

# Cycling Safaris

## LITHUANIAN SEASIDE 2024

### Self-Guided Tour

Family friendly | 250 km / 156 miles | 8 days / 7 nights



Discover the Baltic Sea coast visiting Palanga Resort and the Curonian Spit National Park, designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, explored individually by bicycle on very scenic cycling routes. Experience traditional Lithuanian country life when cycling with storks in the Nemunas River Delta region. This tour partly covers the Seaside Cycle Route which is still only officially signposted, high quality cycle route in Lithuania.

The tour begins & ends in the historic coastal town of Klaipėda (known as Memel for many years) which boasts a rich, turbulent history from 13thC. Nowadays, it's a bustling, modern town offering many excellent leisure options ranging from history tours, to water sports. There's a wide range of cafes & restaurants & many annual festivals, e.g. jazz, folklore. You can choose to spend extra nights here either at the beginning or end of the tour.

During the tour you will spend 2 nights in Nida the largest settlement on the Curonian Spit. It's the perfect place to enjoy a relaxing seaside break or explore on foot, by cycle or canoe its unique surroundings; its geology, birdlife, the influence of the Lagoon etc.

#### Cycling grade

We rate this trip as easy going to moderate. You will cycle on low traffic roads (a few stretches on gravel/sandy road) and separate cycle paths (half the tour), including the Lithuanian Seaside Cycle Route. The terrain is dead flat most of the tour, except a few hills on the Curonian Spit.

## TOUR ITINERARY *if arriving on a Sunday or Thursday*

### Day 1 Sunday or Thursday: KLAIPĖDA

Arrive in Klaipėda. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included). Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.  
OVERNIGHT: Klaipėda; HOTEL: THE OLD MILL\*\*\* [www.oldmillhotel.lt](http://www.oldmillhotel.lt) or similar

### Day 2 Monday or Friday: Cycling with storks on country roads to ŠILUTĖ (47 km/29 mi. by minibus 40 km)

9:00am information meeting at your hotel where you will be greeted by our local representative. Take a short transfer by minibus to the inland where start your cycling on picturesque countryside roads through Pamarys meadows to Šilutė. This region has one of the largest population of storks in Europe. The White Stork truly deserves its place as Lithuanian's national bird. En route you can stop in Švėkšna village to explore the estate with its beautiful park and impressive neo-gothic church of St.Jacob the Apostle.

Arrival in Šilutė, check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Šilutė; HOTEL: GILIJA\*\*\* [www.silutesgilija.lt](http://www.silutesgilija.lt) or similar.

### Day 3 Tuesday or Saturday: RUSNĖ Island & NEMUNAS River Delta (47 km/29 mi.)



Explore Šilutė, a town named after “Šilokarčema” (a pub in the pine forest) and go for a return cycling trip to Rusnė Island, Lithuania’s only island, located in the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park.

When you stand on the bank of the Nemunas River in Rusnė you see the Russian oblast of Kaliningrad just 100 metres across the river. En route you can explore Rusnė village with a new monument to Mahatma Gandhi and Hermann Kallenbach, the old water pumping station and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century lighthouse in Uostadvaris Harbour.

Optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Šilutė; HOTEL: GILIJA\*\*\* [www.silutesgilija.lt](http://www.silutesgilija.lt) or similar.

### Day 4 Wednesday or Sunday: ŠILUTĖ-VENTĖ Cape & crossing the Curonian Lagoon to NIDA (33 km/21 mi., by boat 14 km/9 mi.)

Cycling to Ventė Cape where you can visit a museum of ornithology and one of the first bird ringing stations in Europe, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century lighthouse which has a panoramic view of the unique landscape – glistening waters of the Curonian Lagoon and the great sand dunes. Today, one million birds pass through the station each migratory period. Take a boat to cross the Curonian Lagoon to Nida. Arrive in Nida followed by a bike ride to the hotel. Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.



OVERNIGHT: Nida; HOTEL: NERIJA\*\*\* [www.neringahotels.lt/nerija\\_en.html](http://www.neringahotels.lt/nerija_en.html) or similar.

**Day 5 Thursday or Monday: NIDA – leisure time by the Baltic Sea (10 km/6 mi.)**

Free day to explore Nida which is a former old fishermen’s village on the Curonian Spit washed by the Baltic Sea on one side and the Curonian Lagoon on the other. Today Nida is the largest settlement in Neringa region and one of the most beautiful resorts in Lithuania. Cycle or walk along impressive sand dunes, visit the most popular places of interest – the Fisherman’s House, the summer house of famous German writer Thomas Mann and the Amber Gallery. Optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Nida; HOTEL: **NERIJA**\*\*\* [www.neringahotels.lt/nerija\\_en.html](http://www.neringahotels.lt/nerija_en.html) or similar.

