

Cycling Europe

BALTIC CAPITALS & COAST

LITHUANIA, LATVIA, ESTONIA 2018

GUIDED CYCLE TOUR 11 DAYS/10 NIGHTS

Explore the Baltic coast and the National Parks of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on incredibly scenic routes. This fascinating tour includes the three capital cities – Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn with their Old Towns designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO; the remarkable and previously-closed Curonian Spit; and the largest and most beautiful Estonian island of Saaremaa. During the Soviet occupation, much of the Baltic countryside was strictly out of bounds to foreigners, so rural areas are still remote and unspoilt. Travel from Lithuania in the south, through Latvia and on to Estonia in the north; experience a magical landscape, delightful villages, the three strikingly different capitals and an excellent introduction to the very distinct characters of these unique countries.



GRADE

Moderate level of fitness required; cycling varies between 10 km - 55km each day. Cycling is mainly on low traffic roads and cycle paths. Terrain is varied - mostly flat with some gradual hills as well as some steep ups and downs in the Gauga River valley region.

Day 1 Sunday: VILNIUS

Arrive in Vilnius, capital city of Lithuania and the only inland Baltic capital. Vilnius lies in a leafy bowl on the confluence of two rivers. Its Old Town is warm and mellow with ochre-coloured houses, wrought-iron shop signs, extravagant baroque buildings and an enticing labyrinth of inner courtyards, it's less commercial and more bohemian than its northern counterparts.

7.00pm Welcome meeting with your tour guide.

OVERNIGHT: Vilnius



Day 2 Monday: VILNIUS-TRAKAI Insular Castle-KAUNAS

Cycling 26 km, coach 95 km

After breakfast enjoy a guided tour of Vilnius' atmospheric Old Town with its impressive Baroque churches and university buildings. This afternoon it's a trip to Trakai, the former capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Following a visit to the 14th century island castle built on a small island in Lake Galvė, start your first cycle through the picturesque countryside, then transfer by coach to Kaunas.

OVERNIGHT: Kaunas



Day 3 Tuesday: KAUNAS-VENTĖ Horn-NIDA

Cycling 28 km, coach 240 km

Morning transfer along the Nemunas River to the coast. Along the way you pass the impressive 16th-17th century castles of Raudonė and Panemunė. In the afternoon you cycle to Ventė Horn famous for its bird observatory (entrance included) and the 19th century lighthouse which was used for more than 100 years.

Following a short bus

transfer you arrive in Klaipėda, the main seaport of Lithuania.

OVERNIGHT: Klaipėda



Day 4 Wednesday: CURONIAN SPIT NATIONAL PARK

Cycling 55 km, boat 50km

This morning catch the boat across the Curonian Lagoon to Nida. En route you'll be treated to stunning views of the Curonian Spit's wild, magical strip of shifting dunes that separate the Baltic Sea from the Lagoon. Enjoy sightseeing around Nida, one of the most beautiful resorts in Lithuania. Explore the Amber Gallery and summer house of famous German writer Thomas Mann before cycling back to Klaipėdia on the seaside cycle route along the Curonian Spit famous for its amber and fine sand beaches.

OVERNIGHT: Klaipėdia - Dinner included



Day 5 Thursday: KLAIPĖDA-PALANGA -Hill of Crosses-RIGA Cycling 30 km, coach 290 km

Early morning ride to Palanga through the Seaside Regional Park. Arrive in Palanga, the largest of Lithuania's seaside resorts, for a tour which includes a visit to the Botanical Garden and the Amber Museum in the Palace of Count Tyszkiewicz - over 25,000 pieces of amber and 15,000 insects on display. Afternoon transfer to Riga (Latvia). En-route stop at the Hill of Crosses, an unforgettable sight of thousands of crosses on two small hills. Continue to Riga the capital city of Latvia.

OVERNIGHT: Riga -Dinner Included

Day 6 Friday: RIGA-JURMALA Seaside Resort

Cycling 30 km, coach 20 km

After breakfast enjoy a guided tour of Riga, a medieval Hanseatic town famous for its Art Nouveau buildings: see Riga castle, St.Peter's Church, Dome Cathedral and the Old Guild Houses. In the afternoon take some free time or cycle to Jurmala, the largest resort in the Baltic States known for its long, white, sand beaches, mineral waters and mud with healing properties. Transfer back by coach to the hotel in Riga.

