



HIKING TOURS

Forest Trail and
Baltic Coastal Hiking Route
Southern part



Latvia
Lithuania

WWW.BALTICTRAILS.EU



WHAT CAN YOU FIND IN THE BROCHURE

The brochure includes 15 hiking tours for one and multiple days (up to 16 days) in Latvia and Lithuania, which are part of the **Forest Trail (E11) and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route (E9)** – European long distance hiking paths E11 and E9 – the most interesting, scenic forest areas of both countries, which are renowned for their natural and cultural objects. Several tours include national parks, nature parks, as well as UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Every tour includes a schematic tour map, provides information about the mileage to be covered within a day, level of difficulty, most outstanding sightseeing objects, as well as practical information about the road surface, getting to the starting point.

The tours are provided for both individual travellers and small tourist groups. It is recommended to book transport (rent a car or use public transportation), accommodation and meals in advance, as well as arrange personal and luggage transfer if necessary.

The tours included in the brochure may be shortened or extended depending on the wishes of travellers. These hiking tours, or some of them, may also be included in the traditional tourism routes and city excursions to diversify the offer.

If you wish to do the hiking individually, you will find a detailed route description at www.baltictrails.eu, with a map of sightseeing objects, catering places, shops, picnic areas, road surfaces, obstacles along the route and other useful information, as well as a GPX file with the main route of the hike.

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EUROPEAN UNION



Interreg
Latvija-Lietuva

European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

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The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the project partnership and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

GETTING THERE & AROUND



AIRPORTS

LATVIA

Rīga: www.riga-airport.com
 Liepāja: www.liepaja-airport.lv

LITHUANIA

Vilnius: www.vilnius-airport.lt
 Kaunas: www.kaunas-airport.lt
 Palanga: www.palanga-airport.lt



FERRIES

Stena Line

Route: Travemünde - Liepāja,
 Nynäshamn - Ventspils
www.stenaline.lv

DFDS Seaways

Route: Kiel - Klaipėda, Karlshamn -
 Klaipėda
www.dfdsseaways.com

TT-Line

Route: Trelleborg - Klaipėda, Rostock -
 Klaipėda, Travemünde - Klaipėda
www.ttline.com

Local ferries in Lithuania

From Klaipėda to Curonian Spit
www.keltas.lt

Official tourism website of Latvia: www.latvia.travel
Official tourism website of Lithuania: www.lithuania.travel



LOCAL BUSES AND TRAINS

LATVIA

Buses: www.autoosta.lv. Buses are the most convenient means for reaching local destinations outside Rīga sub-urban area.

Trains: www.pv.lv. Train travel is most convenient for travelling to destinations such as Jūrmala, Gauja National Park, Tukums, Liepāja.

Enquiry service, including public transport: www.1188.lv.

LITHUANIA

Buses: www.autobusubilietai.lt
 Trains: www.traukiniobilietas.lt



COACHES

Lux Express: www.luxexpress.eu
 Ecolines: www.ecolines.eu
 Euroline: www.eurolines.eu

The bus trip between Rīga and Vilnius takes approximately 3.5 hours.

The bus trip between Rīga and Klaipėda takes approximately 4.5 hours.

GENERAL INFORMATION

	LITHUANIA	LATVIA
Capital	Vilnius	Rīga
Territory km ²	65 300	64 573
Population	2,8	1,9
Population density: inhabitants per km ²	43	30.02
Forest area (~ %)	50	52
Coastline (~ km)	100	500
Highest point of the terrain (m)	318	312
Currency	EUR	EUR
Country code	+370	+371

SYMBOLS USED:
























-  Route length
-  Duration
-  Road surface
-  Hiking
-  Drive
-  Bus
-  Alternative route options — other roads or trails that can be taken in case of adverse weather or in other situations.
-  Difficulty level: easy
-  medium
-  hard
-  Starting point of hiking
-  End point of hiking
-  Danger points
-  Good to know!
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① THROUGH THE DZŪKIJA ETHNOGRAPHIC REGION



DAY 1

Arrival in Druskininkai.



Bus to Didžiasalis.



Didžiasalis - Druskininkai

→ 10 km ⌚ ~2 h



Gravel and forest roads, in Druskininkai – asphalt sidewalks, pedestrian / bicycle sidewalks, pavement.



Easy



It is worth spending the day to see Druskininkai and take a trip with a small ship along the Nemunas to Liškiava. You can get by a cable car from the Snow Arena to Druskininkai Water Park, shortening the road by two kilometres.

Accommodation: in Druskininkai.



Itinerary: DIDŽIASALIS - DRUSKININKAI - ŽIOGELIAI - MERKINĖ

Hiking route length: → 48 km

Duration: **3 days** Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Didžiasalis** (can reach by bus from Druskininkai)

🚩 **Merkinė** (there are regular buses from Merkinė to Vilnius)

This route section takes you to the Dzūkija National Park – it is among Lithuania's most forested and desolate nature areas –, and to the town of Druskininkai – a popular SPA and mineral water health resort on the banks of the river Nemunas. When in Druskininkai, we recommend dipping yourself in mineral water baths, enjoying the trip with the cable car over the river

Nemunas, visiting the musical fountain, and walking along the river promenade.

The starting point of the hiking route is the village of Didžiasalis, which is reached by bus from Druskininkai. From there, the route will take you through vast coniferous forests, rich in berries and mushrooms, and small villages. As you get to Druskininkai, the Forest Trail will meander along the small streets and parks of the historic resort of Druskininkai, crossing the river Ratnyčia and the forest park on the right bank of the Nemunas valley. Leaving the resort town behind, the Forest Trail runs on the side of the village revealing you the beautiful landscapes and the view of the Liškiava monastery on the other bank of the river Nemunas. Up to the village of Žiogeliai, the route goes along forest roads and continues along the banks of the Nemunas valley, surrounded by the vast Dzūkija forests. Towards the end of the route, climb up the Merkinė Mound and it will surprise you with breathtaking views of southern Lithuania.





DAY 2



Druskininkai - Žiogeliai

→ 13 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel and forest roads, in Druskininkai – asphalt sidewalks, pedestrian / bicycle sidewalks, pavement.



Easy



Bus to Druskininkai.

Accommodation:
in Druskininkai.



DAY 3



Bus from Druskininkai to Žiogeliai.



Žiogeliai - Merkinė

→ 25 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Small forest and country roads, gravel roads, in a short section – trails and asphalt (Merkinė), by the castle mounds – stairs.



Medium



The Merkys River must be crossed via the A4 road bridge. You have to cross the road and walk along the side of the road for a few hundred metres. There are hogweeds in the vicinity of the Utieka, which must not be touched, because they cause burns!

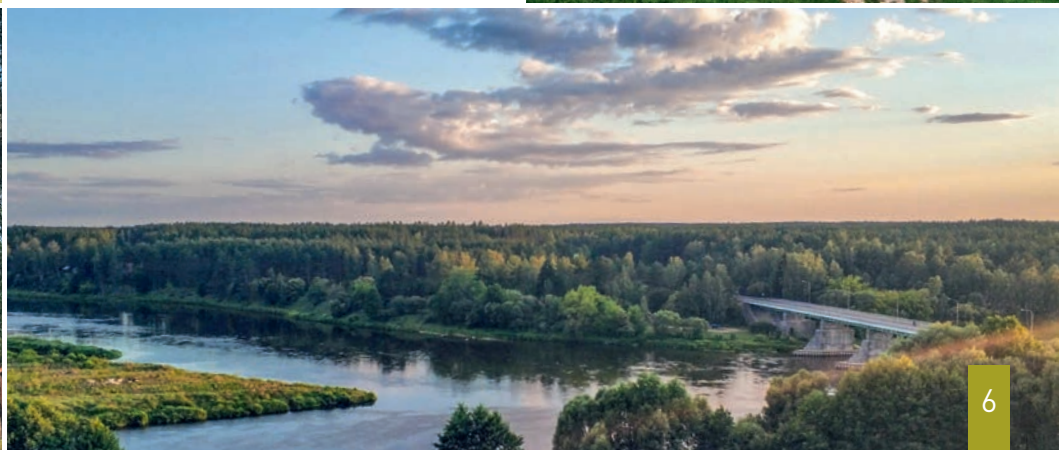
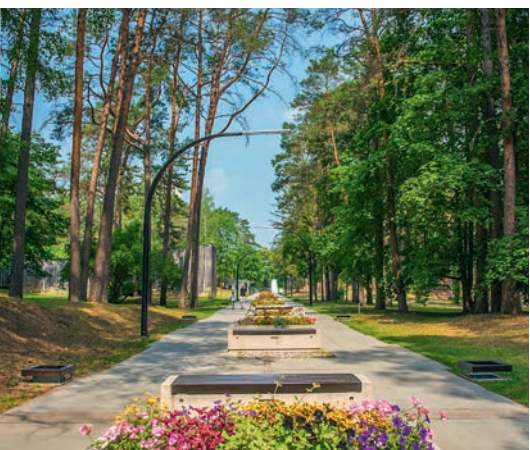


There are no shops or catering sites from Žiogeliai to Merkinė, so you need to take a lunch box.



Bus from Merkinė to Vilnius (trip duration 1,5 h, the latest bus at 18:11 in the evening).

Accommodation: in Vilnius.



② LITHUANIA'S REGIONAL PARKS AND THE RIVER NEMUNAS



DAY 1

Arrival in Kaunas.

Sightseeing in Kaunas.

Alternative I: Can hike till Lampėdžiai and overnight there.

Alternative II: You can rent a bike and have a tour in Kaunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 2



Public bus to Lampėdžiai.



Lampėdžiai - Kulautuva

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Asphalt pavements and pedestrian / bicycle path, in a short section – trails.



Easy

Accommodation: in Kulautuva.



Itinerary: KAUNAS - LAMPĖDŽIAI - KULAUTUVA - VILKIJA - KIRKŠNOVĖ - KAULAKIAI - LYDUVĖNAI - ŠILUVA - DENGILTIS - KURTUVĖNAI - ŠAUKĖNAI - ŠIAULIAI

Hiking route length: → 114 km

Duration: **8 days** Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Kaunas**

🚩 **Šaukėnai** (there are regular buses to Šiauliai)

The route brings you to Kaunas, multiple Lithuanian regional parks and allows to enjoy the landscapes of the river Nemunas.

Kaunas is Lithuania's second largest city. It is notable for its modernist architecture. The city is located at the confluence of

the two largest Lithuanian rivers: Nemunas and Neris. Moving further from Lampėdžiai to Vilkija, the Forest Trail runs for two days along trails and small countryside gravel roads next to the right bank of the river Nemunas. This section is shaped by beautiful landscapes with views of the river, the waterfront meadows and small villages. Do not miss the ferry in Vilkija crossing over the river Nemunas, one of the few still in operation in the Baltic States. For the next two days from Vilkija, the Forest Trail runs through its most spectacular sections in the Dubysa Regional Park from Kirkšnovė to Šiluva with mounds on riverbanks and historical churches now and there. This regional park covers the impressive Dubysa river valley, which reaches a depth of 40 m and a width of up to 500 m. Be prepared for a rolling terrain. Next, the route will take you to the town of Šiluva – the Catholic pilgrimage site – and to the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park. It is among the most forested areas of Central Lithuania; thus, the regional park with its glaciated valleys is a wonderland of forests, waters and wetlands. The Forest Trail leads along small forest paths, tourist trails, beautiful tree alleys and wetlands. The walk ends in Šaukėnai village, from where the city of Šiauliai is easily reached.





DAY 3



Kulautuva - Vilkija

→ 14 km ⌚ 4 – 5 h



Small country roads with gravel pavement, trails, in a small section – asphalt.



Easy



In wet weather, there may be wet spots and puddles on some sections of the route.



It is worth seeing Vilkija town and trying a ferry in Vilkija, because such a vehicle is preserved in only a few places in the Baltic States.



Public bus back to Kaunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 4



Public bus from Kaunas to Ariogala and then at 10:13 to Kirkšnovė (bus goes only on working days, on weekends there can be private transfers organised, also a taxi is available from Ariogala to Kirkšnovė).



Kirkšnovė - Kaulakiai

→ 25 km ⌚ 7 – 9 h



Very small country gravel or natural roads, trails.



Hard



In some places the trail may be overgrown.



Some places have steep slopes, coastal erosion has occurred in one.



This day is for active hikers, it is rather difficult, the trail winds up and down the steep slopes of the shores. Shops are only in Betygala village, located just over a kilometre from the main route, and in Kaulakiai village.

Accommodation: in Kaulakiai.



② LITHUANIA'S REGIONAL PARKS AND THE RIVER NEMUNAS



DAY 5



Kaulakiai - Lyduvėnai or Šiluva

→ 14 or 28 km

⌚ 4 - 5 h or 8 - 9 h



Asphalt and gravel roads.

