



# **Into the Carpathians: A Journey Through the Heart and History of Central and Eastern Europe (Part 1: The Eastern Mountains)**

*Alan E. Sparks*

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Part memoir, part travelogue, part natural and cultural history, *Into the Carpathians* describes a four-month-long hiking and wildlife research expedition along the length of the Carpathian Mountains, from Romania to Poland, some 1,700 miles as the crow flies. As readers follow the author and his companions on this intriguing journey, they will encounter the many natural wonders and colorful inhabitants of the Carpathian landscape--both human and non-human--while gaining deep insights into the historical and mythological forces that have shaped, and continue to shape, the nations, cultures, and psyches along the way. (This volume, Part 1, covers the first half of the journey, through Romania and Ukraine.) Evocative, thoroughly-researched essays paint the cultural terrain of the Carpathian Mountains from a rich palette of topics, including: a brief history of werewolves; the exploits and the end of Attila the Hun; the mystical foundations of Kievan Rus'; the rich pantheon of Slavic mythology; the earthy traditions of Carpathian folklore; and the roots of the relationship between Ukraine and Russia that are sprouting thorny shoots today. The narrative is enhanced with 63 beautiful color photographs.

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