

Drumul Dunării Randonneur

or

Danube Road Randonneur

1303 km by bike along the Danube through Romania and Serbia

August 15th–19th 2026



as experienced by
Jan Buschardt

I had planned to get something to eat, but I simply cannot stand the thought of food. The last 50 km in 35°C heat and sunshine from a cloudless sky have completely drained my energy, even though I still had water left in my bottle when I arrived at the restaurant. So now I am sitting at a restaurant by the Danube, waiting for the ferry that will take me across to the other side. I order a bottle of water and drink it. I order another one, drink most of it and pour the rest into my water bottle. I start to feel a little better, so perhaps it is dehydration after all? Or maybe a mild case of heatstroke because of the heat? I lie down in the shade on the pavement and sleep for a while – perhaps 20 minutes – until the noise of starting cars wakes me up.

How it all started

It all began towards the end of winter, when I was looking at the possibilities for an interesting brevet, preferably somewhere I had never been before and preferably without too many metres of climbing. At the same time, it had to fit in with family celebrations, holiday plans and so on, but fortunately Drumul Dunării Randonneur (DDR) fitted nicely into my plans – so I signed up in April and paid the entry fee.

The brevet starts in Videle – about two hours outside Bucharest – heads down to the Danube and then follows the river westwards, upstream, until it enters Serbia after 714 km. Another 25 km later, the route crosses the river and then follows the Danube eastwards. After a total of around 880 km, the route crosses back into Romania via a dam. From there, it follows more or less the same route back to Videle. The organisers had divided the route into five days, with the possibility of sleeping in a sports hall after each of the first four days, and there was also the option of having a drop bag transported to the overnight stops. With only 5000 metres of climbing, it is a relatively flat route, but I was about to discover that this is not quite the same as there are no steep climbs.

There were 47 participants from nine countries on three continents, so it was quite an international group of riders, although the Romanians made up more than half of the field.

Joan and I had decided to drive there, partly because my recumbent bike is more than a little awkward to take on a plane. It may have been a slightly overambitious decision, considering that the drive from Copenhagen to Videle took three days each way, but we made it through the long journey without any problems. The organisers had made an arrangement with a hotel where the participants could stay, but I had misunderstood that, so Joan and I booked a room at another hotel nearby. That was not entirely without problems because of the language barrier, but with help from the organiser, Iulian, we managed to make the booking in advance.

The Registration

The day before the start, there was an opportunity to meet over a beer and say hello to old and new friends. We could collect our drop bags, which was a huge advantage because I could pack them at my leisure instead of having to rush around the following morning just before the start.

At 6 o'clock on Saturday morning, I rode the short distance from the hotel to the starting point at the town hall. To my great surprise, the road was closed, and several police officers made sure that only participants were allowed to ride up in front of the town hall. The organisers were setting up breakfast – local delicacies – and the participants gradually started to arrive. At registration, the bikes, lights, helmets and reflective vests were checked, after which we received our control cards, a reflective vest, the jerseys we had ordered, energy products and so on. When my recumbent bike was inspected, the official looked at it, raised his eyebrows and said: "Well, I suppose you've brought this on yourself...".



Time passed rather slowly while we sampled the breakfast and chatted, but eventually the starting procedure began. First there were speeches and instructions from the organisers, then a speech from the mayor. Following Romanian tradition, we were offered bread and salt, after which the mayor placed a medal around the neck of each of us. I have no idea what we had done to deserve a medal, but it was a friendly gesture, and I now consider myself an honorary citizen of Videle.

Finally, there was a performance by the town's dance group. When I saw the dancers, I expected some sort of folk dancing, but it turned out to be an energetic show dance full of rhythm and joy. Exactly the right thing to send us off with.