●● / ●●● Medium / Hard



The shop is only in Šiluva.



If you only hike till Lyduvėnai, a private transfer to Šiluva can be organised.

Accommodation: in Šiluva.



DAY 6

Private transfer to Dengiltis.



Dengiltis - Kurtuvėnai
in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park

→ 15 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Mainly small forest roads and trails, in some places gravel roads, in Kurtuvėnai and in the vicinity – asphalt.



Easy



Steep slopes can be slippery in wet weather.



It is advisable to carefully follow the markers in nature and use GPX files, because the network of off-road trails is very dense and the terrain is difficult.



From Kurtuvėnai to Šiauliai.

Accommodation: in Šiauliai or Kurtuvėnai.



DAY 7

Bus or private transfer to Kurtuvėnai.



Kurtuvėnai - Šaukėnai
in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Small forest trails and small forest roads, wooden footbridges in wet places, asphalt in Šaukėnai.



Easy



In this section, the Forest Trail intersects with other hiking routes.



Bus to Šiauliai.

Accommodation: in Šiauliai.



DAY 8

Departure to Vilnius or back to Kaunas.



A TOUR OF LITHUANIA'S NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARKS ③



DAY 1

Arrival in Druskininkai.

Sightseeing in Druskininkai.

Accommodation: in Druskininkai.

DAY 2



Druskininkai - Žiogeliai

→ 12 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel and forest roads, in Druskininkai – asphalt sidewalks, pedestrian / bicycle sidewalks, pavement.



Easy



Bus to Druskininkai.

Accommodation:

in Druskininkai.



Itinerary: DRUSKININKAI - ŽIOGELIAI - MERKINĖ - BIRŠTONAS - PRIENAI - KAUNAS - KULAUTUVA - VILKIJA - KAUNAS - PLUNGĖ - PAPTALTELĖ - PLATELIAI

Hiking route length: → 98 km

Duration: 11 days Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Druskininkai** (there are regular buses from Vilnius or Kaunas)

🚩 **Plateliai** (private transfer to Plungė and from there are regular trains to Vilnius)

This tour of the Forest Trail covers the national parks of Dzūkija and Žemaitija and the Nemunas Loops Regional Park in Lithuania. The starting point of the route is Druskininkai, a popular SPA and mineral water resort on the banks of the river Nemunas. Here, we recommend dipping yourself in mineral water baths, enjoying the trip with the cable car over the river Nemunas, visiting the musical fountain, and walking along the river promenade. For the next two days from Druskininkai, the Forest Trail passes through the Dzūkija National Park to the town of Merkinė. In this most forested and unpopulated region in Lithuania you can enjoy hiking along solitary forest roads, visit ancient mounds and ethnographic villages, where

the traditions of bee-keeping, crafts, mushrooms and berry harvesting are still kept alive.

You will then head to Birštonas, one of the key resorts in Lithuania with its valuable mineral waters. The town finds itself in the Nemunas Loops Regional Park, which includes four large and one smaller loops of the river. The Forest Trail stretches from Birštonas through the entire Nemunas Loops Regional Park up till the town of Prienai. Next, hikers will get to Kaunas, the second largest city in Lithuania and its former capital city. Kaunas is notable for its modernist architecture. The catchment area of the river Nemunas and the river Neris is situated here. Heading on, from Lampėdžiai to Vilkiija, the Forest Trail runs for two days along trails and small countryside gravel roads next to the right bank of the river Nemunas, also crossing resort territory of Kulautuva. This section is characteristic of beautiful riverscapes, waterfront meadows and small villages. For the final section, first you must get to the Žemaitija National Park, where the Forest Trail runs around the Lake Plateliai, which is the largest lake in the historic Samogitian region. Old pine and fir forests and mixed forests are among the most precious natural values of the park. A transfer will take you to Plungė, and from there a train will take you to Vilnius or Kaunas.



③ A TOUR OF LITHUANIA'S NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARKS



DAY 3



Bus from Druskininkai to Žiogeliai (there are many buses per day).



Žiogeliai - Merkinė

→ 25 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Small forest and country roads, gravel roads, in a short section – trails and asphalt (Merkinė), by the castle mounds – stairs.



Medium



The Merkys river must be crossed via the A4 road bridge. You have to cross the road and walk along the side of the road for a few hundred metres. There are hogweeds in the vicinity of the Utieka, which must not be touched, because they cause burns!



There are no shops or catering sites from Žiogeliai to Merkinė, so you need to take a lunch box.



Bus from Merkinė to Alytus.

Accommodation: in Alytus.

DAY 4



Bus Alytus - Birštonas or private transfer.

Sightseeing in Birštonas.

Accommodation: in Birštonas.



DAY 5



Birštonas - Prienai

→ 10 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Asphalt and paved sidewalks – coastal promenade, pedestrian / bicycle paths, in a small section – gravel road.



Easy



Public bus to Kaunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 6

Sightseeing in Kaunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.





A TOUR OF LITHUANIA'S NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARKS ③

DAY 7



Public bus to Lampėdžiai.



Lampėdžiai - Kulautuva

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Asphalt pavements and pedestrian / bicycle path, in a short section – trails.



Easy

Accommodation: in Kulautuva.



DAY 8



Kulautuva - Vilkija

→ 14 km ⌚ 4 - 5 h



Small country roads with gravel pavement, trails, in a small section – asphalt.



Easy



In wet weather, there may be wet spots and puddles on some sections of the route.



It is worth seeing Vilkija town and trying a round-trip ferry in Vilkija, because such a vehicle is preserved in only a few places in the Baltic States.



Public bus back to Kaunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 9



Kaunas - Šiauliai

Train: Šiauliai - Plungė

Private transfer to the accommodation by Lake Plateliai.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė or Plateliai.

DAY 10



Paplatelė - Plateliai

→ 20 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Forest roads and trails, asphalt pedestrian / bicycle paths and sidewalks, gravel roads.



Easy



During the summer season, there are many holidaymakers around Plateliai Lake.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė or Plateliai.



DAY 11

Private transfer to Plungė.

Train: Plungė - Vilnius (there are 3 trains per day, trip duration ~ 3 h 45 min.).



4 KULDĪGA AND ABAVA RIVER VALLEY



Itinerary: KULDĪGA - SNĒPELE - KULDĪGA - RENDA - SABILE - KANDAVA

Hiking route length: 67 km

Duration: 4 days Difficulty level:

Snēpele (private transfer from Kuldīga or bus 2 times per day)

Kandava (bus to Rīga or to Kuldīga goes 8 times per day)

The trip starts in Kuldīga – a jewel among the old towns in Kurzeme. The town centre is home to historic buildings dating back to the 17th – 19th century. Cobble streets of Kuldīga, old buildings, the river Alekšupīte, running through the town, St. Catherine’s Church and organ music

concerts in it, gourmet restaurants and a country delicatessen shop in the town centre is a great travel experience to enjoy in a leisurely ambience of a small town. The red-brick bridge over the river Venta is a landmark of the town. The widest waterfall of Europe, Ventas rumba (width ~100 m) lies on the Venta. Venta river promenade is a popular place for walking along the riverbank.

A private transfer will take you from Kuldīga to the village of Snēpele, where you will start your hike. The trail will take you to the Pelči Manor, the manor park and the fish ponds “Damba”. Next, the Forest Trail will lead you through the Abava River Valley Nature Park up to the town of Sabile. The latter is home to a winery and cider house “Sabiles Sidra nams”, which offers tastings and sells the local wine and cider. The section along the Abava River Valley Nature Park is the most diverse in terms of landscape and terrain of a river valley in Kurzeme. The river valley with its numerous habitats and vast biodiversity reaches a depth of 30–40 m and is more than 300 m wide. One will find springs, waterfalls, rock outcrops, and boulders here. After the Forest Trail has meandered through meadows, oak forests and hillocks it finally reaches the town of Kandava.

DAY 1

Arrival in Kuldīga.

Sightseeing in Kuldīga.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.

DAY 2

Private transfer Kuldīga - Snēpele.



Snēpele - Kuldīga

21 km 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads, in Snēpele and Kuldīga – asphalt or pavement, promenade with gravel along the shore.



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road and crossing the Kuldīga bypass! There can be hogweeds on the roadsides!



There are no catering sites in the section from Snēpele to Kuldīga, so you need to take a lunch box.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.





DAY 3



Kuldīga - Renda (~0,5 h, 11 buses per day)



Renda - Sabile

→ 25 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Gravel roads, in a small section - trails, in Renda and Sabile - asphalt and pavement.



Medium



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



There are no catering sites in the section from Renda to Sabile, so you need to take a lunch box.

Accommodation: in Sabile or surroundings.



DAY 4

Sightseeing in Sabile. Possible to visit the cider house "Sabiles Sidra nams", the Wine hill of Sabile, Abava winery and vineyard.



Sabile - Kandava

→ 21 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads and dirt roads, in a short section - trails, in Kandava - asphalt, pavement.



Easy



Be careful when crossing the Fishermen's reinforced concrete bridge and walking along the side of the road!

Accommodation: in Kandava, Kuldīga or by bus to Riga.



⑤ FROM TUKUMS TO THE COAST THROUGH THE ĶEMERI NATIONAL PARK



Itinerary: JAUNMOKAS - TUKUMS - MILZKALNE - LAKE VALGUMA - ĶEMERI - BIGAUŅCIEMS

Hiking route length: **57 km / 50 km**

Duration: **3 days** Difficulty level:

Jaunmokas (there are 4 buses per day from Rīga)

Bigauņciems or Ķemeri (there are regular buses/trains going to Rīga)

It is possible to arrive one day earlier in Jaunmokas and overnight in the Jaunmoku Castle. It is recommended to spend at least half a day visiting Tukums.

The tour starts at Jaunmokas Castle estate, where you will also find the Forest Museum. The pride of the castle is its unique painted tile stove (beginning of the 20th century) made of 130 painted tiles featuring 50 different views of the cities Rīga and Jūrmala. The Forest Trails runs along smaller tracks through the Austrumkursā Uplands, the valley of the river Slocene, along Lake Sekļa and Lake Jumprava to finally reach the town of Tukums. Well, the town takes pride in its pots, planters and flower beds with blooming roses along its streets. Next, the route meanders through forests to the demanding hillock of Milzkalns and Lake Valguma, where you will find the barefoot trail and a secluded art space within the woods. The Forest Trail continues to make a stopover at the Ķemeri National Park. The park is dedicated to protection of wetlands, since it is home to one of the largest marshlands of Latvia – the Great Ķemeri bog. As to the town – Ķemeri – it is the former balneological and sulphur springs resort. The tour ends in the village of Bigauņciems, where the Forest Trail joins with the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route (E9 European long distance path). Optionally, one can take a detour along the Lake Sloka trail with its bird-watching tower or pay a visit to the “Forest House” – the visitor’s centre of the Ķemeri National Park.

DAY 1

Arrival in Jaunmokas by bus/train. You can take a train to the station “Tukums I” and then take a taxi to Jaunmokas. Possible to have an excursion in Jaunmoku Castle, there is also a restaurant and accommodation.



Jaunmokas - Tukums

14 km **4 - 5 h**



To Lake Sekļa – gravel roads, between Lake Sekļa and Ozoliņi cemetery – forest trails, in Tukums – pedestrian sidewalks.

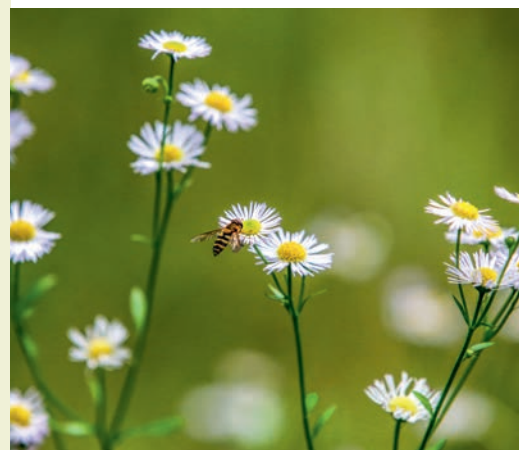


Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road and crossing the road!

Accommodation: in Tukums.





FROM TUKUMS TO THE COAST THROUGH THE ĶEMERI NATIONAL PARK ⑤

DAY 2



Tukums - Lake Valguma

→ 15 km ⌚ 4 - 5 h



Small forest trails, gravel and dirt roads, asphalt in Tukums and Milzkalne.



Easy



There may be damp places on the trails. Be careful when walking along the side of the road and crossing the road!



There is an interesting barefoot trail in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule".

Accommodation: in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule".



DAY 3



Lake Valguma - Ķemeri - Bigauņciems

→ 28 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges.



Hard



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



It is also possible to have a shorter hike only till Ķemeri (21 km) and go by train to Rīga.

