



# CONSTANȚA

Harta turistică



MAREA NEAGRĂ  
Pontus Euxinus



Parcul Tăbăcăriei

Biserica din lemn Sf. Mare Mc. Mina

Complexul muzeal de științe ale naturii

Biserica Sf. Gheorghe

Biserica...

BULEVARDUL MAMAIA

Sala Sporturilor

Biserica Sf. Împ. Constantin și Elena

Biserica Adormirea Maicii Domnului

Piața "Unirii"

Magazinul "Tomis"

BULEVARDUL FERDINAND

Gara

Teatrul Fantasio

Grădina Cinematograf

Edificiul Primăriei, Prefecturii și Consiliului Județean

Teatrul "Ovidiu" și Opera

Biblioteca Județeană

Muzeul de Artă

Camera de Comerț

Portul Tomis

Biserica Schimbarea la față

Muzeul de Artă Populară

Vila Sutu

Hotel Palas

Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie

Biserica Sf. Nicolae

Comandamentul Marinei Române

Moscheea Regele Carol I

Catedrala Sf. Ap. Petru și Pavel

Silozurile "Anghel Saligny"

Portul Constanța

Casa cu lei

Basilica romano-catolică

Acvariul Constanța

Farul Genovez

Muzeul I. Jalea

Cazinoul

Edificiul roman cu mozaic

# The Constanta Casino and its fabulous history

All those who love the architecture of the Constanta Casino have been waiting for ages for the derelict symbolic building of the city to be rehabilitated. One can shoot a film out of the dramas of the Constanta Casino's life that could beat the box office record. It has known glory and decay for many times, it knows what it is like to be wealthy, but also dirt poor. Its problems have started ever since it was in the design phase and are still going on. It is a unique building in the world and could be a goldmine for authorities.

During World War I, the Casino was destroyed by a bomb and was rehabilitated despite the economic problems



I was saying that the history of the Casino repeats itself. During World War I, the most beautiful building of the city by the sea was a field hospital. The Casino was destroyed after a bomb had fallen on it. It was hardly rebuilt because it was thought that repairing the Casino would be a frivolous thing in the situation in which hospitals, schools and other buildings had to be repaired with public funds. Even now the economic situation is not too good, but the rehabilitation of the building is a priority, since it is a historic monument with a unique architecture in the world.

The Casino, the only building in the world with three foundations



As early as the design phase, the Casino has faced problems. It is the only building in the world that has three foundations, so it cannot be eclipsed by any other building from this point of view. It was raised on a headland drawn from the sea. The first foundation was designed by architect Daniel Renard. Then, Daniel Renard left with the liberals from the city's leadership, and the conservatives came. Mayor Ion Bănescu chose architect Petre Antonescu to continue the work. He had another vision, another national style project, and made a second set of foundations to put his work into practice. Petre Antonescu is the author of the Sinaia Casino, which is also very beautiful. The mandate was over, the elections came, the conservatives left, and the liberals came back in charge. Daniel Renard was called upon to continue his work, and when he saw that his project had been

changed, he said: “My foundations have been damaged!” So, a third row of foundations were made. This is one of the things that individualizes the Casino.



### **The Constanta Casino is built on a patch of land drawn from the sea**

The Casino is original and unique in the world because it is built on a patch of land drawn from the sea before 1910. Thus, no other building can compete, from this point of view, with the gem of Constanta. Prior to the start of the works, the city used to end high up, where there is Queen Elizabeth Boulevard now, and where the boardwalk and the Casino are currently, it was the sea. The promenade on the seashore where we walk fondly, inhabitants and tourists alike, was a grand project designed by the prefect of those times, Scarlat Vârnav. Anghel Saligny was the one who had the courage to deliver it since 1903. Back then, Saligny coordinated the construction works of the Port of Constanta. In order to make the boardwalk outside the Casino, both his genius and the experience of the port engineers, as well as the equipment that had been brought from the port on this occasion were necessary.



**The Casino was the place where the high society went to balls, gambling or plays**

At the beginning of the last century, balls were the main means of entertainment for inhabitants and tourists. At the Casino, people used to dance, socialize, meet or plan getting married, people from different social categories got to know each other. Theatre plays were also performed there. There was a large hall for theatre plays, despite the poor acoustics everyone was complaining about.