Day 1 – Saturday, 15 August

Videle-Comana-Giurgiu-Turnu Magurele-Dabuleni

294 km, 841 meters of climbing

Kl. 9:00 – 21:45, riding time 11:00 stopped 1:45

Blue skies, 20-32°C, helpful tailwind

The start was at 9:00 to the full blast of We Are the Champions – with a police car with flashing lights in front, followed by the local cycling club's car and then the participants, rolling slowly through town. Another police car with flashing blue lights brought up the rear. People on their way to work looked twice – they are probably not used to seeing so many cyclists at once. After 10 km, the police car pulled over and the officer waved us off with a friendly "Have a good ride." Shortly afterwards, the club car pulled over too, and we were on our own.

The weather was good: 23 degrees, rising to 32 later in the day before dropping to 20 in the evening. The sky was blue and we had a tailwind.

The roads were better than I had expected – mostly good asphalt, with the occasional stretch containing potholes that required a bit of attention. Traffic was relatively light on this section, and I generally found that motorists were very considerate, moving well over to the left when overtaking whenever they possibly could.



We seemed to be divided into two large groups: one that rode fast, and the one I was in, which did not ride quite so fast. As always at these events, we rode together for the first hour or so, after which the groups gradually split into smaller ones. I more or less stayed with my group until the first control in Comana, which I reached at 11:40 after 71 km.

The "stamp" was recorded at unmanned controls like this one using an app. You simply opened the app when you were within 5 km of the control, and the time was registered automatically. The app also contained maps showing the location of each control, as well as a photograph of the control point – quite clever and easy to use. If the app did not work, for example because there was no mobile signal, you had to take a photo of the control point. Fortunately, mine worked all the way around. At manned controls, you had to use both the app and get a stamp in your control card.

The control was next to a small grocery shop, where I bought water for my bottles. However, a long queue of locals meant that I lost contact with the group I had been riding with, so from there I continued alone to the next control in Giurgiu at 114 km, arriving at 12:30.



The control in Giurgiu



This control was manned and had Pepsi and bananas for the riders. I sat down to eat my banana, but the Filipino participants asked if I would like some of their food. They had a support crew travelling with them, taking care of food and other support, so I ended up with rice and some delicious accompaniments. Wow, it was good.

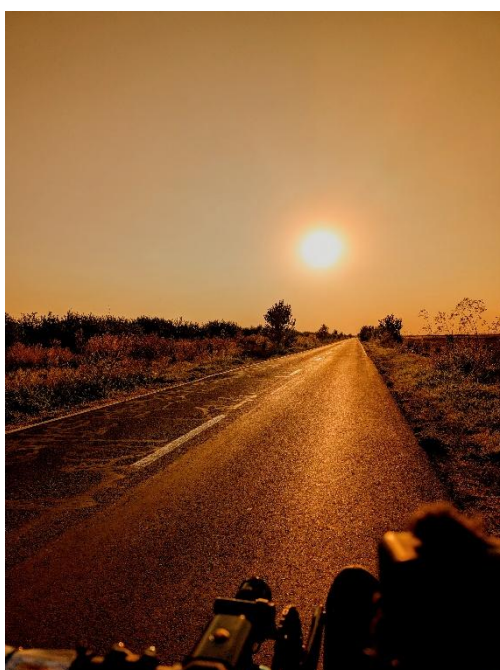
At the manned controls, we had to remember to add our autograph to a large poster containing the names of all the participants. I wondered what that was for, but later I was told that the posters would be given to the local authorities as a thank-you for making their facilities available. What a nice gesture!

After a 30-minute break, I continued through the midday heat towards Turnu Magurele (228 km, 18:40), where the unmanned control was located at the independence monument. I rode part of this section with a group, but when we reached the control, they wanted to rest for a while, so I continued alone.



There were a lot of storks in the villages we went through – often 2 or 3 pairs.

The route continued as it had begun: almost completely flat, with a few small climbs. And still with a tailwind.



Just before sunset on day 1

At 21:40, I arrived at the manned control in Dabuleni (293 km), where we could sleep in a sports hall. There was nothing to eat apart from a few snacks, so I hurried up to a pizzeria in town, where I had a couple of bottles of water and the slowest pizza known to mankind. After that, a shower and off to bed on an air mattress in the hall. The organisers had provided disposable towels and soap, and our first drop bag was waiting for us when we arrived, so I could finally have a much-needed shower and put on some clean clothes.