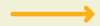
Accommodation: in Bigauņciems and surroundings or in Rīga.



6 ĶEMERI NATIONAL PARK AND JŪRMALA RESORT TOWN





Itinerary: RĪGA - ĶEMERI - BIGAUNČIEMS - DUBULTI - LIELUPE - BULDURI - RĪGA

Hiking route length:  ~ 40 km

Duration: **3 days**

Difficulty level: 

 **Ķemeri** (there are regular trains from Rīga)

 **Bulduri** (there are regular trains to Rīga)

This is an easy 3-day route, suitable for any traveller ready to take some steps outside the capital and get into the woods.

You will start the tour by taking a train from Rīga to Ķemeri.

The walk will start in the Ķemeri resort park leading to the

legendary sulphur spring and continue to the "Forest House" – the visitor's centre of the Ķemeri National Park. The park is established for the protection of mainly wetlands – the shallow coast of the Gulf of Riga, the overgrown seaside lakes, the vast marshlands, mires (forests) and flood plans. Besides, there is the wooden plank Melnalkšņu swamp forest trail. Next, the Forest Trail takes one to the Lake Sloka, a shallow coastal lake with rich aquatic plants, sulphur springs and important migratory bird rest areas. On the banks of it, there is a 7 m high floating bird-watching tower. Further, the Forest Trail runs to the Gulf of Riga in the small fishermen village of Bigauņciems, where it joins with the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route (E9 European long distance path). From there on, the trail runs along the coast direction Jūrmala – the most popular resort town in Latvia with the widest sandy beaches. The tour ends in Ragakāpa Nature Park, which is established to preserve the dunes covered in old pine forests and natural diversity of the seaside. The Jūrmala Open-Air Museum is a place to get to know a traditional local fishermen's farmstead.

DAY 1

Train: Rīga - Ķemeri



Ķemeri - Bigauņciems

 11 km  2 - 3 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges.



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!

Accommodation: in Bigauņciems or surroundings.





DAY 2



Bigauņciems - Dubulti

→ 14,6 km ⌚ 3 - 5 h



Wide sandy beaches from Bigauņciems to Dubulti.



Easy



Be careful when crossing road (P128) in Bigauņciems.

Accommodation: in Jūrmala.



DAY 3



Dubulti - Lielupe - Bulduri

→ 15 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Sandy beaches, forest roads, trails, pavements with asphalt surfaces.



Easy



The wooden parts of the Ragakāpa Nature Trail can be slippery in damp weather.



The estuary of the Lielupe River is a good place for bird watching.

Accommodation: in Jūrmala or Rīga (there are regular trains from Bulduri station to Rīga, trip duration 25 min.).



7 LITHUANIAN AND LATVIAN NATURE PARKS TOUR



DAY 1



Bus Vilnius/Kaunas - Druskininkai

Sightseeing at the Spa resort Druskininkai.

Accommodation: in Druskininkai.

DAY 2



Druskininkai - Žiogeliai



Žiogeliai - Merkinė

→ 25 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Small forest and country roads, gravel roads, in a short section – trails and asphalt (Merkinė), by the castle mounds – stairs.



Medium



The Merkys River must be crossed via the A4 road bridge. You have to cross the road and walk along the side of the road for a few hundred meters. There are hogweeds in the vicinity of the Utieka, which must not be touched, because they cause burns!



There are no shops or catering sites from Žiogeliai to Merkinė, so you need to take a lunch box.

Bus from Merkinė to Vilnius (trip duration 1,5 h, the latest bus at 18:11 in the evening).


Accommodation: in Vilnius.




Itinerary: DRUSKININKAI - ŽIOGELIAI - MERKINĖ - VILNIUS - ŠIAULIAI - DENGILTIS - KURTUVĖNAI - ŠAUKĖNAI - ŠIAULIAI - PLUNGĖ - ŽEMAIČIŲ KALVARIJA - PAPTALTELĖ - PLATELIAI - PLUNGĖ - KLAIPĖDA - LIEPĀJA - KULDĪGA - RENDA - SABILE - KANDAVA - LAKE VALGUMA - ĶEMERI - BIGAUŅCIEMS - RĪGA

Hiking route length: → ~176 km

Duration: **12 days** Difficulty level: ●● / ●●●●

 **Druskininkai** (there are regular buses from Vilnius or Kaunas)

 **Bigauņciems** (there are regular buses to Rīga)

The tour combines the most beautiful southern parts of the Forest Trail in Lithuania and Latvia. The route starts in Druskininkai, Lithuania, and for the next day you will walk through forests of the Dzūkija National Park. After getting to Vilnius and Kurtuvėnai Regional Park, two sections of the Forest Trail will take you from Dengiltis to Šaukėnai. Since it is among the most forested areas of Central Lithuania, the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park with its glaciated valleys is a wonderland of forests, waters and wetlands. The Forest Trail will run along small forest

paths, tourist trails, beautiful tree alleys and wetlands. Next you will take public transportation to reach the Žemaitija National Park, where you will take two sections of the Forest Trail from the pilgrimage town of Žemaičių Kalvarija along the lakes of Plateliai, Ilgis and Beržoras to the town of Plateliai. It is one of the most beautiful towns of Samogitia taking pride in its manor park and the viewing platform on Lake Plateliai. Žemaitija National Park takes pride in its old pine and fir forests, as well as mixed forests.

Next, you will drive through Klaipėda and Liepāja to reach Kuldīga in Latvia. The trip starts in Kuldīga – a jewel among the old towns in Kurzeme. The town centre is home to historic buildings dating back to the 17th – 19th century, Venta waterfall, the old bridge over the river Venta, gourmet restaurants and a local farmer’s store in the centre of the town. From there on the Forest Trail takes you along the riverside promenade in Kuldīga, continues through the nature park “Abavas senleja” from Renda to the wine and cider town Sabile and Kandava. The section along the Abava River Valley Nature Park is the most diverse river valley in Kurzeme in terms of landscapes and terrain. The final section of the tour takes you to the Ķemeri National Park, which is an important place for the protection of wetlands. As to the town – Ķemeri – it is the former balneological and sulphur springs resort. The tour ends on the seaside – the village of Bigauņciems, from where you can easily get to Rīga. Optionally, one can take a detour along the Lake Sloka trail with its bird-watching tower or pay a visit to the “Forest House” – the visitor’s centre of the Ķemeri National Park.



DAY 3

Train: Vilnius - Šiauliai
Private transfer to Dengtiltis.



Dengtiltis - Kurtuvėnai
in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park
→ 15 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Mainly small forest roads and trails, in some places gravel roads, in Kurtuvėnai and in the vicinity - asphalt.



Easy



Steep slopes can be slippery in wet weather.



At this and the next section, it is advisable to carefully follow the markers in nature and use GPX files, because the network of off-road trails is very dense and the terrain is difficult.

Accommodation: in Kurtuvėnai or by Lake Geluva.



DAY 4



Kurtuvėnai - Šaukėnai
in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park
→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Small forest trails and small forest roads, wooden footbridges in wet places, asphalt in Šaukėnai.



Easy



In this section, the Forest Trail intersects with other hiking routes.



Bus to Šiauliai.

Accommodation: in Šiauliai.



DAY 5

Train to Plungė.
Private transfer or public bus to Žemaičių Kalvarija.



Žemaičių Kalvarija - Paplatelė
→ 18 km ⌚ 5 - 6 h



Asphalt (roads, pedestrian / bicycle paths), gravel roads.



Medium

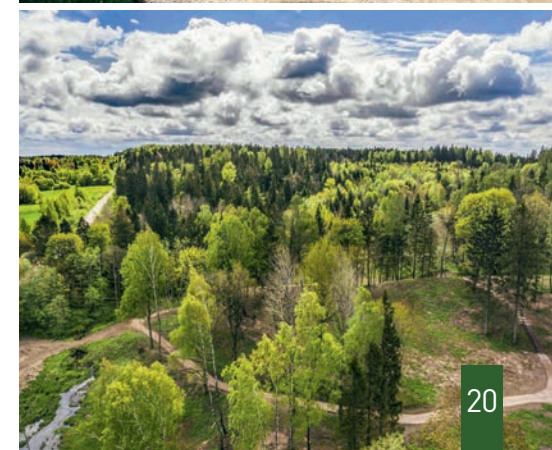
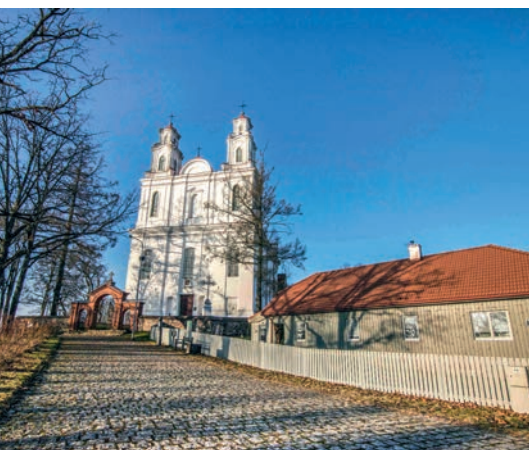


Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



In the summer season, Plokštinės street and the beaches are full of holidaymakers.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė.



7 LITHUANIAN AND LATVIAN NATURE PARKS TOUR



DAY 6



Paplatelė - Plateliai
in Žemaitija National Park
→ 20 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Forest roads and trails,
asphalt pedestrian / bicycle
paths and sidewalks, gravel
roads.

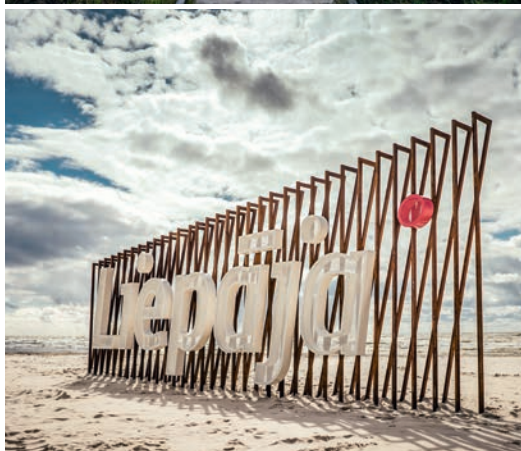
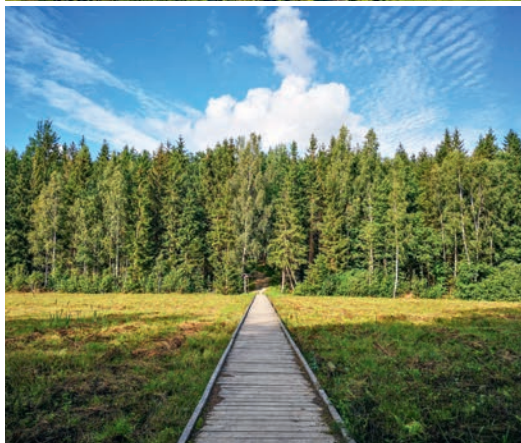


Easy



During the summer season,
there are many holidaymakers
around Lake Plateliai.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė
or Plateliai.



DAY 7

Private transfer to Plungė.
Train Plungė - Klaipėda (trip ~ 1 h);
bus Klaipėda - Liepāja (trip ~ 1,5 h)
Sightseeing in Liepāja.

Accommodation: in Liepāja.

DAY 8



In the morning bus Liepāja -
Kuldīga (trip ~ 1 h 50 min).

Sightseeing in Kuldīga.



**Along the promenade of river
Venta in Kuldīga**

→ (2,5 km in one way)



Asphalt or pavement, prom-
enade with gravel along the
shore.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.



DAY 9



Bus Kuldīga - Renda



Renda - Sabile

→ 25 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Gravel roads, in a small section -
trails, in Renda and Sabile - as-
phalt and pavement.



Medium



There are no catering sites and
shops between Renda and Sabile,
so you need to take the lunch
boxes.

Private transfer to the
accommodation place.

Accommodation: in Sabile or
surroundings - the area of the
Abava River Valley.





DAY 10



Sabile - Kandava

→ 21 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads and dirt roads, in a short section – trails, in Kandava – asphalt, pavement.



Easy



It is worth spending at least half a day visiting Kandava and walking along the Čžu nature trail.



Kandava - Tukums

Accommodation: in Tukums (or can have private transfer to Valgums and overnight in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule").



DAY 11

Train: **Tukums I - Smārde** (trip duration 10 min.) and walk 2,3 km to the start of the Forest Trail.



Jāņukrogs - Ķemeri

→ 21 km ⌚ 4 - 7 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges.



Easy



There is an interesting barefoot trail in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule".

Accommodation: in Ķemeri.

DAY 12



Ķemeri - Bigauņciems

→ 10 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges.



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



Bigauņciems - Rīga





DAY 1

Arrival in Vilnius.