The Casino used to have multiple functions and at various times It could also be a meeting place for inhabitants and tourists, and a place for shows, balls or conferences, but at the same time it kept its function as a casino, having its halls intended for gambling.

Over the years, in the Constanta Casino, there were elite restaurants, confectioneries and bars. An example of this is given in Cezar Petrescu's novel "Darkness", which starts with a table that was taken at the Constanta Casino, where the waiters came from the Athénée Palace. It was a place where the reputable names of the age flaunted themselves, clothes and jewels were displayed, a space of mundanity as well as bohemian life. These two coordinates should the Casino follow again and it would perform its functions on behalf of which it was designed and raised on the seashore.

Currently, the Casino is in advanced deterioration state. It is going to be rehabilitated and the authorities will decide what functions the edifice will have, and whether some of them are to be profitable.

# The Mosque from Constanta built at the request of the king Carol I



- The story of this Islamic worship place from Constanța is 105 years old. The Mosque Carol I was built at the request of the king who's name it bears, as a tribute to the Muslim Community from Constanța, very numerous at that time. More than that, at the inauguration of the worship place, in 1903, the Royal family also took part together with the representatives of the Islamic cult from Romania. Practically, this is the only Mosque that bears a non-Muslim name. The believers call it "Kral camisi" or "the Mosque of the King"

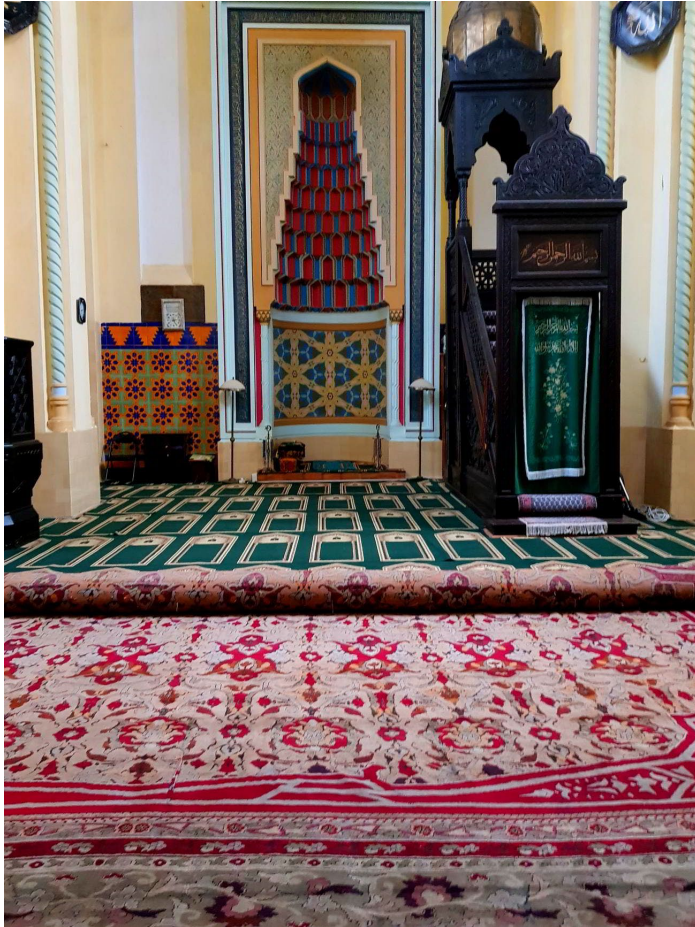




The architecture of the worship place is spectacular. The praying room has a height of 14 meters and the dome a height of 25 meters and is beautifully decorated. This place is part of the historical-cultural and museum patrimony of Romania and is in desperate need to be rehabilitated. The interior is extremely simple arranged, by comparison with the ones of the Christian churches and it comprises only inscriptions from the Quran. The Moor style building, the dome, the vaults and the minaret are entirely made of concrete, this being the first building for which this material was used.

