

Cycling Safaris

LITHUANIA AND LATVIA VILNIUS-RIGA 2018

Guided Tour

Guide cycling with group | 210 km | 7 nights / 8 days



The Baltic coast and National Parks of Lithuania and Latvia explored on highly scenic routes, including the two capital cities – Vilnius and Riga – with their old towns designated by UNESCO as the World Heritage Sites; and featuring the previously-closed Curonian Spit. Start your tour in Vilnius, travel to the Baltic Sea Coast in the West and further on to Latvia in the north, enjoy a great variety of towns, villages and landscapes, and get an excellent feel for the different characters of these distinctive sister 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-KLAIPEDA (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. After a short bus transfer you arrive in Klaipėda, Lithuania's main sea port, where we spend 2 nights.

HOTEL: **Old Mill***** or similar

Day 4 Wednesday: CURONIAN SPIT NATIONAL PARK(cycling ~55 km, by boat-50km)

Take a morning boat across Curonian Lagoon. Sightseeing around Nida, one of the most beautiful resorts in Lithuania. Exploring the Amber Gallery and a summer house of the famous German writer Thomas Mann. In the afternoon cycling back to Klaipėda on the Seaside Cycle Route along the Curonian Spit. Dinner at 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 polygon 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.

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

Breakfast at the hotel. End of the tour.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO EXTEND THIS TOUR BY 3 DAYS AND CONTINUE ON TO ESTONIA.

2018 TOUR DATES AND PRICES

Sundays:

May 20, 27

June 17

July 1, 15, 29

August 12, 26

€ 915 per person sharing in a twin / double room

€ 1150 single room occupancy

TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- › 7 nights stay at the hotels, including all taxes, and breakfast
- › 2 dinners included (Klaipeda & Riga)
- › Welcome meeting with a glass of beer or wine
- › Guide cycling with group on days 2-7
- › Rent of trekking bicycle with a waterproof pannier (+ helmet on request)
- › Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned coach /minibus
- › Luggage transport as per itinerary
- › Boat trip across the Curonian Lagoon
- › Ferry ticket from the Curonian Spit to Klaipėda
- › Excursions as shown in itinerary
- › Entrance to: Vilnius University, Trakai Insular Castle, Thomas Mann's House in Nida, Amber museum in Palanga, Turaida Castle, Saulkrasti Bicycle Museum, Riga Cathedral
- › Individual information package (city guides, maps and program)

THE TOUR EXCLUDES:

- › Arrival and departure transfers
- › Lunches and 5 dinners
- › Tips

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:

- › Per person arrival or departure transfer - €30
- › Arrival or departure transfer for a party of 2 persons - €15 per person
- › E-bike supplement - €130 per person (limited availability, on request)
- › 3-course dinner package (5 dinners with coffee/tea) - €110 per person

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 Riga KONVENTA SETA*** or similar

SGL 85 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

DBL 95 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

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.

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

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.