Sightseeing in Vilnius.

Accommodation: in Vilnius.

DAY 2



Vilnius - Druskininkai

→ 130 km

Sights on route:

- **Druskininkai** is a Lithuanian historic health and spa resort with flower gardens, musical fountains, museums and water-park. You can enjoy the Snow Arena and a trip with the air-tram above the river Nemunas.



Hike along the Forest Trail till the Snow Arena (3 km in one way) or till Didžiasalis (11 km) and go back to town by public bus.

Accommodation: in Druskininkai.



Itinerary: VILNIUS - DRUSKININKAI - BIRŠTONAS - KAUNAS - VILKIJA - ARIOGALA - KAULAKIAI - LYDUVĒNAI - ŠILUVA - TYTUVĒNAI - KURTUVĒNAI - ŠIAULIAI - TELŠIAI - PLATELIAI - PAPLATELĒ - SALANTAI - MOSĒDIS - AIZPUTE - KAZDANGA - KULDĪGA - SABILE - KANDAVA - TUKUMS - LAKE VALGUMA - ĶEMERI - JŪRMALA - RĪGA

Hiking route length: → **128 km hiking and 930 km driving**

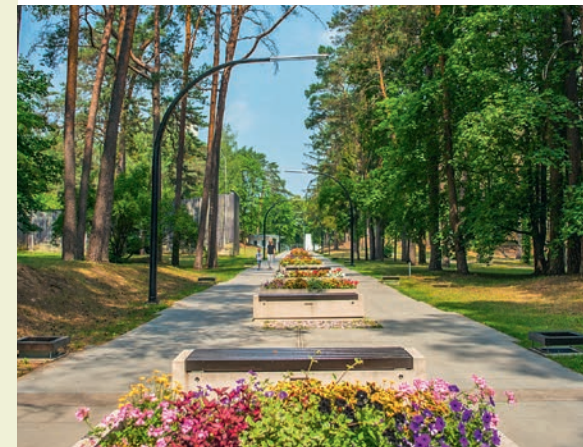
Duration: **15 days** Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Vilnius**

🚩 **Rīga**

The road trip from Vilnius to Rīga will take you to the most beautiful and important sightseeing places of the Forest Trail in Lithuania and its southern part in Latvia.

You will start your tour with the visit of the capital city – Vilnius, then you will go to the historic resort town of Druskininkai, meandering through the town following the route of the Forest Trail. You will then visit the Dzūkija National Park, Merkinė Mound and the resort town of Birštonas, situated in the territory of Nemunas loops regional park. Further you will reach the second largest city in Lithuania – Kaunas, walking through the city along the route of the Forest Trail to finally reach the Panemunė forest. You will then walk along the beautiful banks of the river Nemunas to Vilkija, which boasts of its unique ferry service. Next on the route is the Dubysa Regional Park, which includes the spectacular Dubysa river valley, historic churches and mounds along its banks. Be prepared, since the terrain of this area is rather rolling. Next, you will visit the town of Šiluva, which is a Catholic pilgrimage site, and then travel to the Tytuvėnai Regional Park, where you walk the natural trail of the lake of Gilius, which is part of the Forest Trail. The tour will continue in the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park, where you will walk one section of the Forest Trail from Kurtuvėnai to Šaukėnai, leading along small forest trails, educational trails, beautiful tree alleys and through wetlands. Then you will go to the region of Samogitia, visiting Telšiai and walk one of the Forest Trail sections along Lake Platelė. Next, the tour takes you through the stone town of Mosėdis to Latvia, where you will stop over to have a walk on one of the oldest towns in Latvia – Aizputė, enjoying its 19th century wooden architecture and the local wine brewery. Next you will take a small walk along the Forest Trail in the eye-catching Kazdanga manor park and drive on to the most beautiful town of Kurzeme – Kuldīga. At the end of the tour, you will walk a section of the Forest Trail along the Abava River Valley Nature Park and nature trails in the Ķemeri National Park.





DAY 3



Druskininkai - Grūtas - Merkinė - Birštonas

→ ~95 km

Sights on route:

- **Grūtas Park** where the exhibition was based on the Soviet time monuments demolished during 1989-91 restoration of independence.
- Ancient **castle Hill at Merkinė** provides fine views at the rivers Merkys and Nemunas. There is a 26 m high viewing platform.
- **Birštonas** - a popular resort town by the Nemunas river loops, with the mineral water swimming pools and the highest observation tower in Lithuania (45 m).



Hike in Birštonas along the Forest Trail (5 - 6 km).

Accommodation: in Birštonas.



DAY 4



Birštonas - Prienai - Kaunas

→ ~45 km

Sights on route:

- **Kaunas**, one of the most beautiful Lithuanian cities, is located at the confluence of the Nemunas and the Neris. It is Lithuania's second largest city and former capital. You can see the Old Town, the 9th Fort, Laisvės alėja (Liberty Boulevard), the Kaunas castle, and a vast number of Interwar architecture buildings.
- We suggest you to drive till the Three Virgins Bridge, park the car there and then walk along this bridge and Forest Trail in the **Panemunė Pinewood** (hike 2,6 km in one way).

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 5



Kaunas - Kulautuva - Vilkija - Ariogala - Kaulakiai

→ ~85 km

- Drive Kaunas - Vilkija (30 km), leave the car in Vilkija.
- Public bus: Vilkija - Kulautuva (~15 min.)

- Public bus: Vilkija - Kulautuva (~15 min.)



Kulautuva - Vilkija

→ 16 km ⌚ 5 - 6 h



Drive to Kaulakiai or Kirkšnovė



Small country roads with gravel pavement, trails, in a small section - asphalt.



Easy



In wet weather, there may be wet spots and puddles on some sections of the route.

- **Vilkija ferry** - the only ferry in Lithuania which carries across the river Nemunas.
 - **Vilkija** - an urban monument, a peculiar hill town.
 - **Ariogala** - one of the oldest towns in Lithuania, known since the 13th century.
 - **Kulautuva** has long been famous for its beautiful pine forests, green parks and 1.5 km of clean sandy beach.
- Accommodation:** in Kaulakiai or Kirkšnovė.



DAY 6



Kaulakiai - Šiluva - Tytuvėnai

→ 50 km

Sights on route:

- **Dubysa river valley and Regional Park** - the Dubysa is a beautiful river favoured by nature lovers because of its rapid flow. The Dubysa is shallow and the water is very clear.
- **Lyduvėnai bridge** - the longest and highest railway bridge in the Baltic States.
- **Šiluva** - a town surrounded by forests, an important Catholic-pilgrimage site.
- **Tytuvėnai Regional Park** - the most valuable natural asset of the park is lakes surrounded by wetlands — an important habitat for many animals and birds, including thousands of cranes. It is possible to hike along the Gylis lake trail (3,3 km), which is a part of the Forest Trail.

Accommodation: in Tytuvėnai.



DAY 7



Tytuvėnai - Kurtuvėnai - Šiauliai

→ 65 km

Leave the car in Kurtuvėnai.



Kurtuvėnai - Šaukėnai

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Small forest trails and small forest roads, wooden footbridges in wet places, asphalt in Šaukėnai.



Easy



In this section, the Forest Trail intersects with other hiking routes.



Public bus back to the car in Kurtuvėnai (~20 min.).

Sights on route:

- Kurtuvėnai manor barn and Kurtuvėnai Regional Park Visitor centre.
- Kurtuvėnai Live Horse Museum.
- Juodlė lake cognitive path.

Accommodation: in Šiauliai.

DAY 8



Šiauliai - Telšiai - Paplatelė

→ ~109 km

Sights on route:

- **Telšiai** - the city is located in the Samogitia Upland, on seven hills by the beautiful Lake Mastis and the Durbinas stream. It is worth taking a walk around the city of Telšiai, see the Amphitheatre, exploring the most important sights or admiring the view of Lake Mastis while walking along its shore.
- **Germantas and Lake Ilgis cognitive trails** which are part of the Forest Trail. The Ilgis lake trail is ~ 1,2 km long around the lake, but the total length of the trails are ~12,4 km.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė.

DAY 9



Paplatelė - Plateliai

in Žemaitija National Park

→ 20 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Forest roads and trails, asphalt pedestrian / bicycle paths and sidewalks, gravel roads.



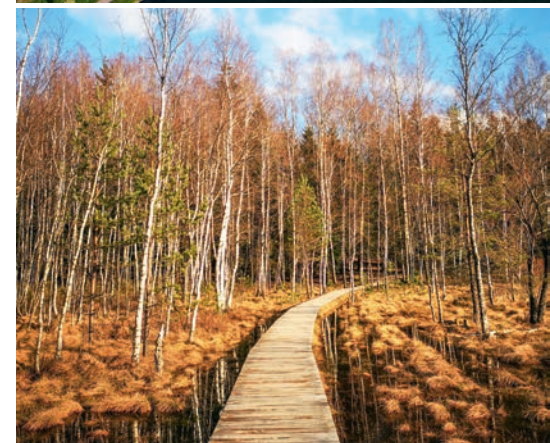
Easy



During the summer season, there are many holidaymakers around Lake Plateliai.

Private transfer back to hotel.

Accommodation: in Paplatelė.





DAY 10



Paplatelė - Salantai - Mosėdis - Aizpute

→ ~112 km

Sights on route:

- **Salantai town** - can visit the Salantai park, which is located on the banks of Salantas river.
- **Mosėdis town** - one of the oldest towns in Žemaitija, also known as the “Capital of Stones”, it is famous for its stone museum.
- **Hike along the ~3.5 km long trail** around Mosėdis pond. It starts at the Vaclovas Intas Museum of Rare Stones and ends at the Mosėdis mound.
- **Gramzda Forest Park** with an open-air cinema.
- **Swedish gate** in Priekule.
- **Aizpute** - one of the oldest cities in Latvia. The authentic wood architecture of Aizpute from the 19th century is a European cultural heritage. Ruins of a castle of the Livonian Order, a stone bridge over the river Tebra, water mills, estates. You can also visit the Aizpute winery.

Accommodation: in Aizpute.



DAY 11



Aizpute - Kazdanga - Snēpele - Pelči - Kuldīga

→ ~60 km



Forest Trail hike in Kazdanga

→ 7 - 9 km ⌚ 2 h



Paths and park trails



Easy

During this hike, you will see the Kazdanga castle complex and manor park, which is one of the biggest estate parks in Latvia (196 ha), beautiful landscapes with wooden sculptures, an observation tower and a boulder grotto.

- **Ostrich farm “Nornieki”** and restaurant “[ar putniem]”.
- **Kuldīga** - one of the most attractive towns of Kurzeme with architectural heritage of 17th and 18th century buildings. You can see the Venta river waterfall and the Old brick bridge across the Venta.
- **Hike along the Venta river promenade** (2,4 km in one way) in Kuldīga, which is a part of the Forest Trail.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.



DAY 12



Kuldīga - Renda - Sabile - Kalnmuiža

→ ~52 km

Private transfer to Sabile.



Sabile - Kalnmuiža

→ ~9 km ⌚ ~ 2 - 3 h



Gravel roads and dirt roads, in a short section – trails.



Easy

Accommodation: in Kalnmuiža surroundings.



DAY 13



Kalnmužiža - Kandava - Tukums - Lake Valguma

→ 54 km



Valgums - Ķemeri

→ 21 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges.



Easy



There is an interesting barefoot trail in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule".

Private transfer back to Lake Valguma.

Accommodation: in the leisure complex "Valguma Pasaule".



DAY 14



Lake Valguma - Ķemeri - Lake Sloka - Jūrmala - Rīga

→ ~109 km

Sights on route:

- Hike: **Melnalkšņu swamp forest trail** (0,6 km) and **Sloka lake nature trail** (3,1 km) and climb the wooden bird watching tower.
- Hike along the beach in Jūrmala resort town from Dubulti till Bulduri (~6 km).

Accommodation: in Rīga.

DAY 15

Sightseeing in Rīga.

Departure.





Itinerary: NIDA - PERVALKA - JUODKRANTĖ - SMILTYNĖ - KLAIPĖDA

Hiking route length: 59 km

Duration: **3 days** Difficulty level:

Nida (can arrive by bus from Klaipėda)

Klaipėda

It is possible to go to Nida 1 day earlier and stay overnight there.

This tour will take you on a walk through the Curonian Spit from Nida to Smiltynė. The Curonian Spit National Park is located on a long, sand-dune spit that separates the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea coast. A sand beach of ~50 km is running on the western side of the dune spit,

while the shore of the Curonian Lagoon is shallow and characteristic of ridged bays overgrown with reeds. The Baltic Coastal Hiking Route starts in the centre of Nida near the port. In Nida, it runs along the Curonian Lagoon promenade, offering beautiful views of the spacious waters. From Nida to Bulvikio Cape, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route winds along small forest paths leading up and down pine-covered dunes; in the village of Preila, the trail runs along the promenade of the lagoon. Between Pervalka and Juodkrantė, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route leads along a beautiful, sandy beach. You can take the Ragany kalnas (Hill of Witches) trail in Juodkrantė. The route alternates between the Baltic Sea coast, the dunes and the Curonian Lagoon until it finally reaches the ferry, which will take you to Klaipėda.