The brevet rules included time penalties for a long list of offences, including the very sensible rule that you received a time penalty if your phone was not on silent in the sleeping areas. That worried me a little, as my phone has a mind of its own when it comes to deciding when to make a sound and when not to, so I have no idea what noises it might suddenly come up with. The many time penalties also suggested that the organisers had a strict and bureaucratic attitude to the rules. Fortunately, my phone did not cause any problems, and it turned out that the organisers had a sensible and relaxed approach to the rules – as is the case in most events.

At the two overnight stops, the organisers had set up charging stations so everyone could recharge whatever they had: phones, GPS units, power banks and so on. Really good service!

Day 2 – Sunday, 16 August

Dabuleni-Izvoarele-Drobeta Turnu Severin-Svinița

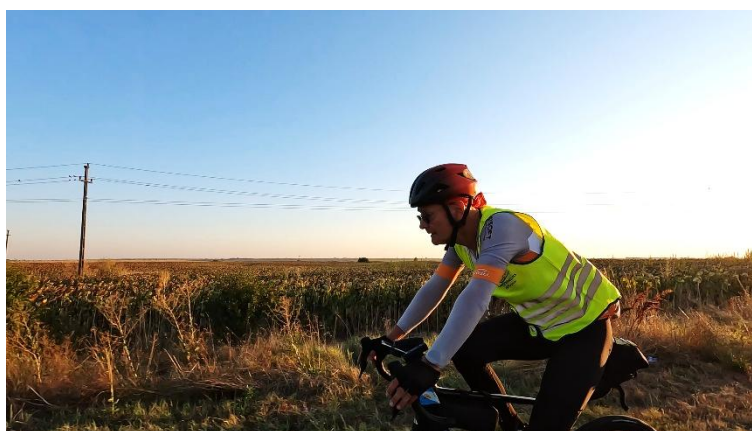
313 km, 1306 meters of climbing

Kl. 5:45 – 22:30, riding time 13:00, stopped 3:45

Still blue skies, 13-35°C

I slept well – or as well as you can on an air mattress – for about six hours.

There was no breakfast at the control, so I set off at 5:45 after eating a couple of energy bars.



I had hoped to find somewhere I could get an omelette or something similar, but there were no cafés on this stretch. One of the Romanians told me to look for a supermarket, where I should be able to buy a sandwich. And sure enough, a little further on there was a supermarket where, after a few language difficulties, I managed to order two sandwiches. Google Translate told me that a sandwich is called a *sandwic* in Romanian, but apparently it is pronounced completely differently. A Romanian sandwich bought in a supermarket is like a croque monsieur: two halves of a bread roll with cheese and ham in between, heated in a toast machine. So, at 7:15, I was finally able to enjoy my breakfast in the form of two toasted sandwiches and a bottle of water.



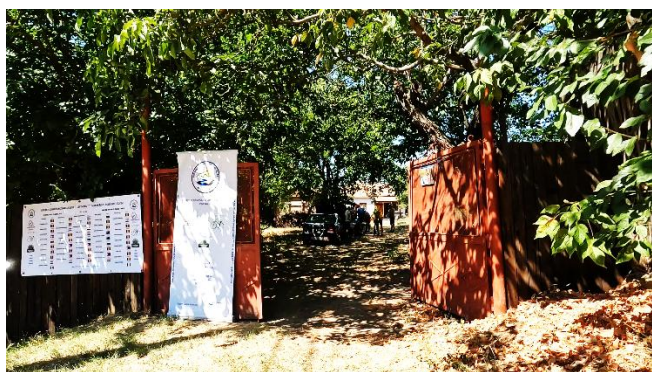
Breakfast day 2: Croque monsieur. The two bikes behind me belonged to two very young Germans who were on their way from Germany to Istanbul. I had a good chat with them – and other participants told me that they had ridden and talked with them on several occasions as well, so I ended up getting the full life story of the two teenagers.