**Day 6 Friday or Tuesday: Along sand dunes of the Curonian Spit NIDA-JUODKRANTĖ-KLAIPĖDA (58 km/36 mi.)**

Follow an asphalt bike path of the Seaside Cycle Route which takes you along the Curonian Spit to Klaipėda. En route you can explore the “Dead” sand dunes on foot, watch a colony of grey herons and cormorants, visit the Hill of Witches which houses a hundred fanciful and folksy wooden sculptures of Lithuanian legends scattered along a forest path, swim in the Baltic Sea or, relax, take the sun on golden beaches. Finally, take a local ferry from Smiltynė to the Old Town of Klaipėda. Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.



OVERNIGHT: Klaipėda; HOTEL: **THE OLD MILL**\*\*\* [www.oldmillhotel.lt](http://www.oldmillhotel.lt) or similar

**Day 7 Saturday or Wednesday: Along the Seaside Cycle Route to Palanga / KLAIPĖDA-PALANGA Resort - KLAIPĖDA, (58 km/36 mi.)**

Cycle along the Lithuanian Seaside Cycle Route to Palanga resort. The route leads you through Giruliai Forest and the Seaside Regional Park, a former soviet military polygon area. En route explore the Dutchman’s Cap – a 24-meter-high coastal cliff and Plazė Lake. In Palanga you can visit the Botanical Park and Amber Museum, explore J.Basanavičius pedestrian street with many cafes & restaurants and the 470m pier heading into the Baltic Sea. Return to Klaipėda using the same or slightly different route. Optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Klaipėda; HOTEL: **THE OLD MILL**\*\*\* [www.oldmillhotel.lt](http://www.oldmillhotel.lt) or similar

**Day 8 Sunday or Thursday: KLAIPĖDA**

Breakfast at the hotel. End of the tour. It is possible to extend your stay in Lithuania.

## TOUR ITINERARY *if arriving on a Saturday or Wednesday*

### Day 1 Saturday or Wednesday: KLAIPĖDA

Arrive in Klaipėda. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included). Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.  
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9:00 a.m. information meeting at your hotel where you will be greeted by our local representative. Cycle to Palanga resort along the Lithuanian Seaside Cycle Route leading through Giruliai Forest and the Seaside Regional Park. En route explore the Dutchman's Cap – a 24-meter-high coastal cliff and Plazė Lake. In Palanga you can visit the Botanical Park and Amber Museum, explore J.Basanavičius pedestrian street with many cafes & restaurants and the 470m pier heading into the Baltic Sea. Return to Klaipėda using the same or slightly different route. Optional dinner at the hotel.

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### Day 3 Monday or Friday: Countryside Roads through Pamarys Meadows ŠVĖKŠNA-ŠILUTĖ (44 km/28 mi., by minibus 40 km)

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## 2024 TOUR DATES & PRICES

### Set Departure dates (Wednesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays and Sundays)

<b>Season 1:</b> June 8, June 15 (Saturday departure) June 9, June 16 (Sunday departure) May 29, June 12, June 19, August 28 (Wednesday departure) May 30, June 13, June 20, August 29 (Thursday departure)	€595 per person sharing in double / twin room  €935 single room
<b>Season 2:</b> June 29, July 6, August 10, August 17 (Saturday departure) June 30, July 7, August 11, August 18 (Sunday departure) June 26, July 3, July 10, July 24, July 31, Aug 7, Aug 14 (Wednesday departure) June 27, July 4, July 11, July 25, Aug 1, Aug 8, Aug 15 (Thursday departure)	€655 per person sharing in double / twin room  €995 single

Bike hire is not included in the tour price:

€80 bike hire, €170 e-bike hire, €120 cyclocross bike, €170 tandem bike, €5 helmet

Minimum group size on fixed dates 2 people.

Tour departure on any date from May – September with a group of 4 pax or more when a scheduled boat across the Curonian Lagoon is available.

