

# Cycling Safaris

## LITHUANIA - LATVIA - ESTONIA VILNIUS - RIGA - TALLIN 2018

### Guided Tour

Guide cycling with group | 310 km | 10 nights / 11 days



Explore the Baltic coast and the National Parks of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on very scenic routes. The tour includes the three capital cities – Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn – with their Old towns designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO; and the previously-closed Curonian Spit and the largest and most beautiful Estonian island of Saaremaa. Travel from Lithuania in the south, through Latvia and on to Estonia in the north; experience a wide variety of towns, villages and countryside for an excellent introduction to the very distinct characters of these quite different countries.

## TOUR ITINERARY

### Day 1 Sunday: VILNIUS

Arrival to Vilnius. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included). Check-in at the hotel.

7:00 p.m. (19:00) welcome meeting at the hotel with tour guide.

HOTEL: **TILTO\*\*\*** or similar

### Day 2 Monday: VILNIUS-TRAKAI-KAUNAS (cycling app. 26 km, by coach app. 95 km)

After breakfast a city tour of Vilnius, capital of Lithuania for more than 600 years. The tour includes: the Cathedral Square, St. Ann and Bernardines' Church, the Gates of Dawn with a holy image of the Virgin Mary, Russian Orthodox Church of the Holy Spirit, Town Hall Square and Vilnius University (founded in 1579) with St. John's Church. Afternoon trip to Trakai (25 km from Vilnius), the former capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Visit to the insular castle of the 14th century, erected on a small island in lake Galvė. Then cycling on picturesque hilly road and transfer by coach to Kaunas.

HOTEL: **SANTAKA BEST WESTERN\*\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 3 Tuesday: KAUNAS-VENTĖ-NIDA (cycling app. 28 km, coach app. 240 km)**

Morning transfer along the Nemunas River to the coast. En route passing Veliuona mound hill and the impressive 16th-17thC castles of Raudonė and Panemunė. In the afternoon cycling to Ventė Horn including visit to a bird observatory and the 19thC lighthouse which was used for more than 100 years. Then a short bus transfers takes you to the town of Klaipėda, Lithuania's main seaport.  
HOTEL: OLD MILL\*\*\* or similar

**Day 4 Wednesday: CURONIAN SPIT & the Hill of Witches (cycling ~55 km, by boat - 50km)**

Take a morning boat across the Curonian Lagoon to Nida, en route enjoying beautiful views of the Curonian Spit sand dunes which separate the Baltic Sea from the Lagoon. Sightseeing around Nida, one of the most beautiful resorts in Lithuania. In the afternoon cycling on the Seaside Cycle Route along the Curonian Spit to Klaipėda for dinner in the Hotel (included)  
HOTEL: OLD MILL\*\*\* or similar

**Day 5 THURSDAY: KLAIPĖDA-PALANGA Resort-Hill of Crosses-RIGA  
(cycling 30km, by coach 290 km)**

Early morning ride to Palanga through the Seaside Regional Park, a former soviet military training area. Arrival in Palanga, the biggest seaside resort of Lithuania. City tour including the visit to the Botanical Garden and Amber Museum in the Palace of Count Tyszkiewicz, with over 25000 pieces of amber and 15000 inclusions of insects on display. Afternoon transfer to Riga (Latvia). Stop at the Hill of Crosses (16 km from Šiauliai), the unforgettable place with thousands of crosses on two small hills. Continue to Riga, the capital of Latvia. Dinner at the hotel (included).  
HOTEL: KONVENTA SETA\*\*\* or similar

**Day 6 Friday: RIGA-JURMALA Seaside Resort (cycling ~30 km, by coach ~20 km)**

After breakfast a guided tour of Riga Old Town, a medieval Hanseatic town which is famous for its Art Nouveau buildings. In the afternoon free time in Riga or cycling to Jurmala, the largest resort in the Baltic States well known for its long, white sand beaches, mineral waters and mud with healing properties. Transfer back by coach to the hotel in Riga.  
HOTEL: KONVENTA SETA\*\*\* or similar

**Day 7 Saturday: GAUJA National Park & Bicycle Museum (cycling ~40 km, by coach ~100 km)**

Morning transfer to Sigulda, the most popular resort in Latvia, in the Gauja River Valley. Cycling through Gauja National Park to Saukrasti, en route enjoy spectacular views of Gauja River valley with Gutmana Cave, visit Turaida Castle and the oldest Latvian Church, Krimulda, built in 1205. Finish the ride with a visit to the Latvian bicycle museum followed by a transfer to Riga.  
HOTEL: KONVENTA SETA\*\*\* or similar

**Day 8 Sunday: RIGA-SAAREMAA (cycling 35 km, by coach 340 km, by ferry-6km)**

Morning transfer to the largest Estonian island of Saaremaa which has preserved all that is best about the old Estonia. With little traffic and flat roads Saaremaa provides the perfect rural setting for cycling. Travel on picturesque roads along the Baltic Sea coast to the village of Angla, known for its iconic windmills. Transfer then to Mandjala for 2 overnight stays at the seaside. Dinner at the hotel is included tonight.  
HOTEL: SAAREMAA THALASSO SPA\*\*\* or similar

### **Day 9 Monday: SAAREMAA ISLAND (cycling -55 km, by coach- 40 km)**

Enjoy a ride across Saaremaa Island's wild beauty – Sorve Peninsula, finishing at the the Sorve lighthouse. The peninsula is of historic and military significance due to its position of dominance over the Irbe Strait and the Baltic Sea route to Riga. Transfer back to the hotel.