The route was again fairly flat, with the occasional bump along the way. The road passed through small villages that were not really all that small. Many of them were two or three kilometres long, but generally consisted of little more than a row of houses on either side of the road. This is agricultural country, with the occasional industrial building scattered across the landscape. Often the industrial buildings were abandoned after the fall of communism, and they are now slowly falling into disrepair.

In the villages and out in the open countryside there are lots of dogs, which may or may not have an owner. Whenever bikes pass, they suddenly come running after the riders, barking angrily. The general opinion among the Romanian randonneurs was that the dogs do not bite as long as they are running, but there is a risk that they might run into your bike and make you fall over – and then it is not certain that they will continue not biting. Many times I came across

dogs wandering lazily along the roadside, but when they spotted me, they suddenly came alive and set off after me. I tried shouting at them, but that seemed to excite them even more, so several times I had to put some real effort into the pedals. As a cyclist, I am apparently a sprinter – I just need the right motivation!!

At 12:00, I arrived at the manned control in Izvoarele (456 km), where snacks, cola, and water were available. I stayed there for 45 minutes and followed some advice I had received from Mircea, one of the Romanian randonneurs: I drenched both my cap and jersey in cold water before putting them back on and continuing. It provides a little relief from the heat, although it does not take long before the clothes are completely dry again.



The control in Izvoarele



I rode for a while with a mixed group, the core of which consisted of Romanians ‘led’ by Iulian, the organiser. It was hot, so it was very welcome when they stopped at a small grocery shop to buy water and ice for their bottles and to stuff down their jerseys. Lovely!



I arrived in Drobeta, the second overnight stop (528 km), at 15:40. Here there was again the possibility of sleeping, and I could collect my second drop bag, but after only 235 km, it would have been a very short day and would have made Monday a very long one, so I decided

to continue another 60 km and sleep at a hotel. The two Australians, Soufi and Bhanu, had found a hotel on Booking.com, and after a bit of technical trouble, I managed to book a room at the same hotel. It was wonderfully simple not having to worry about where I was going to sleep. After 45 minutes, during which I ate some crisps and drank some cola, I continued.



The control in Drobeta

Until now, I had been cycling along the Danube but at such a distance that I could not see the river. Now the road ran right alongside it, so I could see it all the time. The road was a narrow, busy main road with heavy traffic, so it was not the most pleasant stretch – but it was beautiful. There was a narrow shoulder where I could ride, but whenever there was a bridge, the shoulder disappeared and I had to share the road with trucks and buses. This was the worst section of the route in terms of traffic. Many of the other participants talked about life-threatening situations and near-death experiences, but I did not experience anything genuinely dangerous myself. It is probably an advantage to ride alone on this type of road because cars and trucks can overtake much more easily than when they have to pass a line of five to eight cyclists.



