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## Bucharest

**Bucharest**, the capital of present-day Romania, is located in the southeast of the country, near the Danube river. This area was frequented by nomadic tribes for many centuries, but had little significance until the fourteenth century, when the Romanian state, the principality of Valachia, was founded in the region. With the Ottoman conquests at the beginning of the fifteenth century, Wallachia, as well as Moldavia, retained its autonomy but accepted the suzerainty of the sultan in Constantinople. This vassalage continued officially until 1878.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, the Romanian princes moved their capital from the hills in the north to Bucharest, which remained the administrative centre of the principality up to 1859, when Wallachia united with Moldavia to form the second Romanian principality, between the Carpathian Mountains and the Black Sea, with its capital at Jassy.

In 1862, Bucharest became the capital of the Romanian state (constituted as a kingdom in 1881), and it grew into a metropolis after Romania's territorial enlargement in 1918-20, when the regions Bessarabia, Bucovina, Transylvania, and parts of the Banat were integrated into the country.

Little remains from several centuries of Ottoman influence on Bucharest, which was especially pronounced during the Phanariot period (1711-1821), when the Porte appointed members of prominent Greek families in Istanbul's Phanar (Fener) district to govern the two Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. The Bucharest archives contain some material from the Ottoman era, but most of the city's architectural features from this epoch were eliminated in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the process of Westernising the Romanian capital.

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## al-Bustānī family

**Al-Bustānī** (also Bistānī or Bestānī, from Ar. *bustān*, "garden") is the name of an eminent Maronite Lebanese **family** with roots in the northern part of Mount Lebanon. Some of its members were leading figures in the fields of Arabic language, literature, and education during the Arabic Nahḍa (renaissance, awakening of the Arabic language and culture) in the nine-

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