

# Cycling Europe

## EXPLORE THE BALTICS

LITHUANIA, LATVIA, ESTONIA 2020

### SEMI 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 beautiful Gauja River valleys. 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.*



#### SEMI GUIDED

*This tour is semi-guided. Except in Jurmala and the Curonian Spit, our driver with a minibus and bike trailer accompanies you. City tours are included in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius and these are led by professional guides. Our driver will transport your luggage every day to the next hotel and take care of any problems should they arise. To make certain that you are well looked after, we only employ people, who have good local knowledge and speak English.*

## GRADE

Moderate level of fitness required; cycling varies between 30km - 60km 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 Gauja River valley and the Otepää region.. The tour covers all three Baltic States and therefore it includes minibus transfers between the most interesting cycling destinations and the capital cities. Walking sightseeing tours in the capital old towns are along cobbled streets.

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Monday: Vilnius (Lithuania)

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. 7.00 pm Welcome meeting at the hotel with our local representative. Overnight Vilnius.



### Day 2 Tuesday: VILNIUS-TRAKAI Insular Castle-KAUNAS

#### Cycling 35 km, coach 75 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 Wednesday: Kaunas – Vente Horn – Nida: Crossing the Curonian Lagoon by ship (cycling 31 km, minibus 185 km, boat 14 km)



Morning transfer along the Nemunas River to the coast, passing the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century castles of Raudonė and Panemunė. Cycle to Ventė Horn where you can visit a bird observatory and the 19<sup>th</sup>C lighthouse that was used for over 100 years. Take a boat across the Curonian Lagoon to the mainland (1.5 hours), enjoying a stunning view of the Curonian Spit sand dunes. Overnight Nida.

#### **Day 4 Thursday: Curonian spit National Park (cycling 57 km)**

Morning sightseeing round Nida, one of the loveliest resorts in Lithuania. Cycle on the Seaside Cycle Route along the Curonian Spit, famous for its amber and fine sand beaches. En route to Klaipeda you may stop at the "Dead" sand dunes, visit Juodkrante settlement and go swimming in the Baltic Sea. Take a ferry to the old town of Klaipeda, Lithuania's main seaport. Overnight Klaipeda.



#### **Day 5 Friday: Klaipeda – Palanga – Hill of Crosses – RIGA (cycling 32 km, minibus 290 km)**



Begin your day cycling to the seaside resort of Palanga along a beautiful cycling path through the Seaside Regional Park, a former soviet military training area. There will be time to visit the Botanical Park, Amber Museum and the 470m pier jutting out into the Baltic Sea. Afternoon transfer to Riga by minibus, stopping en-route at the Hill of Crosses - an unforgettable sight of thousands of crosses on two small hills.

#### **Day 6 Saturday: RIGA & JURMALA Seaside resort, Latvia (cycling 30 km, train 25 km)**

Today you may take part in a guided tour of Riga Old Town, a medieval Hanseatic town renowned for its art Nouveau buildings. In the afternoon explore Riga on your own or take a cycle ride on a bicycle path to Jurmala, a renowned Latvian seaside resort known for its long, white, sand beaches, mineral waters and mud with healing properties. We recommend that you take the opportunity to bath in the sea and cycling along the beach – it's well worth it! In the evening take a local train back to Riga (30 min, not included). Overnight Riga.



#### **Day 7 Sunday: GAUJA National Park & Bicycle Museum – RIGA Cycling 40 km, by coach 100 km**

Morning transfer to Saulkrsti where you can visit the Latvian bicycle museum. Cycle to Sigulda, the most popular resort in Latvia. Continue on through Gauja National Park 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. Overnight Sigulda.



**Day 8 Monday: SIGULDA - SAAREMAA (Latvia – Estonia) (cycling 38km, minibus 330km, ferry 6 km)**

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 or Kuressaare for overnight.

**Day 9 Tuesday: SAAREMAA ISLAND (Cycling 46 km, coach 40 km)**

Enjoy a day ride across Saaremaa Island's wild beauty to the Sorve lighthouse. Finish the day with a visit to Kuressaare, the capital of Saaremaa, home to one of the finest preserved medieval Episcopal Castles in the Baltics, dating from 13thC. Overnight Mandjala or Kuressaare.

**Day 10 Wednesday: SAAREMAA & TALLINN**



**Cycling 40 km, coach 210 km, ferry 6 km**

Take a morning ride to the giant Kaali meteorite crater. En route stop at Kuressaare, the capital of Saaremaa and home to one of the finest preserved medieval Episcopal Castles in the Baltics, dating from 13<sup>th</sup> century. Free time to explore the town and the Bishop's castle. Then transfer by coach to Tallinn. After arrival in Tallinn enjoy a guided tour of Tallinn Old Town. Overnight Tallinn.

**Day 11 Wednesday: TALLINN**

Individual departure after breakfast.

**2020 SCHEDULE**

Monday departure: June 22, June 29, July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27, and August 3, 10, 17 & 24

Minimum group size 2 people.

Any other dates from May to September can be booked for groups with minimum 6 people.

## 2020 TOUR COST: IN EUROS PER PERSON

Share twin/double	€1299
Single room	€1699

### BIKE HIRE

**7 speed** trekking bike with back pedal brakes or **24 speed** Shimano derailleur gears and free-wheel (optional) €99

**E-Bike:** 8 speed Shimano Nexus hub gears & back-pedal break or free wheel €280  
Bike rental includes waterproof pannier (1 per bike and a tachometer (1 per booking).

<b>Bike helmet:</b>	€10
<b>Waterproof handlebar bag</b>	€20

**Meal supplement:** 5 dinners (3 courses with coffee/tea) at hotel restaurants €118  
(excludes Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius)

### TOUR COST INCLUDES

- 10 nights stay in middle-range hotels (3\*), including all taxes
- Breakfast daily
- Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned minibus
- Luggage transfers as per itinerary
- Guided tours in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius (any entrance fees are payable individually)
- Crossing the Curonian Lagoon by boat from Nida to the mainland
- A return ferry ticket to Saaremaa Island
- Individual information package (city guides, maps, programme and route description – ONE PER ROOM)
- Emergency contact numbers for our English-speaking representatives

### TOUR COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Arrival and departure transfers
- Lunches and dinners
- Bicycle rental
- Entrance fees
- Tips

### AIRPORT TRANSFERS

**Arrival** (Tallinn Airport) **Departure** (Vilnius Airport) car one way for 1-3 people €30  
Minibus one way for 4-7 people €59

### EXTRA NIGHTS

**Tallinn: 4 star per room per night including breakfast**

Single room	€95
Double room	€105

**Vilnius: 3star per room per night including breakfast**

Single room	€75
Double room	€90

*Book through*

# **A Walker's World**

**Don't just see the world. Experience it.**

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