DAY 1



Klaipėda - Nida



Nida - Pervalka

18 km 4 - 6 h



Pavement, pedestrian paths and promenade in populated areas. Forest trails with natural surface elsewhere and sand in some places.



Easy



At high water (in early spring and late autumn), a short section of the trail between Nida and Preila may be flooded. Be careful at the washed-out coastline as it can easily collapse!

Accommodation: in Pervalka.

DAY 2



Pervalka - Juodkrantė

18 km 4 - 6 h



Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement and cobblestones in populated areas.



Easy



From Pervalka, it is recommended to take the circular nature trail (4-5 km) along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon to Horse Cape, which offers amazing views of the Nagliai Dune.

Accommodation: in Juodkrantė.



DAY 3



Juodkrantė - Klaipėda

23 km 6 - 8 h



Single-track forest trails and other trails, sandy beaches, paved beachside walkways.



Medium



Be careful when crossing the main road on the Curonian Spit (No. 167).



Check the ferry timetable in advance from Smiltynė to Klaipėda: www.keltas.lt. The New Ferry is used by vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, while the Old Ferry is available only to pedestrians and cyclists.




You can walk to the pier (an additional 2 km out and back) from the Sea Museum (1.5 km from the Old Ferry).

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.



DAY 1

Arrival in Klaipėda.

 Bus Klaipėda - Nida

Time to explore the resort town Nida.

Accommodation: in Nida.

DAY 2



Nida - Pervalka

→ 18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Pavement, pedestrian paths, promenades in populated areas. Forest trails with natural surface elsewhere and sand in some places.



Easy



At high water (in early spring and late autumn), a short section of the trail between Nida and Preila may be flooded. Be careful at the washed-out coastline as it can easily collapse!


Accommodation: in Pervalka or surroundings.



Itinerary: NIDA - PERVALKA - JUODKRANTĖ - SMILTYNĖ - KLAIPĖDA - PALANGA - ŠVENTOJI

Hiking route length: → 107 km

Duration: **6 days** Difficulty level: 

 **Nida** (can reach by bus from Klaipėda)

 **Šventoji** (by bus to Klaipėda, 6 buses per day)

This tour includes a walk along the Baltic Sea coast in Lithuania through the Curonian Spit from Nida to Smiltynė (see a detailed description under tour No. 9) and continues further north from Klaipėda to Šventoji located at the Lithuanian/Latvian border. Klaipėda and Palanga are popular seaside resorts with lots of pubs,

hotels, street cafés and musicians. Klaipėda is the only port city and the third largest city in Lithuania. Šventoji is also a popular seaside town located next to the mouth of the river Šventoji. Between Klaipėda and Palanga, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route leads through the Seaside Regional Park (Lithuanian: Pajūrio regioninis parkas). It was founded for the protection of coastal and marine landscapes, biodiversity and local cultural heritage. The most famous place of the seaside is the Dutch Hat (also called Dutch Cap, Dutchman's Cap or Holland's Cap) – a 20 m high cliff, which used to serve as a landmark and guide for seafarers and fishermen.



DAY 3



Pervalka - Juodkrantė

→ 18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement and cobblestones in populated areas.



Easy



From Pervalka, it is recommended to take the circular nature trail (4-5 km) along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon to Horse Cape, which offers amazing views of the Dead Dunes.

Accommodation: in Juodkrantė.



DAY 4



Juodkrantė - Klaipėda

→ 23 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Single-track forest trails and other trails, sandy beaches, paved beachside walkways.



Medium



Be careful when crossing the main road on the Curonian Spit (No. 167).



Check the ferry timetable in advance from Smiltynė to Klaipėda: www.keltas.lt. The New Ferry is used by vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, while the Old Ferry is available only to pedestrians and cyclists.



You can walk to the pier (an additional 2 km out and back) from the Sea Museum (1.5 km from the Old Ferry).

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.



DAY 5



Klaipėda - Palanga

→ 29 km ⌚ 8 - 10 h



Mostly sandy or sandy/pebbly beaches and single-track forest trails, short sections of wooden walkways. Pavement with hard surface in Klaipėda and Palanga.



Hard



Keep a safe distance from the seaside bluffs. They are soft and can easily collapse under you!



It is possible to do a shorter hike till Karklė and have private transfer to Palanga.

Accommodation: in Palanga.



DAY 6



Palanga - Šventoji

→ 19 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Mostly sandy beaches, narrow forest trails. Pavement with a hard surface in Palanga and Šventoji.



Easy

Accommodation: in Šventoji or go by bus to Klaipėda.



11 RUSNĖ AND THE CURONIAN LAGOON



DAY 1

Arrival in Šilutė.



Bus to Rusnė.



Around Rusnė Island

→ 23 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h



Gravel roads and footpaths over the Rusnė polders. Approximately 10 km of paved road between the villages of Uostadvaris and Rusnė.



Medium



Exercise caution when walking on the side of the road!



Rusnė Island is an excellent place to observe birds during spring and autumn migration.



The route can be done in either direction. It is worth walking through the tiny streets of Rusnė Village to see its beautiful two-storey wooden buildings with tile roofs and elaborate ornaments. It is possible to travel from Uostadvaris to Nida on the Curonian Spit by boat: www.mingeskaimas.lt/en/.

Accommodation: in Rusnė.



Itinerary: ŠILUTĖ - RUSNĖ - ŠILUTĖ - VENTĖ

Hiking route length: → 58 km

Duration: **3 days** Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Rusnė** (3 buses per day from Šilutė and regular buses to Šilutė from Klaipėda)

🚩 **Ventė** (can have ferry from Ventė to Nida in summer season or private transfer to Klaipėda)

This tour will take you exploring the peculiar island of Rusnė and the delta of the river Nemunas in Lithuania. The island of Rusnė in the Nemunas Delta Regional Park is enclosed by waters of the river Nemunas and its tributaries. It is a resting place for migratory birds and home to a cormorant colony. The area of the island is 45 km²

and it is connected to the mainland by a bridge. The island of Rusnė is the lowest place in Lithuania, lying below sea level. The historic centre of the town Rusnė is characteristic of authentic wooden architecture, buildings painted in bright colours, colourful window shutters and decorations. The Baltic Coastal Hiking Route leads through the small town of Šilutė, revealing architecture that was once common to East Prussia. From Šilutė to Kintai, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route runs along a low plain. To protect this area from flood waters of Nemunas, there is a system of dams, polders and canals established. After crossing the river Minija, the route invites you to visit the ethnographic village of Minija. Here you can enjoy the lowland landscape of the seaside region with vast wetlands and ponds.





DAY 2



Rusnė - Šilutė

→ 9 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Mostly pedestrian lanes, all hard surface: pavement and cobblestones.



Easy

Accommodation: in Šilutė.

DAY 3

Private transfer to Kintai.



Kintai - Ventė

→ 16 km ⌚ 3 - 4 h



Mostly paved roads, also gravel roads.



Medium

Accommodation: in Kintai or Ventė (can organise private transfer to Klaipėda on the next day or boat to Nida).





Itinerary: NIDA - KLAIPĒDA - PALANGA - ŠVENTOJI - LIEPĀJA - UŽAVA - VENTSPILS - ĶEMERI - JŪRMALA

Hiking route length: 70 km

Duration: **7 days** Difficulty level:

Nida (by bus from Klaipėda)

Bulduri - Jūrmala (there are regular trains to Rīga)

This tour leads to the popular seaside resort towns in Lithuania and Latvia, from Nida on the Curonian Spit to Jūrmala on the Gulf of Riga.

The first stage of the route runs through the Curonian Spit to the city of Klaipėda with its symbol – the wooden sailing ship – and its old town resembling German towns in terms

of architecture. You will then visit the Lithuanian summer beach capital Palanga with some of its top sights being the Botanical Park, the Amber Museum, the pedestrian street of J. Basanavičius and the Sea Pier. Next, the route will take you to the former fishermen village of Šventoji, now a resort town, near which the Žemaičių alkas (Samogitian Sanctuary) is located – an ancient pagan sanctuary. After crossing the border of Lithuania/Latvia you will reach Liepāja – known as the windiest city in Latvia. Should you be interested in military heritage, you will find that in the former military port of Karosta. The tour continues to reach Ventspils, another seaside city. Here, you can go on a voyage on a small vessel on the river Venta river and out to the sea, walk along the river-side, go for a ride on the narrow-gauge train called “Mazbānītis”, marvel at greenery in the form of clocks made of flowers, spot the iconic cows of Ventspils – multiple sculptures scattered around the city streets. At the end of the tour, you will drive to Jūrmala and walk on the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route through the longest Latvian resort cities boasting with its widest sandy beaches.

DAY 1

Arrival in Nida.

Sightseeing in Nida.

Accommodation: in Nida.

DAY 2



Nida - Pervalka

18 km 4 - 6 h



Pavement, pedestrian paths and promenades in populated areas. Forest trails with natural surface elsewhere and sand in some places.



Easy



Be careful at the washed-out coastline as it can easily collapse!



In spring and early summer, various species of birds nest in the Curonian Lagoon, therefore visitors are urged to be especially quiet so as not to disturb the birds during nesting and feeding.



Bus to Klaipėda.

Evening walk in Klaipėda, port town.

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.





DAY 3



Bus Klaipėda - Palanga



Palanga and Botanical park

→ (2-3 km in one way)

Possible to visit the Palanga manor and park, Amber Museum, as well as the Palanga pedestrian bridge.

Accommodation: in Palanga.



DAY 4



Bus Palanga - Šventoji.
Can visit the pagan sanctuary near Šventoji.



Šventoji - LT/LV border - Nida - Pape

→ 17 km ⌚ 6 - 7 h



Pavement with a hard surface in Šventoji, sandy and pebbly beaches, occasionally fine gravel. Near Nida – several kilometres of pebbly beach. In places, the pebbles form outcrops of several tens of centimetres, created by the waves. In Pape, the roads are covered in gravel.



Medium



The state border along the coastline can be crossed at any time; hikers must always carry valid personal identification documents.



There are no services available near the border.

It is worth to visit the Pape Ҷoғи ancient fishermen village with the Open-air Museum "Vītolnieki".

Private transfer to Liepāja.

Accommodation: in Liepāja.

DAY 5

Sightseeing in Liepāja. It is worth seeing the Rose Square, concert hall "Lielais Dzintars", O. Kalpaks bridge and other places.



Liepāja - Karosta - Northern pier

→ 6,5 km



Bus back to Liepāja centre.

Accommodation: in Liepāja.





DAY 6



Bus to Užava.
Possible to visit the Užava light house, Užava brewery.



Užava - Ventspils

→ 20 km ⌚ 7 - 9 h



Sandy, pebbly beaches (starting from small to big pebbles), in some places, stones. The seashore undergoes noticeable change after storms: it can be seen in the washed away shore where pebble zones alternate with sand zones.



Medium



The bluffs: it is forbidden to climb them, as it can cause landslides and landfalls of sand and soil.



There are no services between Užava and Ventspils.

Sightseeing in Ventspils.

Accommodation: in Ventspils.



DAY 7



Bus Ventspils - Ķemeri

Walk 1 km to the Ķemeri train station.

Possible to see the Ķemeri historical resort town with a landscape park, a renovated water tower and sulphur water spring. You can also walk 2,5 km till the Ķemeri National Park Information centre and Melnalkšņi swamp forest trail (0,6 km long).

Train Ķemeri - Dubulti



Dubulti - Bulduri

→ 5 km



Sandy beaches.



Easy



In summer months there can be many people at the beach.

Train to Riga.






GRAND COASTAL HIKING TOUR ALONG THE LITHUANIAN AND LATVIAN NATIONAL AND NATURE PARKS

13





Itinerary: KLAIPĒDA - ŠILUTĒ - RUSNĒ - UOSTADVARIS - NIDA - KLAIPĒDA - PALANGA - ŠVENTOJI - PAPE - BERNĀTI - LIEPĀJA - ZIEMUPE - PĀVILOSTA - VENTSPILS - MAZIRBE - KOLKA - MĒRSRAGS - ENGURE - JŪRMALA - RĪGA

Hiking route length:  ~195 - 202 km

Duration: **16 days**

Difficulty level: 

 **Rusnē** (by bus from Šilutē and Klaipēda)  **Jūrmala** (there are regular trains to Rīga)

This long-distance tour follows the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route from the Lithuanian coast, starting on the island of Rusnē and continuing to the Curonian Spit, running along the Baltic Sea coast to Cape Kolka and finally reaching Rīga. On this route you will hike some sections of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route and experience the diversity of coastal landscapes: rocky beaches, steep shores, overgrown beaches, bird migration sites, vast sandy beaches. You will walk on solitary beaches with no-one in sight for several kilometres just to suddenly find yourself in lively resort towns. There are both sections of hiking and bus transfers along the route.

