they will not get bored by a long stroll in the forest, they will run from one apparatus to another, being delighted when they manage to work out on them. It is also necessary a board with the map of the area to be placed at each end of the trail.

## CONCLUSIONS

These belvedere spots and trails represent an alternative to spend free time for tourists who come to Arieșeni and Albac resorts. The organizations do not imply exaggerated costs which should not be supported by the town halls of the communes which are part of the Albac – Arieșeni territorial system.



The touristic organization of an area can be achieved by finding solutions for the valorization of natural and anthropic resources, since present time tourism plays an important role in economy, and this asserts itself as being very necessary. Both the touristic development and the economic progress must also take into account the demands of the natural and anthropic background and the touristic organization should be conceived in connection with these two variables.

The existing natural and anthropic resources in the studied territory are numerous and they have a high degree of attractiveness, but the essential conditions for tourism are very much under the value of the natural background, slowing down the touristic circulation in the territory.

Finally, we hope that this paperwork will positively influence the local actors in designing and elaborating future strategies of evolution and development of the Albac – Arieșeni territorial system.

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