## **A big rug for a little building**

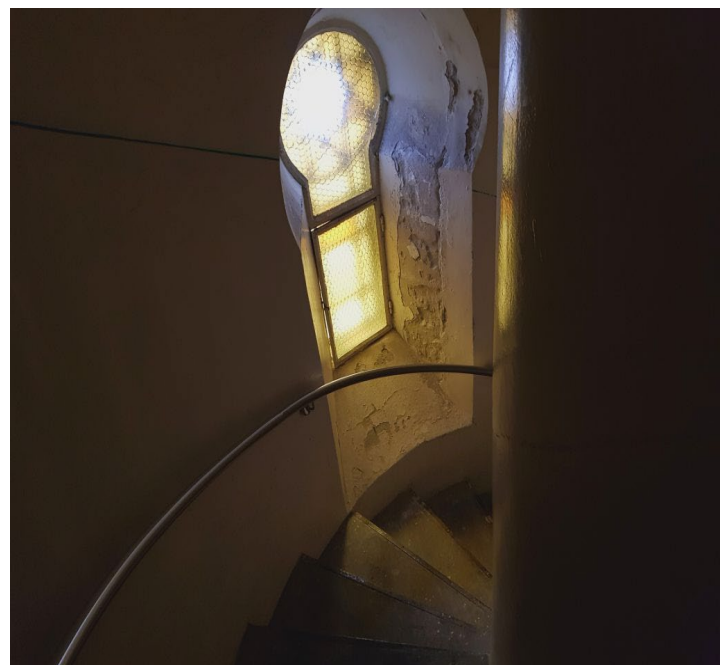
I knew that inside the Carol I there is a very old and beautiful rug. When I entered, I saw that the rug is mostly rolled than displayed and I asked why is it staying this way. I was told that the tower of the altar, by the way it is placed, doesn't allow the total display of the rug, so it can always be found rolled.



The rug has actual historical value. It was given by the sultan Abdul Hamid (1876-1909) to the Mosque situated on the Ada-Kaleh island, before this Mosque had been covered by waters as a result of building the Hydropower from the Iron Gates. The dimension of the rug is 126 meters and it weights 490 kilos. It was realized by the Craft Center Hereke from Turkey.

## **The minaret, a touristic attraction**

There are not few tourists that have the guts to climb the 140 narrow steps, spirally arranged, which lead to the minaret. While taking a resting brake, the visitors can notice that the walls of the tower are scorched and in need of rehabilitation. From the circular balcony, from where the muezzin calls the Muslims to pray, the ones that managed to climb all the stairs can see the sea and have a wider perspective over the old center of Constanța. Also, the wonderful dome, on top of which resides, proud, the half-moon, the symbol of Islam, can be observed closer.





# The Genoese Lighthouse

The **Genoese Lighthouse** (**Romanian**: Farul Genovez) is a lighthouse and historic monument situated on the waterfront of the city of **Constanța**, Romania<sup>[1]</sup> behind a group of statues which has in its center the bust of **Mihai Eminescu**, sculpted by **Oscar Han**. It is located near **Constanța Casino**.

The lighthouse stands approximately eight meters high and is rectangular at its base to a height of about three and a half meters, and is octagonal above that. The interior of the lighthouse is cylindrical, with a spiral staircase in stone. The structure itself stands upon a pedestal base consisting of two steps, and is finished at the top with brackets supporting the eaves, upon which the metal housing of the lantern room also forms the roof.<sup>[2]</sup>

The original lighthouse was built around 1300<sup>[3]</sup> by the **Genoese** who traded at the port, to guide ships at sea from a range of about two nautical miles out to the small port of **Constanța**.<sup>[2]</sup> It was rebuilt between 1858-1860 by **French-Armenian** engineer Artin Aslan, by order of the British-owned **Danube and Black Sea Railway** Company, to honor the Genoese merchants who established a flourishing sea trade community.



# Ovidiu's statue - Constanța



The statue of Ovidius is the first of the statues erected in Constanța, after Dobrogea rejoined the Romanian territory; it is the one that depicts the great Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC-17 BC). The statue is located in Piața Ovidiu, in front of the Constanța National History and Archeology Museum.

Ovidiu arrives at Tomis in the 9th year, in the middle of May, after a journey full of dangers and adventures, by sea and on land. He writes the first epistles from book I of "*Tristia*" (*Tristia*) right during the sea voyage, the ship ("Minerva") that was carrying him being threatened by a storm. In the Greek citadel of Tomis, "*among arrows and sloiuri*", surrounded by Getae whose language he appropriates, also writing a poem in their idiom (*libellus geticus*), he composes the "*Sad*" cycle, in 5 books.

The statue was made in 1884 by the Italian sculptor Ettore Ferrari, sculptor who also created the Abraham Lincoln statue in New York, the Garibaldi monument in Rovigo Italy, the Giordano Bruno statue in Rome and the Ion Heliade-Rădulescu statue in Bucharest and was inaugurated in Constanta in August 1887. Cast in bronze, with a height of 2.60 m, the statue depicts Ovidiu in a deeply meditative attitude.