Initially you will visit the peculiar island of Rusnē with its bird migration sites, observation towers and the delta of the river Nemunas, which is Lithuania's lowest point. Next, a ferry will take you to the just-as-impressive Curonian Spit – a lengthy spit of sand-dunes extending into the Baltic Sea of the coast of Lithuania. Here you will walk two sections of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route enjoying the magnificent dunes and visiting the Lithuanian Sea Museum and the Dolphinarium. Then, heading north along the coast through the Seaside Regional Park, you will reach the Lithuanian beach capital Palanga and pay a visit to the Amber Museum. Crossing the Lithuanian/Latvian border on foot you will stop over at the Pape Nature Park and enjoy its lighthouse, wild horses, the authentic fishermen village and local museum. The walk on lone beaches takes you to the top of the highest dune in Latvia – the Pūsēnu dune – and afterwards continues to reach the village of Bernāti. Next on the route is the windy seaside city of Liepāja, also known as the Latvian capital of rock-music. Karosta is another distinctive site in Liepāja – it is the former military town and nearly every street of this part of the city has some footprints of its military heritage. Heading further, your feet will take you through the solitary beaches of Ziemupe to the village of Pāvilosta. If you are lucky, you might find some ambers washed ashore. Pāvilosta is a small charming village with a marina and some notes of smoked fish lingering in the air. Moving on, from Ventspils through Slītere National Park, through the Livonian fishermen villages to finally reach the Kolka Cape – the meeting point of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. Also, a top site for bird watching. At the end of the tour, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route leads to Engure Nature Park, meandering through reed trails running between the villages of Mērsrags and Engure. The tour ends in Jūrmala with its wide sandy beaches, the bustling urban life of a resort town, impressive villas and summer cottages, and the Ragakāpa Nature Park in the resort's neighborhood Lielupe.

curonian Spit – a lengthy spit of sand-dunes extending into the Baltic Sea of the coast of Lithuania. Here you will walk two sections of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route enjoying the magnificent dunes and visiting the Lithuanian Sea Museum and the Dolphinarium. Then, heading north along the coast through the Seaside Regional Park, you will reach the Lithuanian beach capital Palanga and pay a visit to the Amber Museum. Crossing the Lithuanian/Latvian border on foot you will stop over at the Pape Nature Park and enjoy its lighthouse, wild horses, the authentic fishermen village and local museum. The walk on lone beaches takes you to the top of the highest dune in Latvia – the Pūsēnu dune – and afterwards continues to reach the village of Bernāti. Next on the route is the windy seaside city of Liepāja, also known as the Latvian capital of rock-music. Karosta is another distinctive site in Liepāja – it is the former military town and nearly every street of this part of the city has some footprints of its military heritage. Heading further, your feet will take you through the solitary beaches of Ziemupe to the village of Pāvilosta. If you are lucky, you might find some ambers washed ashore. Pāvilosta is a small charming village with a marina and some notes of smoked fish lingering in the air. Moving on, from Ventspils through Slītere National Park, through the Livonian fishermen villages to finally reach the Kolka Cape – the meeting point of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. Also, a top site for bird watching. At the end of the tour, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route leads to Engure Nature Park, meandering through reed trails running between the villages of Mērsrags and Engure. The tour ends in Jūrmala with its wide sandy beaches, the bustling urban life of a resort town, impressive villas and summer cottages, and the Ragakāpa Nature Park in the resort's neighborhood Lielupe.

DAY 1



Bus Klaipēda - Šilutē, Šilutē - Rusnē

Accommodation: in Rusnē.

DAY 2



Around Rusnē Island from Rusnē till Uostadvaris

 15 km  4 - 5 h



Gravel roads and footpaths over the Rusnē polders.



Medium



Exercise caution when walking on the side of the road!



Rusnē Island is an excellent place to observe birds during spring and autumn migration.

Ferry from Uostadvaris to Nida (the last ferry at 17:00).

Accommodation: in Nida.





DAY 3



Nida - Pervalka

→ 18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Pavement, pedestrian paths and promenades in populated areas. Forest trails with natural surface elsewhere and sand in some places.



Easy



At high water (in early spring and late autumn), a short section of the trail between Nida and Preila may be flooded. Be careful at the washed-out coastline as it can easily collapse!

Accommodation: in Pervalka.



DAY 4



Pervalka - Juodkrantė

→ 18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement in populated areas.



Easy



From Pervalka, it is recommended to take the circular nature trail (4-5 km) along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon to Horse Cape, which offers amazing views of the Dead Dunes.

Accommodation: in Juodkrantė.

DAY 5



Bus to Smiltynė.

Can visit the Lithuanian Sea Museum and Dolphinarium (1,5 km from the Smiltynė bus stop).

Ferry to Klaipėda.

Sightseeing in Klaipėda.

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.



DAY 6



Private transfer to Karklė (~25 min.).



Karklė - Palanga

→ 12km ⌚ 3 - 4 h



Mostly sandy or sandy/pebbly beaches and single-track forest trails.



Easy



In the Seaside Regional Park, the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route runs along the beach, which is part of a nature reserve. It is prohibited to walk anywhere else than the beach.

Accommodation: in Palanga.





DAY 7



Palanga - Šventoji



Šventoji - LT/LV border - Nida - Pape

→ 17 km ⌚ 6 - 7 h



Pavement with a hard surface in Šventoji, sandy and pebbly beaches, occasionally fine gravel. Near Nida – several kilometres of pebbly beach. In places, the pebbles form outcrops of several tens of centimetres, created by the waves. In Pape, the roads are covered in gravel.



Medium



The state border along the coastline can be crossed at any time; hikers must always carry valid personal identification documents. There are no services available near the border.

It is worth to visit the Pape ȶoņi ancient fishermen village with the Open-air Museum "Vitolnieki".

Accommodation: in Pape.



Medium



The only shops in the coastal area from the Latvian-Lithuanian border to Bernāti are located in Jūrmalciems.

Accommodation: in Bernāti.



DAY 9



Bus to Liepāja.

Sightseeing and a little hike in Liepāja.

Accommodation: in Liepāja.



DAY 10



Private transfer to Ziemepe.



Ziemepe - Pāvilosta

→ 21 km ⌚ 7 - 9 h



Sandy, pebbly (with little pebbles), occasionally wide (near Akmensrags), occasionally narrower sandy beaches. In Pāvilosta, asphalt.



Easy



No shops or catering is available between Ziemepe and Pāvilosta.

Accommodation: in Pāvilosta.



DAY 8



Pape - Bernāti

→ 25 km ⌚ 8 - 10 h



Sandy and pebbly beaches, occasionally soft sand, which makes walking difficult. There are wide sandy beaches around Jūrmalciems and Bernāti.



DAY 11



Bus from Pāvilosta to Ventspils.

Sightseeing in Ventspils.

Accommodation: in Ventspils.



DAY 12



Private transfer to Sīkrags.



Sīkrags - Mazirbe - Košrags

→ 11 km ⌚ 3 - 4 h



Sandy beaches, forest trails and gravel roads. In Mazirbe village, asphalt.



Easy



You can wade across the small river Mazirbe during low water (there is a bridge ~ 0,5 km away from the sea).



The only shop is located in Mazirbe village, so you need to buy something for dinner.

Accommodation: in Košrags.



DAY 13



Košrags - Kolka

→ 18 km ⌚ 7 - 8 h



Gravel roads, sandy beach.



Easy



There are no shops and



catering places during this day, the only place is in Kolka.

Accommodation: in Kolka.

DAY 14

Free morning in Kolka.

In the afternoon the bus Kolka - Mērsrags (~1 h 20 min.).

Excursion: in Mērsrags, nature reserve, trail, sightseeing tower.

Accommodation: in Mērsrags.

DAY 15



Mērsrags - Engure

→ 22 km ⌚ 7 - 9 h



Beaches covered in sand and fine gravel, coastal meadows, small trails, forest roads. Asphalt in the villages, a small section of gravel road.



Medium



The coastal meadows can be bypassed using the roads and trails in the villages. The river Engure can be crossed via bridge.



You should avail yourself of binoculars for bird watching, suitable (closed) footwear and walking poles for support.

Accommodation: in Engure.

DAY 16



Engure - Ragaciems

Hike option 1:



Ragaciems - Dubulti

→ 22 km ⌚ 7 - 9 h

Hike option 2:



Dubulti - Lielupe - Bulduri

→ 15 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



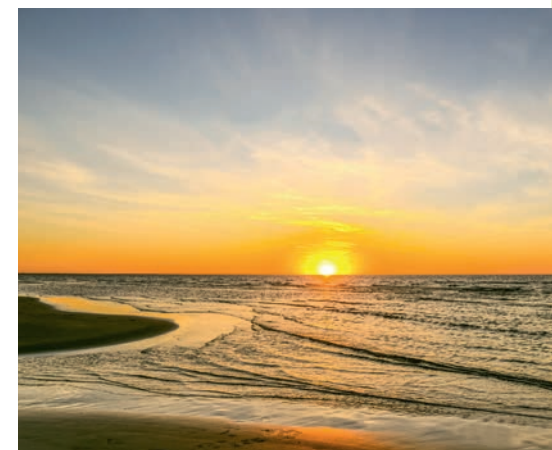
In the surroundings of Ragaciems village: small pieces of dolomite, some boulders, gravel. Other places and sandy beaches and sidewalks.



Easy

Train to Rīga.

Accommodation: in Rīga.





THE GREAT LOOP ALONG THE SEACOAST AND THROUGH INLAND FORESTS: FOREST TRAIL AND BALTIC COASTAL HIKING IN LATVIA AND LITHUANIA (self-drive + hiking)

14



DAY 1

Arrival in Rīga.

Accommodation: in Rīga.

DAY 2



Rīga - Jūrmala - Ķemeri National Park - Lake Valguma

→ 67 km

Sightseeing and walking in Jūrmala resort town.

Leave the car in Ķemeri.



Ķemeri - Lake Sloka - Bigauņciems

→ 11 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



The Forest Trail at this section nearby Ķemeri overlaps with the pedestrian and bicycle route “Zaļā kāpa” [The Green Dune], which is marked white-yellow-white paint on the trees.

Private transfer back to the car.

Accommodation: in Valguma.



Itinerary: RĪGA - JŪRMALA - ĶEMERI - BIGAUŅCIEMS - LAKE VALGUMA - KANDAVA - SABILE - KULDĪGA - JŪRKALNE - PĀVILOSTA - LIEPĀJA - PAPE - PALANGA - KLAIPĒDA - CURONIAN SPIT - NIDA - PERVALKA - JUODKRANTĒ - KLAIPĒDA - PAPLATELĒ - PLATELIAI - TELŠIAI - BUOŽĒNAI - KURTUVĒNAI - ŠAUKĒNAI - ŠIAULIAI - RĪGA

Hiking route length: → ~ 825 km driving, ~140 km hiking

Duration: 13 days

Difficulty level: ●●

🇱🇻 Rīga

🇱🇻 Rīga (or Vilnius)

This tour can be done with your own or rented car and it includes driving, some hiking parts and transfers with the public transport. This grand Forest Trail and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route tour includes some of the best and most beautiful parts of the Forest Trail and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route in Lithuania and the southern part of Latvia. Hikes are combined with trips and excursions in cities, as well as other popular tourist sights in both countries. You will get a detailed impression about the forest diversity, coastal landscape and most popular national and regional nature parks in Latvia and Lithuania.

You will start the tour in Rīga, where you will enjoy the beautiful Old town included in UNESCO and Art Nouveau district. Then you will drive to Ķemeri National Park, where you will have some small hiking along the Forest Trail till the place Bigauņciems, where the Forest Trail meets the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route. After that you will hike along the Forest Trail in the beautiful Abava River valley and see Sabile - the wine and cider town. Then you will reach the most charming Kurzeme town - Kuldīga with its old town streets, the bridge over river Venta, the promenade and waterfall. Afterwards you will drive to the coast and have some hike along the most outstanding bluffs around the Baltic Sea. Then you will also see Liepāja - the windy city and hike in the Pape Nature Park. Further the tour will bring you to Lithuania and its Baltic Coastal Hiking Route part. You will see the resort town Palanga, Klaipėda and hike in the Curonian Spit from Pervalka to Juodkrantė to see the interesting sand dunes. Further you will drive from Klaipėda to Paplatelė and enjoy a 1 day hiking in Žemaitija National Park. Then you will drive to Telšiai and explore the Lake Germantas and landscape reserve along small forest paths and wooden footbridges. At the end of the tour you will go for a 1 day hike in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park which is one of the most forested areas in Central Lithuania with very pronounced glacier-shaped terrain forms spread in the Eastern Žemaitija Upland.



