

Church Life in Moldova

Christianity, God and church are all taken very seriously in Moldova. Many of the older people have held onto their faith through many troublesome years. For the younger ones, Jesus is truly their only hope. The way Moldovans worship may look a bit different than the way you worship, please be respectful. Remember that they are your brothers and sisters in Christ and take the chance to learn from them and worship alongside them.

1. **Pace “pa-chay”**- This means peace in Romanian. Churches greet one another in this way. Feel free to greet members of the church this way. If you are unsure if the person is a Christian, choose a different form of greeting.
2. **Women in Church**- It is best not to wear jewelry to church here in Moldova. Also, wear makeup conservatively. Women here wear skirts that go at least down to their knees. We ask that you would also bring a few of these to wear during service. (You only need a few and can rotate them.) Also, women wear some form of head covering or scarf. It does not have to cover your head completely and they are often rolled to look like headbands. Very wide, large headbands are acceptable, as are wide cloth headbands. If you are unsure, just bring a favorite scarf and we can teach you how to wear it.
3. **Men in Church**- We ask that you all please wear nice pants, jeans or khakis. Short-sleeves are acceptable, but not t-shirts please. At least a polo shirt or a buttoned up shirt. When preaching, it is allowable to have a sports coat and tie.
4. **Sitting in the Church**- In a few churches men and women sit on opposite sides of the sanctuary. Here they are very accommodating and may ask you to sit together in the front row. Graciously accept their offer.
5. **Your Bible**- Please treat your Bible with respect. Do not place it on the floor or slam it down. It contains the Word of God and should be treated as such.

This is your opportunity to build-up the church around the world and to meet new brothers and sisters in Christ. Be open to learning, loving, serving and being served. Open your heart for God to work and He will surely use you and change you during your time in Moldova.

Moldovan Customs

1. Moldovans are always ready to offer you their best. Please accept their hospitality and kindness with thanks a servant's heart of your own.
2. When entering a Moldovan home, always remove your shoes. Though they tell you that it is not necessary, do so anyways.
3. The Moldovan people make a large display out of having guests in their home. They will produce a large amount of food. Try everything, eat more of what you like and be sure to leave some left over. Remember that this may be all the food their family has for the week.
4. Be careful how you admire things in their home, they will frequently insist you take it. Don't hesitate to voice the appreciation of something, just be sincere, but not too demonstrative.
5. After a relationship has been established they will embrace and kiss each other on each cheek. You can expect this after a couple of meetings and a sincere friendship has been established. Very common among women and not uncommon among men.
6. Tipping: In restaurants the tip is normally 10% but look over the check. Occasionally the tip is added to the check as service.