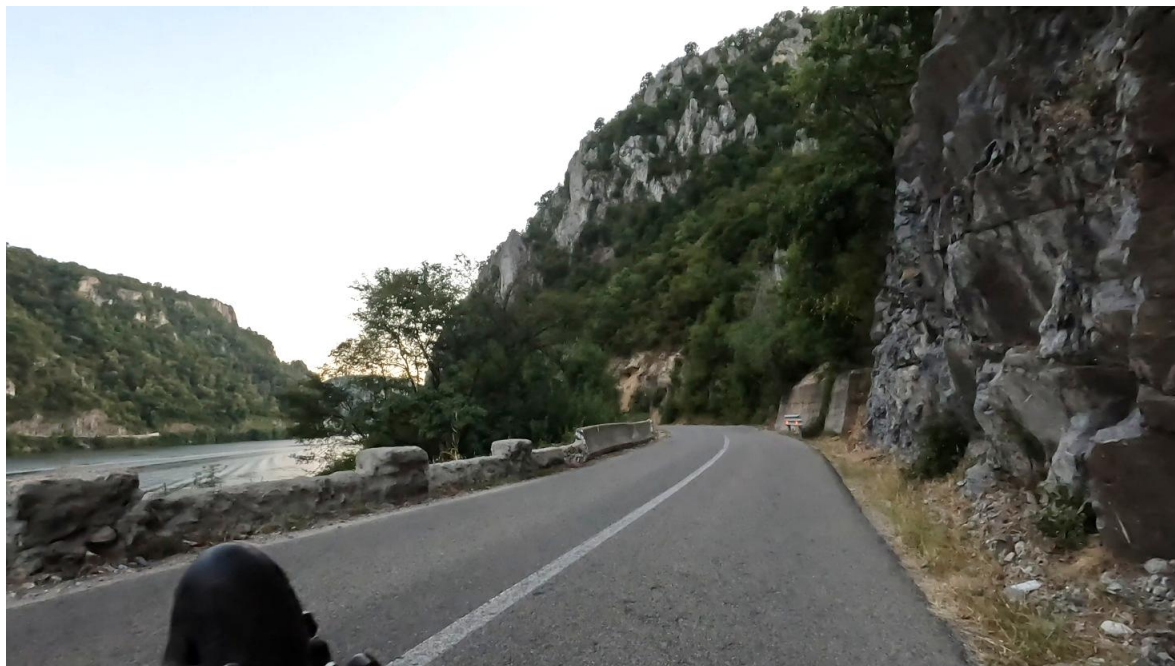
After a little more than an hour, I reached Orsova (558 km), where I went into a restaurant to get something to eat. The Romanian national dish is soup, which they eat all year round despite the summer heat, so I chose a soup that tasted absolutely fantastic. At the same time, it contained both liquid and salt, so it is not a bad randonneur meal.



Orsova



From Orsova, there is a climb for the next 20 km. The first hill out of town was so steep that I chose to get off and push rather than completely destroy my knees and muscles. After that, the road went up and down, with beautiful views of the river winding its way between steep hillsides.



As darkness fell, a fantastic starry sky revealed itself above me – unfortunately, I cannot both ride my bike and look up at the stars at the same time, because then I fall over.

I arrived at the hotel in Svinița at 22:15 (602 km) after messing around in the small town trying to find it. The town lies on a steep slope, where the road is more than 12% in places, so I had to push the bike uphill through town – and unfortunately past the hotel, which was not particularly well signposted in the dark. After 30 minutes of going back and forth, I found the hotel and checked in. Soufi and Bhanu had already arrived and were on their way to bed when I put my bike away.

Day 3 – Monday, 17 August

Svinița-Bazias- Serbian border-Stara Palanka-Ram-Golubac-Drobeta Turnu Severin

294 km, 1566 meters of climbing

Kl. 6:15– 00:30, riding time 13:00, stopped 5:15

Blue skies, 15-36°C, strong tailwind at first, then calm.

After six and a half hours of sleep, I continued as the sun slowly rose. The evening before, I had been shown the kitchen where breakfast would be served, and I had said that I would like some bread. When I came down to the kitchen, there was a plate of cakes waiting for me! That was not quite what I had expected, but the cakes were good and neither too sweet nor too rich, so I ate several of them together with a cup of coffee and some water.



Breakfast

Fortunately, I had brought my own energy bars, so I could manage until the next control.

The ride along the Danube is also a ride along the border between Romania and Serbia, and therefore along the border between two time zones. My phone kept switching between Romanian and Serbian signals, which meant that it kept changing the time. As a result, I was constantly confused about what time it was and how long I had left before the ferry across the Danube. Eventually, I managed to set the phone so that it always stayed on Romanian time, which made it much easier to work out what time it actually was.

I was riding along the section of the Danube known as the Iron Gates, or *Porțile de Fier*. This is a stretch where the Danube is squeezed between the mountains and where it was previously difficult or impossible to pass by boat. In the 1970s, a dam was built across the Danube – rather confusingly, it is also called the Iron Gates – together with a hydroelectric power station. Further down the Danube there is another hydroelectric power station called Iron Gates II, so the confusion is complete. The result, however, is that it is now possible to sail along what was previously an unnavigable part of the Danube.