DAY 3



Valgums - Tukums - Kandava

→ 42 km

Private transfer from Kandava to Sabile.

Sights on route:

- **Sabile** - romantic, small town of Kurzeme, which is located in the most beautiful and deepest part of the Abava valley, you can see the Wine Hill, visit the winery and cidery to taste the local made drinks.
- **Kalnmuīža manor**.
- **Kandava** - ancient architecture, cobbled streets, lanterns, mountainous terrain and beautiful nature views as well as the Abava bridge and possibility to taste the coffee made from oak acorns.



Sabile - Plosti - Kandava

→ 21 km Ⓛ 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads and dirt roads, in a short section – trails, in Kandava – asphalt, pavement.



Easy



Be careful when crossing the Fishermen's reinforced concrete bridge and walking along the side of the road!

Accommodation: in Kandava.



DAY 4



Kandava - Kuldīga

→ 60 km

Private transfer to Pelči.

Sights on route:

- **"Mazsālijas" deer garden**, wine cellar and tastings.
- **Pelči** palace and park with the ponds.
- **Peony garden** "Ziedoņi".
- **Sightseeing in Kuldīga**. One of the most attractive towns of Kurzeme with architectural heritage of 17th and 18th century buildings.



Pelči - Kuldīga

→ 11 km



Gravel roads, in Snēpele and Kuldīga – asphalt or pavement, promenade with gravel along the shore.



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road and crossing the Kuldīga bypass! There can be hogweeds on the roadsides!

Alternatives: Can add one extra day in Kuldīga to explore this nice town.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.





DAY 5



Kuldīga - Alsunga - Jūrkalne / Labrags

→ 40 km

Leave the car in Jūrkalne or Labrags.

Sights on route:

- **Ēdole castle.**
- **Alsunga village** - the centre of the Suiči historical region, which is a small Catholic community in the Lutheran western part of Latvia. You can try their nice national costumes and taste their traditional carrot bun called "sklandrausis".
- **The steep shore of the Baltic Sea in Jūrkalne** - they are up to 20 m high, washed by the waves and mostly made of sand and narrow bands of pebbles and stones.



Jūrkalne / Labrags - Pāvilosta

→ 16 - 20 km

⌚ 7 - 9 h



Sandy, pebbly beaches (with pebbles of different sizes), beaches covered in small stones. Near Pāvilosta and Jūrkalne: wide sandy beaches.



Hard



The bluffs collapse as the sea washes away the shore and the rain water washes out their slopes. You can come across landslides, landfalls, rockfalls, so the bluffs cannot be used for moving forward. To this end, stairs have been installed in many places. Landfalls mostly occur during storms or after them, as well as after heavy showers, but may also occur at other times.



Public bus or private transfer from Pāvilosta back to the cars.

Jūrkalne / Labrags - Pāvilosta

→ 21 km

Accommodation: in Pāvilosta.

DAY 6



Pāvilosta - Liepāja

→ 53 km

- Morning in **Pāvilosta town.**
- **Sightseeing in Liepāja.** You can visit the Liepāja beach, Rose square, the Great Amber Concert hall and the Karosta former military town.



Liepāja - Karosta - Northern pier

→ 6,5 km in one way

Accommodation: in Liepāja.



DAY 7



Liepāja - Pape - Palanga - Klaipėda

→ 117 km

Sights on route:

- **Pape Nature Park** - possible to see the Pape lighthouse, the Koņi historical fishermen village, museum also the wild horses.



Pape lighthouse - Pape Koņi village - Pape lighthouse

→ 5,5 - 6 km

- **Palanga** sightseeing, it is worth walking along the pedestrian J. Basanavičius Street and see the symbol of Palanga - the pedestrian bridge.

- **Klaipėda** - an important port city in Lithuania.

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.





DAY 8

Ferry: Klaipėda - Smiltynė


 Smiltynė - Nida
→ 50 km

Sights on route:

• **Nida**, the most popular resort town in the Curonian Spit, where you can walk along the promenade and see the typical architecture of the Curonian Spit region — one-storey wooden buildings with tile or reed roofs and window shutters painted blue and white.


Accommodation: in Nida.

DAY 9


 Nida - Juodkrantė
→ 30 km

 Juodkrantė - Pervalka

 Pervalka - Juodkrantė
→ 18 km ⌚ 5 - 6 h

 Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement and cobblestones in populated areas.

 Easy

 Visitors must stay exclusively on the established trails in the Nagliai Nature Reserve.




 Juodkrantė - Klaipėda
→ 20 km


Accommodation: in Klaipėda.

DAY 10


 Klaipėda - Plateliai
→ 70 km

 Bus or private transfer Plateliai - Papatelė.

 Papatelė - Plateliai in Žemaitija National Park
→ 20 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h

 Forest roads and trails, asphalt pedestrian / bicycle paths and sidewalks, gravel roads.

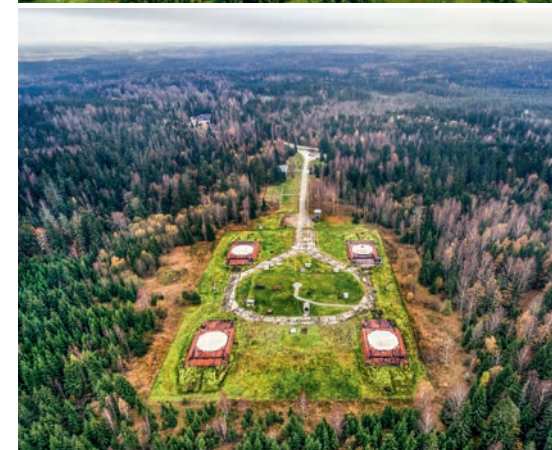
 Easy

 During the summer season, there are many holidaymakers around Lake Plateliai.

Sights on route:

- **Plokštinė cognitive trail.**
- **Cold War exposition** - located in the former Soviet Union underground ballistic missile launch complex.
- **Siberija Observation Tower** - 15 m high with a panorama view to the surroundings of Plateliai.
- **Plateliai** - beautiful town in Žemaitija National Park with a famous past.

Accommodation: in Plateliai.





DAY 11



Plateliai - Telšiai

→ 35 km

Leave the car in Telšiai, at the place.



Telšiai - Buožėnai

→ 18 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Mostly gravel roads, asphalt, forest paths, in a swampy place - wooden paths, in Telšiai and surroundings - asphalted pedestrian and bicycle paths.



Easy



Be careful when walking on the side of the road and crossing the A 11 highway!

Sights on route:

- **Germantas and Ilgio lake cognitive trails** which are part of the Forest Trail. The Ilgio lake trail is ~ 1,2 km long around the lake, but the total length of the trails are ~12,4 km.
- **Telšiai** - the city on the seven hills by the Lake Mastis. It is worth taking a walk around the city of Telšiai, exploring the most important sights or admiring the view of Lake Mastis while walking along its shore.



Bus back to Telšiai.

Accommodation: in Telšiai.



DAY 12



Telšiai - Kurtuvėnai

→ 57 km



Kurtuvėnai - Šaukėnai

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Small forest trails and small forest roads, wooden footbridges in wet places, asphalt in Šaukėnai.



Easy



In this section, the Forest Trail intersects with other hiking routes. The markers should be followed carefully and it is advisable to use GPX files.

Sights on route:

- **Kurtuvėnai** manor barn and Kurtuvėnai Regional Park Visitors centre.
- **Kurtuvėnai Live Horse Museum.**
- **Juodlė** lake cognitive trail.



Bus back to cars in Kurtuvėnai.



Kurtuvėnai - Šiauliai

→ 27 km

Accommodation: in Šiauliai.

DAY 13

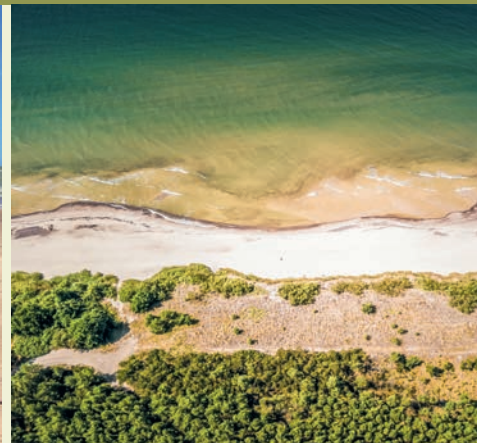


Šiauliai - Rīga

→ 132 km

Alternative: can also drive to Vilnius and end the tour there.





DAY 1

Arrival in Rīga.
Sightseeing in Rīga.
Accommodation: in Rīga.

DAY 2



Rīga - Jūrmala - Ķemeri - Apšuciems
→ 80 km

Sights on route:

Sightseeing in Jūrmala resort town.



in Jūrmala from Dubulti till Bulduri (or the opposite way).
→ 5 - 6 km



Melnalkšņu swamp forest trail
→ 0,6 km



Sloka lake nature trail and climb the wooden bird watching tower.
→ 3,1 km

• **Ķemeri historical resort and park.**

Accommodation: in Apšuciems or surroundings.



Itinerary: RĪGA - JŪRMALA - ĶEMERI NATIONAL PARK - ENGURE NATURE PARK - KOLKA - SLĪTERE NATIONAL PARK - VILLAGES OF THE LIVONIANS - VENTSPILS - JŪRKALNE - PĀVILOSTA - LIEPĀJA - CURONIAN SPIT - KLAIPĒDA - RUSNĒ - DUBYSA RIVER VALLEY - VILKIJA - KAUNAS - BIRŠTONAS - DZŪKIJA NATIONAL PARK - VILNIUS

Hiking route length: → ~1210 km driving, ~110 km hiking

Duration: **16 days** Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 **Rīga**

🚩 **Vilnius**

This tour is a road trip from Rīga to Vilnius, stopping along the road to hike on nature trails of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route. In Latvia the route mainly follows the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route/ the Baltic coast, continuing along the coast and the Curonian Spit in Lithuania. Further, the route includes some smaller sections of the Forest Trail in Lithuania leading to Druskininkai and near the Lithuanian/Polish border.

This tour will suit travellers who are ready to indulge in some nature trails and have a peek in urban landscapes, but who are not prepared for longer distances with backpacks, tenting and similar. A car will

take you from one short hike to the next. Another transfer is planned from the island of Rusnė to the Dubysa valley, thus linking the Lithuanian sections of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route and the Forest Trail. The tour includes Latvian and Lithuanian nature's jewels – the national parks of Ķemeri and Slītere, Cape Kolka, Pape Nature Park, the Curonian Spit, the island of Rusnė, the river Nemunas, the Dubysa river valley regional park with its rolling terrain, the most forested and secluded area of Lithuania – the Dzūkija National Park. Besides the capital cities of both countries, the route will take you to other major cities – Ventspils, Liepāja, the popular resort town of the Curonian Spit – Nida, as well as historical bathing resorts: Ķemeri, Birštonas and Druskininkai. You will also see the city of Kaunas and the beautiful riverscapes of the river Nemunas.



DAY 3



Apšuciems - Mērsrags - Kaltene - Roja - Kolka

→ 97 km

Leave the car in Mērsrags.



Mērsrags - Bērzciems

→ ~12 km ⌚ 3 - 4 h



Coastal meadows, small trails, forest roads. Asphalt in the villages, a small section of gravel road.



Medium



The coastal meadows can be bypassed using the roads and trails in the villages.



Bus back from Bērzciems to Mērsrags (there are only 5 buses per day!).

Sights on route:

- **Engure Nature Park** - Mērsrags coastal meadows are a very important nesting and rest sites for migrating birds.
- **Kaltene** rock beach and the bird watching tower.
- **Roja** - the port town and possibility to taste the smoked-fish.

Accommodation: in Kolka.



DAY 4



Kolka - Pitrags - Košrags - Mazirbe - Ventspils

→ 90 km

Sights on route:

- **Coastal hike:** Along the Kolka Cape which is the Northernmost point of the Kurzeme (Courland) peninsula.
- **The Pine Nature Trail** (1,3 km) in Kolka which is part of the Slītere National Park.
- Visit the **Livonian coast and small fisherman villages:** Sīkrags, Pitrags, Košrags, Mazirbe. The Livonian Coastline is the only place where you can learn about the cultural heritage of the other indigenous nation of Latvia. Possible to visit the Livonian National house in Mazirbe village.
- **Ventspils** - a nice and attractive town by the Baltic sea with many tourist attractions.

Accommodation: in Ventspils.