Children up to 3 years in parents room – free (only charge for bike seat with helmet: €20 or bike trailer: €90)

## WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights stay at the hotels including all hotel taxes
- Daily breakfast
- Luggage transport Klaipėda - Šilutė, Šilutė - harbour ~ Nida & Nida ~ Klaipėda
- Transfer by minibus Klaipėda ~ Veiviržėnai
- Boat trip across the Curonian Lagoon to Nida
- Individual information package (city guide, maps, program and route description)
- GPS Tracks
- Emergency contact numbers

## THE TOUR EXCLUDES

- Lunches & dinners (dinner optional) Half board (7x 3-course dinner with coffee/tea: €225 if booked 3\* hotel in Klaipėda / €255 if booked 4\* hotel in Klaipėda)
- Bike hire is not included in the tour price (€80 for trekking bike, €170 for e-bike, €120 for Cyclocross bike, €170 for tandem)
- **PRE/POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION**
- Hotel in Klaipėda [OLD MILL HOTEL\\*\\*\\*](#) or similar
- Single € 95 per room per night, including breakfast
- Double €105 per room per night, including breakfast
- Hotel in Klaipėda [NATIONAL\\*\\*\\*\\*](#) or similar
- SGL €115 per room per night, including breakfast
- DBL €125 per room per night, including breakfast

## BIKE RENTAL AND FITNESS

Here is an example of the type of touring bike that you can rent:



**Comfortable trekking / hybrid bikes (KTM, VDV - *velo-de-ville*) which we offer for rental on self-guided and fully guided cycle tours in the Baltics. They are equipped with:**

- 24-speed Shimano derailleur gears with free wheel or 8-speed internal-hub gears, *Shimano Nexus*, & pedal brake (optional);
- Aluminum frame of different size and type - lady's, unisex and standard one with a crossbar;
- Front suspension fork (some are with lockout function) or rigid fork;
- 28" and 26" size wheels with flat-less puncture protection tires,
- Comfortable saddle with springs or/and suspension seatpost,
- Mudguards to keep you clean in case of bad weather;
- Bottle holder (except bikes with real lady's frame);
- Back rack for panniers (one waterproof pannier is included);
- LED lights (front & back) with hub dynamo;
- Flat pedals which can be changed to SPD ones (extra charge) or your own pedals.
- Handlebar bag with map/smartphone holder & tachometer



### E-bikes / Pedelecs - motor-assisted electric bikes

We use high quality e-bikes specially designed by Velo-de-Ville (VDV) company in Germany, and they are equipped with:

- Comfortable saddle with springs or suspension seatpost, easy adjustable height;
- Back rack for panniers (one waterproof pannier is included on most tours);
- BOSCH central-drive motor (250W) and 11 ah Litium-Ion battery (400Wh or 500 Wh) which lasts for up to 110 km/70 miles in eco mode;
- On-board computer with 5 riding modes: Off, Eco, Tour, Sport, Turbo;
- 8-speed internal-hub gears (Shimano Nexus) with freewheel or back-pedal brakes (optional);
- Aluminum lady's/unisex frame type of different size (SS - 42 cm/16", S - 45 cm /17", M - 50 cm /19", L - 55 cm /21", XL - 60 cm /24") and standard frame with a crossbar for tall men - XL size (60 cm/24");
- Front suspension fork;
- 28" size wheels and flat-less puncture protection tires, *Schwalbe Marathon Plus 40x622*;
- LED lights with hub dynamo.
- Handlebar bag with map/smartphone holder & tachometer



### Cyclecross bikes for sportive travellers

with wider tires (35 mm) and disc brakes are more universal and suitable for rides on good asphalt and gravel roads; and they are equipped with water bottle holders, racks for a handlebar bag, *Ortlieb*, and back panniers.

- *KONA Jake* with lightweight alloy frame (51 cm/20" and 54 cm/21"), 20-speed gears;
- *KONA Jake the Snake* with lightweight alloy frame and carbon fork, frame size 58 cm/23", 20-speed gears.
- Handlebar bag with map/smartphone holder & tachometer

## BACK UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation.

If you experience small problems with the bike (e.g., a puncture) you will have a spare tube, pump and tyre lever. You also have access to a 24 hour helpline.

## 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*).

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Arrival & departure information

Ferry terminal: Klaipeda (DFDS ferries from Kiel, Germany & Karlshamm, Sweden; TT-Line ferries from Travemunde/Rostock, Germany & Trelleborg, Sweden)

Airport: Klaipeda/Palanga (35 km / 22 mi. away from Klaipeda, [www.palanga-airport.lt](http://www.palanga-airport.lt)). Regular flights from Copenhagen (DK), Riga (LV), London Luton (GB) & London Stanstead (GB). Due to many connection flights (SAS, Air Baltic) it is easy to reach this airport from many cities in Europe via Copenhagen and Riga.

### Option to book arrival or departure transfer:

From Palanga Airport to accommodation: €75 (1-3 people) or €110 (4-7 people)

From Klaipeda central ferry terminal: €50 (1-3 people) or €75 (4-7 people)



**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

Foreign currencies and local currency can be exchanged at all banks.

**Additional expenses and spending money**

All lunches, dinners and drinks are at your expense.

**Local Time**

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