Soufi and Bhanu had left before me, so I was alone on this section. There was such a strong tailwind that the waves on the Danube were moving against the current. Bhanu later told me that they had not had a tailwind when they rode through a couple of hours earlier, so I was lucky to get a push from behind.



Danube in the morning light

I reached the control in Bazias (690 km) at 8:45. Laura, an important part of the support team, was busy preparing breakfast for the riders: fried eggs, falafel, feta cheese and smoked pork fat. The last one sounds a bit strange, but it tasted surprisingly good – and it was wonderful to get some proper food into my stomach.



Bazias



We had to remember to sign the posters

The group of Romanians, together with the organiser Iulian, had continued to Bazias the night before and had apparently arrived around 3:00 in the morning. They were gradually getting up after a good night's sleep and were about to have something to eat before continuing.

After Bazias, we were due to enter Serbia and take a ferry to the other side of the Danube. The ferry only runs every three hours, so it was important not to miss a departure. I had already accepted that I would not be able to catch the 10:30 ferry – as I had originally expected when planning the ride at home – and would instead aim for the 13:30 ferry.

I had plenty of time but chose to leave Bazias after about an hour so as not to risk running short of time because of queues at the border, a puncture or other problems. It was a hot and dry stage. The sun beat down mercilessly from a cloudless sky, the temperature climbed above 35 degrees, and there was not a breath of wind. I had water and energy powder in my bottles, food in my stomach and a good mood, so despite a few hills, I thought things were going well.



It was dry and hot, with only a few houses along the stretch between Bazias and the Serbian border

There was not a single car at the border between Romania and Serbia, so getting through was easy, apart from the Romanian border guard asking whether I had any weapons or drugs with me. I was able to reassure her that I did not, but I did wonder why she was concerned about me taking weapons and drugs out of the country, while the Serbian border guard didn't seem equally concerned about me importing them.

Another 25 km later, I arrived in Stara Palanka, where the ferry was to take me across the river. I was not able to eat, so I got something to drink at a restaurant and took a short nap until I

was woken by cars speeding away in panic after their drivers realised that the ferry would soon be leaving from the other side of the small village. I grabbed my bike and took a shortcut through the garden of another restaurant, where I discovered that the group of Romanians were sitting and having a beer. There was still plenty of time, and since the Romanians had decided that it was "beer day", I ordered a beer as well, which I just managed to swallow before the ferry approached the small landing.



The "ferry" was actually a barge pulled across the river by a motorboat tied alongside it. In the end quite a large group of riders took the 13:30 ferry. The crossing took about half an hour before we could go ashore in Ram, where a steep street led us up from the ferry landing. I rode with the group led by Iulian to the control in Golubac and ended up at a Serbian restaurant around 17:00, where we had dinner.



Water and ice along the way



Serbian restaurant with a view of Danube and a castle on the other side of the river

From there, the route passed through fairly deserted countryside with quite a few steep hills. I lost contact with the others because I could not keep up on the climbs – and I even had to get

off and push my bike up a couple of times when the gradient stayed above 10% for longer stretches.

On this section there are more than 20 tunnels – some short and some quite long. They are relatively narrow, with no shoulder for cyclists. Fortunately, there was not much traffic, but on one occasion I didn't make it out of a tunnel before a large truck passed me at high speed. Even though the truck moved well over to the left, the air pressure gave me such a push that I was wobbling around quite a bit after it had passed.

The sun went down, and I continued up and down the hills in the dark. Fortunately, there were also some good, long descents with good asphalt, so I could make use of the speed without worrying about potholes or cracks in the road. After a long descent, I entered a town where I hoped to find somewhere to buy water, as I was running low. Just inside the town limits there was a petrol station – and the Romanian group was sitting there. I joined them, had some water and an ice cream, and then we could continue.

I rode with the Romanians, but when we hit another long and steep hill, I was dropped and had to ride to the control alone in the dark. The route crossed the river again – and thus returned to Romania – via the Iron Gates, the dam that holds back the river so it can be used to generate electricity.