HOTEL: SAAREMAA THALASSO SPA\*\*\* or similar

### **Day 10 Tuesday: SAAREMAA & TALLINN (cycling -10 km, by coach- 216km, by ferry-6km)**

Take a short morning ride to Kuressare, the capital of Saaremaa, home to one of the finest and best preserved Episcopal Castles in the Baltics, which dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There will be free time to enjoy the town and the castle before a coach transfer to Tallinn. En route there is the opportunity to view one of Estonia's natural wonders and one of the worlds biggest craters, the Kaali meteorite crater. Arrive in Tallinn in the afternoon to enjoy a guided tour of the old town.

HOTEL: PARK INN BY RADISON MERITON\*\*\*\* or similar

### **Day 11 Wednesday: TALLINN**

Breakfast at the hotel. End of the tour.

## **2018 TOUR DATES AND PRICES**

### **Sundays:**

May: 20, 27

June: 3, 10, 17, 24

July: 1, 15, 29

August: 12, 19, 26

September: 2

€ 1,275 per person sharing in a twin / double room

€ 1,570 single room occupancy

## **TOUR PRICE INCLUDES**

- › 10 nights stay in hotels, including all taxes, plus breakfast daily
- › 3 dinners included (1x Klaipeda, 1 x Riga, 1 x Saaremaa)
- › Welcome meeting with a glass of beer or wine
- › English speaking guide escort on days 2-10
- › Rent of trekking bicycle with waterproof pannier (+ helmet on request)
- › Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned coach /minibus
- › Luggage transport as per itinerary
- › Excursions as shown in itinerary
- › Boat trip across the Curonian Lagoon
- › Ferry tickets from the Curonian Spit to and from Saaremaa Island
- › Entrance to: Trakai Insular Castle, Amber museum in Palanga, Turaida Castle, Saulkrasti Bicycle Museum and Angla Windmill Park in Saaremaa.
- › Individual information package (city guides, maps and program)

### **THE TOUR EXCLUDES:**

- › Arrival and departure transfers
- › Lunches and dinners
- › Tips

### OPTIONAL EXTRAS:

- Per person arrival or departure transfer - €30 for one person\*
- Arrival or departure transfer for a party of 2 persons - €15 per person\*
- E-bike supplement - €150 per person (limited availability, on request)
- 3-course dinner package (6 dinners with tea/coffee) - €130 per person  
\*(excluding Vilnius)

### PRE/POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION:

#### Hotel in Vilnius TILTO\*\*\* or similar

SGL 75 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

DBL 90 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

#### Hotel in Tallinn BERN\*\*\*\*\* or similar

SGL 90 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

DBL 110 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

Minimum group size 2 pax.

### WHAT TO BRING

Cycling gloves; cycling shorts; long pants; waterproof jacket; sunglasses; sun cream; sunhat; stiff-soled shoes suitable for cycling; water bottles. Although it is not compulsory to wear a helmet in the Baltic States, we strongly recommend that you wear one (*please bring your own as these are not provided*).

### BIKE AND FITNESS

Here is an example of the type of touring bike used:



Aluminium frame

21 speed

Choice of a front or rear pannier bag (please note that the pannier is smaller than the one you see on the bike)

Water bottle carrier

Back carrier

Bicycle lock

Pump

Repair kit (carried by tour guide)

Map support

Helmets are not included.

The tour is easy as there is flat terrain, the route partly follows gravel roads but mainly asphalt roads including ~100 km of signposted bicycles.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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### **Weather**

This itinerary takes place at the same latitude as Scotland, and the area has a continental climate – long cold winters, short hot summers, and it can rain a lot. Daytime temperatures should vary from 20C degrees to 33C degrees, cooler in bad weather. Nights will be cool to warm, never being cold – perhaps chilly in bad weather. There is generally a good amount of sunshine during summer months and the days are very long in June and July.

### **Passport and Visas**

Lithuania was among the ten accession countries that joined the EU in May 2004. Most nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay, (the exception being a list of nationalities from EU countries who are only required to produce a personal identification card). It is your responsibility to have the correct documents and to obtain your own visa, if required. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise and any subsequent effects.

### **Currency**

In Lithuania, the unit of currency is the Euro

### **Additional expenses and spending money**

All lunches/drinks are at your expense.

### **Local Time**

Local time conforms to Eastern European Time which is 2 hours ahead of GMT.