OVERNIGHT: Riga



Day 7 Saturday: GAUJA National Park & Bicycle Museum – RIGA

Cycling 40 km, by coach 100 km

Morning transfer to Sigulda, the most popular resort in Latvia, in the Gauja River Valley. Cycling through Gauja National Park to Saulkrasti, enjoying spectacular views of the Gauja River valley with the Gutmana Cave and visiting Turaida Castle and the oldest Latvian Church, Krimulda, built in 1205. Finish the ride with a visit to the Latvian bicycle museum (entrance included) followed by a transfer to Riga. **OVERNIGHT: Riga**

Day 8 Sunday: RIGA-SAAREMAA ISLAND
Cycling 35 km, coach 340 km, ferry 6km

Morning transfer to Estonia's largest island, Saaremaa, where all that is wonderful about old Estonia is perfectly preserved. With little traffic and flat roads Saaremaa provides an idyllic rural setting for cycling. Travel on picturesque roads along the Baltic Sea Coast to the village of Angla where the iconic windmills are located. Transfer to Mandjala.

OVERNIGHT: Saaremaa - Dinner included



Day 9 Monday: SAAREMAA ISLAND
Cycling 55 km, coach 40 km

Enjoy a day ride across Saaremaa Island's wild beauty to the Sorve lighthouse. Historically, the peninsula had considerable military significance, dominating the Irbe Strait and the Baltic Sea route to Riga. Transfer back to the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Saaremaa

Day 10 Tuesday: SAAREMA & TALLINN
Cycling 10 km, coach 216 km, ferry 6 km

Take a short morning ride to Kuressaare, the capital of Saaremaa and home to one of the finest preserved medieval Episcopal Castles in the Baltics, dating from 13th century. Free time to explore the town and the Bishop's castle. Then transfer by coach to Tallinn. On the way we stop at the one of the world's giant craters, Kaali. After arrival in Tallinn enjoy a guided tour of Tallinn Old Town.

OVERNIGHT: Tallinn - Farewell dinner in a local restaurant included

Day 11 Wednesday: TALLINN (Estonia)

Tour Ends after Breakfast at the hotel.

2018 SCHEDULE

May 20, May 27, June 3, June 17, July 1, July 15, July 29, August 12, August 26, September 2
Min group size 2 people; Max 21 people with one guide, 25 people with two guides.

2018 TOUR COST: IN EUROS PER PERSON

Share twin/double **€1420**
Single room supplement **€1729**

Meal supplement: 6 dinners (3 courses with coffee/tea) at hotel restaurants **€130**

Upgrade to Electric Bike €150

TOUR COST INCLUDES

- 10 nights accommodation, including all taxes
- Breakfast daily & 4 dinners (dinners include 3 courses with coffee/tea)
- Welcome meeting with a glass of beer or wine
- Mineral water on cycling days
- English speaking Guide
- Rental bike - trekking bike with waterproof pannier (+ helmet on request)
- Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned coach /minibus

- Luggage transfers as per itinerary
- Excursions as shown in itinerary
- Boat trip across the Curonian Lagoon
- Ferry tickets from the Curonian Spit and to/from Saaremaa Island
- Entrance to: Trakai Insular Castle, Venté Ornithological Station, Amber museum in Palanga, Turaida Castle, Saulkrasti Bicycle Museum, Angla Windmill Park in Saaremaa.
- Individual information package (city guides, maps and program) – 1 pack per room

AIRPORT TRANSFERS

Arrival (Vilnius Airport) **Departure** (Tallinn Airport) car one way for 1-3 people €30
 Minibus one way for 4-7 people €160/ transfer

EXTRA NIGHTS

Vilnius: 3 star per room per night including breakfast

Single room €70
 Double room €85

Tallinn: 4 star per room per night including breakfast

Single room €89
 Double room €99

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