I arrived at the control and overnight stop in Drobeta (898 km) at 23:30. I ate some pizza and drank a beer that I was offered before taking a shower and going to sleep in the sports hall.



Drobeta for the second time

Day 4 – Tuesday, 18 August

Drobeta Turnu Severin-Crivina-Maglavit-Dabuleni-Turnu Magurele

299 km, 972 meters of climbing

Kl. 6:00 -22:00, riding time 12:15, stopped 3:45

Blue skies, 17-31°C

I slept badly in a hot sports hall where it was almost impossible to sleep. So I got up, ate a few snacks and rode out into the early morning.

We were now riding back along the same route we had taken on the way out, so I could recognise some of the places.

I reached the unmanned control in Crivina (939 km) at 8:00. It was simply the town sign, so I spent less than a minute stopping and registering my passage in the brevet app.

Here and there springs with drinking water were found by the road side. They could be large installations, small installations or simply a pipe sticking out of a hillside. Most of the springs could be recognised from a long distance by the cars and trucks parked at the roadside while their drivers were out collecting water. I filled my bottles at one of the springs and took the opportunity to soak both my cap and jersey. As usual, it helped for 20–30 minutes.

I reached the unmanned control in Maglavit (1028 km) at 11:45. After registering my passage in the app, I noticed a supermarket set back a little from the road further ahead. It was time for lunch, so I turned in towards the supermarket and discovered that there was already a group of randonneurs sitting on the paving stones outside the shop. I greeted them, bought something to eat and drink, and sat chatting with the others for 45 minutes before getting back on my bike.



International lunchparty

I arrived at the manned control in Dabuleni (1136 km) at 17:20. My drop bag was there, and I could have the opportunity to sleep, but it was still early, and since I had slept so badly the night before, I wanted to sleep in a hotel. Bhanu told me that he and Soufi had reserved a room at a hotel in Turnu Magurele, so I decided to choose the same hotel, even though it was a little further – 66 km – than I had originally intended to ride. By choosing to sleep in Turnu Magurele, I would have to ride part of the route in the dark, which I was not particularly happy about, as some of the roads could be of rather poor quality. But I had some watermelon, a cola and an energy bar, and filled my bag with bars and energy powder from my drop bag. Then, after a 45-minute rest, I continued.

The sunset was beautiful, just as it had been on the previous days, and traffic was light, so I made reasonably good progress. A few kilometres before Turnu Magurele, I was supposed to turn off the road, but there was a "No Entry" sign and another sign saying that the road was being monitored by drones. I was tired and more obedient to the route description than to road signs, so I turned onto the forbidden road. The road led across a bridge that was in poor condition, with holes and missing asphalt, so it was perfectly reasonable that the road was closed to cars. A couple of times, cars came towards me, and I started worrying that it might be the drone operator on the way out to tell me off, but fortunately nobody bothered me.

I messed around a bit trying to find the hotel in the middle of Turnu Magurele, and while I was standing there looking at my GPS, two Romanians came over and wanted to know where I had started and how far I had cycled. At least, I think that was what they wanted to know, because communication was a little slow due to the language barrier. With the help of Google Translate, we eventually managed to sort out their questions, and they explained with gestures how I could find the hotel.

After I had received the key to my room, put my bike in a secure room and was on my way to the lift, the doors opened and the two Australians, Soufi and Bhanu, came out on their way to the hotel restaurant. I quickly dropped my bag and other things in the room, took a shower and hurried to the restaurant before it closed. There I had the largest steak I had eaten in a long time – and, to my great annoyance, I had to leave more than half of it.

Day 5 – Wednesday, 19 August

Turnu Magurele-Videle

109 km, 526 meters of climbing

Kl. 8:30 – 13:05, riding time 4:15, stopped 0:20

Partly cloudy, 21–31°C, light headwind

Joan, who had been in Bucharest while I was cycling, was going to pick me up in Videle. There was no reason to drag her out of bed early, so I decided to sleep late and leave so that I would arrive in Videle between 12:00 and 13:00. Soufi wanted to leave earlier because he had a flight to catch, but Bhanu had the same plan as me, so we met in the restaurant for breakfast and set off together at 8:30 after a good night's sleep.