# Headquarters of the Navy Command



Near the Genoese Lighthouse was erected by the English company ***Danube and Black Sea Railway Co. Limited*** , known for the construction of the Constanța - Cernavodă railway, the imposing Hotel Terminus.

The British company was led by John Trevor Barkleay and the hotel was built according to the plans of the architect Alexandru Orascu, an architect with studies in Berlin, Munich and Paris, in a neoclassical style with pediments, capitals and decorative statues. The grand facade with many windows gave it a splendid appearance. The hotel had 90 rooms and spacious lounges with balconies. Several hot and cold bathrooms were arranged inside, on each floor of the hotel. Later, the hotel was lit with electricity.

The construction has a solid foundation, being built on a rock 14 meters deep, made of bricks built with mortar. Between 1924 and 1927 the building was expanded, and between 1982 and 1983 it was restored, but its neoclassical style was preserved. In 1931, the hotel was abolished, and the building hosted the King Carol I Military Circle. In the first months of 1914, the building was still affected by its original purpose, since the management transmitted, on May 16, its acceptance

regarding the parade of troops through the courtyard hotel, on the occasion of the visit to Constanta of the Romanian royal and Russian imperial families.

Between 1925 and 1927, the building was transformed into an officer's dormitory. In fact, the Navy bought it precisely for this purpose: a military hotel, organizing here in 1932 the first exhibition of a museum of the Romanian Navy. After 1944, it continued to be an officer's dormitory, so that from 1958 it became the headquarters of some local enterprises. Since 1978, the Command of the Navy, respectively of the Admiralty, has been operating here.

# The Orthodox Cathedral "Holy Apostles Peter and Paul"



This cathedral is an Orthodox place of worship, located in the peninsular area of the city, below Ovidiu Square, in front of the building of the Archdiocese of Tomis. , The building dominates with its monumental architecture the entire space of the southern cliff of the city.

The foundations of the cathedral were laid in 1883, on September 4, when Metropolitan Iosif Gheorghian was serving. The church was consecrated on May 22, 1895 due to problems with the interior painting. The steps to paint the church were started in 1888, three years after the end of the construction. The task was given to Demetrescu Mirea, a famous painter of the time. The creative work of the artist would change not only the appearance of the house, but also its history. Instead of traditional Byzantine painting, Mirea, a painter with an innovative vision, preferred the realistic style, attributing to the saints the faces of some personalities from the everyday life of Constanta. This fact attracted a scandal of great proportions. The representatives of the Orthodox Church were shocked by the artist's work. They refused to organize the consecration service of the cathedral and requested the urgent change of the painting. The plan of this building

belongs to the architect Alexandru Orascu, and the architect in charge of the works was Carol Benesch. The contractor of the works was Henri Guaracino.

The cathedral is a work in the neo-Byzantine style, the old architecture of the Romanian Country, made of pressed brick, which stands out due to the monumentality of the facade and the 35 m high tower. The painting was redone in 1959-1961, by Gheorghe Popescu and Niculina Dona-Delavrancea, the frescoes being reproduced in the neo-Byzantine style, with a Romanian coloration. The painting, made in neo-Byzantine style with Romanian decorations and motifs, has a special beauty and gives the Cathedral the status of an art monument, in addition to that of an architectural monument. Worth noting are the two frescoes that "enthroned" at the entrance to the Cathedral and that depict Heaven and Hell in detail. Sculpture is well represented in the pediment and pews, as well as in the chandeliers, polychandras and candlesticks (metal alloy of bronze with brass) designed by Ion Mincu and made in Paris,

Until 1925, the church served as a parish church, and in the period 1925-1950 it was used as the episcopal church of the Diocese of Tomis. Due to the Soviet bombings, in August 1941, the altar, the catapeteasma with the icons and the painting were seriously damaged and some were destroyed. The cathedral was rebuilt after the war and was re-consecrated on January 14, 1951 by Patriarch Justinian Marina, together with Bishop Chesarie Paunescu of the Lower Danube.

In December 2001, the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul was declared an archiepiscopal church with a monastic character. Since then, services are celebrated twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, by monks who live in the Archbishop's Palace next to the cathedral.