

# 800 DAYS IN MOLDOVA

August, 2017  
FINAL Edition

News and perspectives of Rîșcani and the Republic of Moldova • Mark Gilchrist, U.S. Peace Corps volunteer

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## Goodbye, Moldova!

I have very much enjoyed the past two years here, but I must leave soon.

It was so easy to fall in love with Moldova and Moldovans. I am in awe of the beauty of the magnificent landscape throughout the year, but especially from April through October, and I am in complete awe of the hardiness, grit and determination of Moldovans as they endure the long winters!

Yes, this is the poorest country in Europe, but life is getting better. Once a closed society run completely by a government, Moldovans are working hard to build a wide-open society run completely by the people, through their government. The former is rather easy, actually, and the latter is extremely difficult.

Change like this is very slow, and Moldova has made great progress in a mere 25 years. (After nearly 250 years, the U.S. still can improve on every level.)

Most Moldovans will tell you their country needs two things: jobs and an honest government. While the U.S. as a whole may have a stronger economy and a more transparent government, people in many states

and communities there would also tell you that they need more jobs and honest leaders.

Here are two (very difficult ways) that Moldova can guide its future:

**Made in Moldova** – Moldovans **import** twice as many goods as they export, so buying more goods that are made here, or avoiding nonessential items such as imported fashion clothing or decorative flowers, can help improve that trade imbalance and create more jobs here.

**Independent Media** – A vital part of an honest government is transparency, and that is possible only with an independent, open and aggressive media. Honest and dishonest politicians and employees will come and go, so they must be overseen consistently and thoroughly.

Trained journalists know the laws of open governments, and they work daily to be the “eyes and ears” of the public. By reporting fairly and vigorously, they hold governments accountable for how they spend taxpayers’ money, and they help keep corporations in line with how they treat employees and the public.

## Projects complete

**Imagini Rîșcani**

The project; “*Imagini Rîșcani*” will donate 2,000 photographs of all 53 villages and cities to the mayors and residents for use in any way they choose.

I enjoyed bicycling and walking hundreds of kilometers here, and I saw beauty everywhere, in the landscapes, the buildings, parks and monuments, and most of all in the wonderful people of Rîșcani.

[Click here for photos.](#)



The 15 editions of “800 Days in Moldova” are available in English and Romanian, (and three in Russian,) or in complete PDF sets to download.

Reading the English and Romanian versions side-by-side may be helpful in learning (or teaching) either of the two languages.

[Click here for all sets.](#)



A view of the Rîșcani performing arts center never seen before. The building houses a 600-seat theater with stage, a public library, computer lab, music room and offices. Behind the building, from left, is the city’s soccer stadium, basketball gymnasium, Orthodox church and public lake.

## “Numa Numa” or “Dragostea Din Tei?”

“Numa Numa” fever spread around the world in 2004, and it all started with three Moldovans.

O-Zone rocked charts throughout Europe with its song; “*Dragostea Din Tei*,” and U.S. blogger Gary Brotsma’s quirky and viral **lip-sync video** quickly



memed it into hyper-space.

The song title means “Love from the lindens” in English, and is about regret over a partner leaving a rela-

tionship.

The most popular lyrics are from the chorus; “Nu mă, nu mă,” which mean “Not me, not me,” because the partner will leave without him.

O-Zone lasted only a few years, but word came out this year that the group may get back together.

## Getting around in Moldova

Moldovans own about one-fifth the number of vehicles, per person, that Americans do, and about half as many as Romanians.

For every 1,000 people in each country, you would find about 800 U.S. motor vehicles, 330 Romanian, and only about 156 Moldovan vehicles.

This may explain why in the U.S. there is either a stop or yield sign, or a traffic light on every cor-

ner, while there are almost no stop signs in Moldova, and traffic lights in only the largest cities.

Moldovans travel throughout the country, (about the size of Maryland.)

It is curious that, while a quarter of the vehicles in the U.S. are pickup trucks, you would be lucky to see a single one in a day in Moldova. Per-

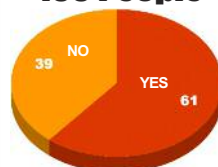
haps, they are impractical for carrying several passengers, (the ones with larger cabs being too expensive,) or maybe – at least, in the villages here – pickup trucks have yet to replace the horse-and-cart.



## JOKE OF THE MONTH

A horse walks into a bar. Bartender says; “So, why the long face?”

## 100 People



I asked 100 people whether they thought that Moldova should join the European Union. (The country is currently an E.U. “community” member.) Nearly two-thirds of the people who had a preference said they thought Moldova should join, and more than one-third said no.

“Buy land; they’re not making it anymore.”

Mark Twain

## License plates



Motor vehicles must be registered in most countries, and there are some interesting differences between license plates in Moldova and in the U.S.

Using the European format, plates on Moldovan passenger vehicles, (above,) are roughly 20-inches wide and 4-inches tall. They are all white with black characters, and the country is designated at the left.

The first two letters on the license plate once revealed the district where the vehicle was registered, (Rîșcani = “RI”.) but adoption of EU standards has changed that.

United States plates are 12-inches wide and 6-inches tall. Each of the 50 states designs its plates, with its own colors, character schemes, phrases and illustrations.

A typical U.S. license plate will have characters, a state icon, and either the state name, the district name or a slogan.

People in most states can pay an extra fee for a “**vanity**” plate, with characters of their choice. States try hard to avoid dirty words, and residents try even harder to sneak them on.

In some states, residents may buy license plates that promote a charitable cause, with the extra money they pay helping to fund that cause. Some of these include the state university system and environmental charities.



<b>August</b>	1st	31th
<b>Day length</b>	14:53 hrs.	13:23 hrs.
<b>Sunrise</b>	5:43 am	6:22 am
<b>Sunset</b>	8:37 pm	7:46 pm
<b>Full Moon</b>	7th	
<b>Avg. Temp.</b>	68°F	
<b>Rainfall</b>	2 inches	
<b>Holidays</b>		
	27 - Independence Day	
	28 - Independence Day Holiday	
	31 - Romanian Language Day	

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