When you set off in the morning, the GPS can sometimes be a little confused and have trouble finding its way – and since we had ridden around a bit the previous evening, we were not entirely sure which way to go to get back onto the route. But just as Bhanu and I were standing there discussing it, the Romanian group came riding past and shouted that we should follow them. So the hotel was right next to the route! Shortly afterwards, the Romanians stopped at a petrol station for breakfast while Bhanu and I continued alone.

The route was now different from the way out, so we were riding through unfamiliar territory. The road went up and down a bit, and I could not keep up with Bhanu, so we rode separately and passed each other from time to time.



We met at some railway works about an hour before the finish and rode together from there into Videle and the finish, where we arrived at 13:05 after a total of 1307 km.



The finish area was in a large field, where tables had been laid with all sorts of delicious food being cooked on gas burners. Really good! Joan and I stayed for quite a while waiting for my drop bag before we could get into the car and drive towards Bucharest and new holiday adventures.



Conclusion

Before leaving home, I had set myself a number of goals for this brevet:

- Sunscreen.
I wanted to remember to apply sunscreen in the morning and again during the afternoon so that I would not get burned by the strong sun. A couple of days I forgot the afternoon application, but I never got sunburned or even red, so I consider this goal achieved.
- Hydration.
I was determined to remember to drink plenty and never pass an opportunity to refill my bottles if even one of them was empty or almost empty. This was more or less completely successful. I am not sure whether I drank too little on the section from Bazias to the ferry, but apart from that, I was well hydrated.
- Food and energy.
I have gradually come to the conclusion that I typically do not consume enough carbohydrates and other energy during the longer brevets, so I am trying to force myself to take in more. I had brought a larger supply of bars, gels and bags of energy powder from home, some in my bike bag and some in my drop bags, so that I could restock during the ride. My goal was to eat a bar or some food about once an hour, which I managed reasonably well. I always had one bottle with an energy drink and one with plain water, and I drank roughly the amount of energy drink I had planned. It helps that I have found a powder with almost no taste, so I do not get tired of it over several days. I was never seriously hungry because I always had a bar or something similar to satisfy my hunger. Some of the bars, however, almost melted in the heat, so I had to squeeze them straight out of the wrapper and into my mouth.

There is no 1200 km brevet or longer that is genuinely easy, but on this brevet, I did manage to get plenty of sleep – five to eight hours a night – eat reasonably well and avoid too many metres of climbing. So, despite the heat, it was not the hardest brevet I have ridden, but one of the most exciting.

All in all, it was a huge experience to cycle through Romania and Serbia. The brevet was well organised, and the support was world-class, driven by the enthusiasm of the volunteers and their desire to give the participants a great experience.

A big thank you goes to Iulian, Carolin, Adrian, Laura and everyone else on the organizing- and support teams who made sure that everyone had a fantastic experience.



The medal was made of wood – very original og well excecuted

GPS-data:

1307 km

5265 meters of climbing according to GPS

Total time: 100 hours and 5 minutes

Of which 53 hours and 48 minutes of cycling

Note1:

The elevation gain was measured with my Garmin Edge 1050. The total differs from the "official" 6261 metres of climbing taken from OpenRunner. There is nothing particularly strange about that, as they are two different ways of calculating elevation gain.

The total distance is also four kilometres longer than the official distance of 1303 km – probably mostly due to inaccuracies in Garmin's distance measurement, but also because I made a few detours to hotels along the way.

Note 2:

A few days after DDR 2026, the organisers started planning the route for 2030. The route will avoid the heavily trafficked section between Drobeta and Orsova. At the time of writing, the plan is to make the route 1500 km long and, among other things, include the mountain road Transfăgărășan, bringing the total elevation gain to roughly twice that of the 2026 edition.