DAY 5



Ventspils - Jūrkalne - Pāvilosta - Liepāja

→ 130 km

Sights on route:

- **Užava lighthouse.**
- **Užava brewery.**
- The most outstanding bluffs around the Baltic Sea in **Jūrkalne.**
- **Pāvilosta** - a small port town located at the mouth of river Saka, former fishermen village, now a popular place for surfers and tourists with cafes, a possibility to taste the local fishes.

Accommodation: in Liepāja.





DAY 6

Sightseeing in Liepāja. You can visit the Liepāja beach, Rose square, the Great Amber Concert hall and the Military port.



Liepāja - Karosta - Northern pier

→ 6,5 km in one way

Accommodation: in Liepāja.

DAY 7



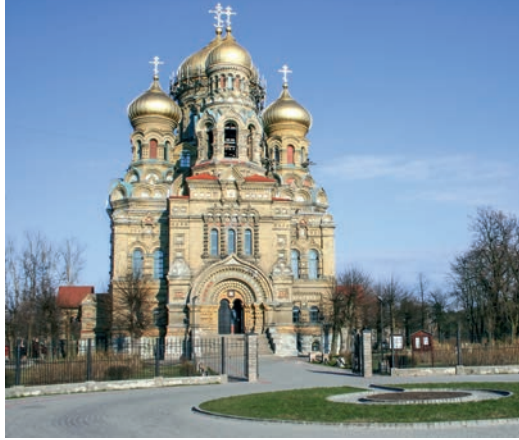
Liepāja - Pape - Šventoji - Palanga - Klaipėda

→ 122 km

Sights on route:

- **Pape Nature Park**, Pape lighthouse, wild horses.
- **Pape Ķonuciems** authentic village and museum.
- **Šventoji resort town.**
- **Palanga** - hike in the Botanical park and visit the Amber Museum.

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.



DAY 8



Klaipėda - Smiltynė - Nida

→ 50 km

Hike in Curonian Spit.

2 hiking options:

OPTION 1:



Nida - Pervalka

→ ~18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Pavement, pedestrian paths and promenades in populated areas. Forest trails with natural surface elsewhere and sand in some places.



Easy



At high water (in early spring and late autumn), a short section of the trail between Nida and Preila may be flooded. Be careful at the washed-out coastline as it can easily collapse!

OPTION 2:



Pervalka - Juodkrantė

→ ~18 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement and cobblestones in populated areas.



Easy



From Pervalka, it is recommended to take the circular nature trail (4-5 km) along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon to Horse Cape, which offers amazing views of the Dead Dunes.



Get back to Nida by public bus.

Accommodation: in Nida.





DAY 9



Nida - Klaipėda - Rusnė

→ 110 km



Around Rusnė Island

→ 23 km ⌚ 6 - 8 h

We recommend exploring the island of Rusnė and the delta of the river Nemunas. The island of Rusnė in the Nemunas Delta Regional Park is enclosed by waters of the river Nemunas and its tributaries. It is a resting place for migratory birds and home to a cormorant colony. The area of the island is 45 km² and it is connected to the mainland by a bridge. The island of Rusnė is the lowest place in Lithuania, laying below sea level. The historic centre of the town Rusnė is characteristic of authentic wooden architecture, buildings painted in bright colours, colourful window shutters and decorations.



Gravel roads and footpaths over the Rusnė polders. Approximately 10 km of paved road between the villages of Uostadvaris and Rusnė.



Medium



Exercise caution when walking on the side of the road!



Rusnė Island is an excellent place to observe birds during spring and autumn migration.

Accommodation: in Rusnė.



DAY 10



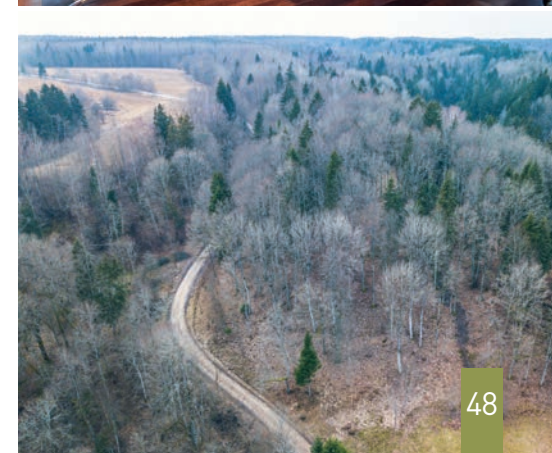
Rusnė - Lyduvėnai - Kaulakiai

→ 180 km

Sights on route:

- **Šilutė town** - an attractive small town where you can see the architectural style typical of East Prussia.
- **Lyduvėnai** - possible to see the highest and longest railway bridge in Baltics over the river Dubysa.
- **Danutė (Lyduvėnai) castle hill.**
- **Dubysa Regional Park** - it covers the impressive Dubysa river valley, which is up to 40 m deep and 0.5 km wide, where castle-mounds, historical churches and other testimonies of culture and history dot the riverbanks. The Dubysa is a beautiful river favoured by nature lovers because of its rapid flow. The beautiful slopes of the valley are crossed by deep ravines of lateral tributaries. Important habitats that are protected at European level are found here, such as dry grasslands in calcareous soils, species-rich pastures and pasture meadows.
- **Kaulakiai** - village where the Dubysa Regional Park Visitors Center is located.

Accommodation: in Kaulakiai or surroundings.





DAY 11



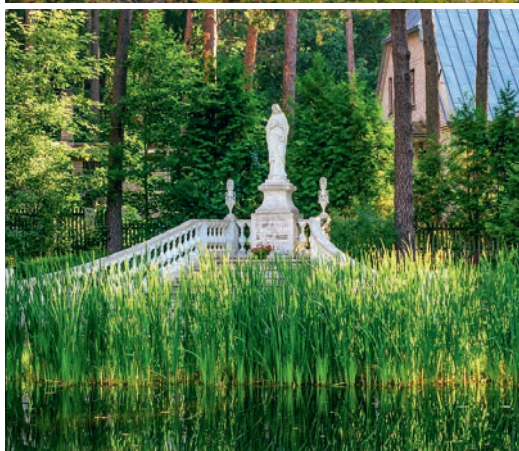
Kaulakiai - Betygala - Kirkšnovė - Ariogala - Vilkija - Kaunas

→ 85 km

Sights on route:

- **Short hike in Betygala** and surroundings along the Forest Trail (2 - 5 km) - a very small ancient Lithuanian village, can see the castle mound and the Monkey bridge over the river Dubysa.
- **Ariogala** - one of the oldest towns in Lithuania, known since the 13th century. You can see the Song valley, a Suspension bridge or Dubysa river, have a walk in the beautiful Purve park and taste the healthy water from the Ariogala Spring.
- **Short hike in Vilkija town (~3 km)** - an object of urban heritage, which has been known since the 14th century. Its development was determined by the nearby river Nemunas. You can take a small walk in Vilkija along the Forest Trail, you will see the Vilkija outcrop and from here you can admire the breath-taking views of the Nemunas. It is also recommended to try the Vilkija ferry which is the only ferry in Lithuania which carries across the river Nemunas.

Accommodation: in Kaunas.



DAY 12

Day in Kaunas.

- **Kaunas**, one of the most beautiful Lithuanian cities, is located at the confluence of the Nemunas and the Neris. It is Lithuania's second largest city and former capital. You can see the Old Town, the 9th Fort, Laisves aleja (Liberty Boulevard), the Kaunas castle, Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- We suggest you to drive till the Three Virgin Bridge, park the car there and then walk along this bridge and Forest Trail in the **Panemunė Pinewood** (hike 2,6 km in one way).
- Another option is



hike from Kaunas to Lampėdžiai

→ 9 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h

Accommodation: in Kaunas.

DAY 13



Kaunas - Prienai - Birštonas

→ 45 km

Sights on route:

- **Birštonas** - a popular resort town by the Nemunas river loops, with the mineral water swimming pools, the highest observation tower in Lithuania (45 m).



Hike in Birštonas along the Forest trail

→ 5 - 6 km

Accommodation: in Birštonas.





DAY 14



Birštonas - Druskininkai

→ ~85 km

Sights on route:

• **Druskininkai** is a Lithuanian historic health and spa resort with flower gardens, musical fountains, museums and waterpark. You can enjoy the Snow Arena and a trip with the air-tram above the river Nemunas.



Hike along the Forest Trail till the Snow Arena (3 km in one way) or till Didžiasalis (11 km) and go back to town by public bus.

Accommodation: in Druskininkai.



DAY 15



Druskininkai - Žiogeliai

→ 13 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel and forest roads, in Druskininkai – asphalt sidewalks, pedestrian / bicycle sidewalks, pavement.



Easy



Bus to Druskininkai.



Druskininkai - Merkinė - Vilnius

→ 135 km

Sights on route:

• Ancient **castle Hill at Merkinė** provides fine views at the rivers Merkys and Nemunas. There is a 26 m high viewing platform.

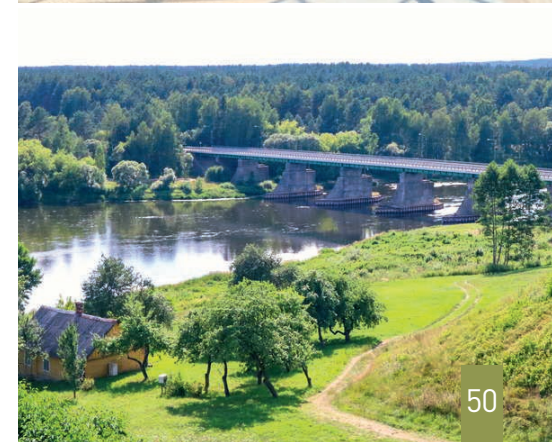
Arrival in Vilnius.

Accommodation: in Vilnius.

DAY 16

Sightseeing in Vilnius.

Departure.



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PROJECT LLI-448 "DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST TRAIL IN LATVIA AND LITHUANIA AND EXPANDING THE BALTIC COASTAL HIKING ROUTE IN LITHUANIA" (HIKING PROJECT)

The project is being implemented with the support of the European Union Interreg V-A Latvia-Lithuania cross-border cooperation programme for 2014-2020.

THE PROJECT AIMS

to establish and promote two common cross-border long-distance hiking routes — the Forest Trail and the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route, which pass through the territory of Latvia and Lithuania, thereby increasing the number of tourists to the region. Marketing activities are expected to result in an increase in the number of overnight stays in rural areas by at least 5 % in the year following the completion of both routes.

PLANNED RESULTS OF THE PROJECT:

- Development and promotion of the Southern part of the Forest Trail in Latvia and Lithuania and the Southern part of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route in Lithuania. Both routes will be connected to the already existing Northern part of the Forest Trail and of the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route in Latvia and Estonia, using common names and marking schemes.
- Maps and guides will be developed to promote the routes, and information will be available at www.baltictrails.eu.

Total costs of the project are EUR 788 104,45.

Co-funding by the European Regional Development Fund is EUR 669 888,76.



LEAD PARTNER:



Kaunas Regional Development Agency

PROJECT PARTNERS:

LATVIA



Lauku Ceļotājs

www.celotajs.lv

Latvian Country Tourism Association "Lauku ceļotājs"



KURZEMES
PLĀNOŠANAS
REĢIONS

Kurzeme Planning
Region



Kuldīga County
Council

LITHUANIA



Lithuanian Countryside
Tourism Association



Žemaitija National Park
Administration



Curonian Spit National
Park Administration

INFORMATION:

LATVIA



Jurtaka
Mežtaka – Forest Trail



Jurtaka
Meztaka

LITHUANIA



Baltictrails LT:
Miško takas - Jūrų takas



Miško takas -
Jūrų takas

Photos used: the partners of the Hiking project, tourism information centres, A. Pališkis, A. Barzdžius, A. Aleksandravičius, P. Grigaliūnas, V. Grigas, T. Valionis, K. Fedirka, Ž. Jašinskaitė, S. Kazlauskas, Artis Veigurs.



LEGEND

- █ Baltic Coastal Hiking Route
- █ Forest Trail
- █ Main roads
- █ Regional roads
- █ Roads with separated lanes

- Other roads
- Railway
- Ferries
- National parks
- Airports



The Baltic Coastal Hiking Route is part of the European long distance path **E9**. The E9 route starts at Cape St.Vincent in Portugal and ends in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Name in Lithuania: **Jūrų takas**, in Latvia: **Jūrtaka**, in Estonia: **Ranniku Matkarada**.

The Forest Trail is a long distance hiking route, part of **E11**, which takes its start by the North Sea in Scheveningen, in the surroundings of The Hague, the Netherlands, and ends in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Name in Lithuania: **Miško takas**, in Latvia: **Mežtaka**, in Estonia: **Metsa matkarada**

This Tour brochure includes the tours based on the southern part of the Forest Trail and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route from Rīga to Druskininkai and Neringa.

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