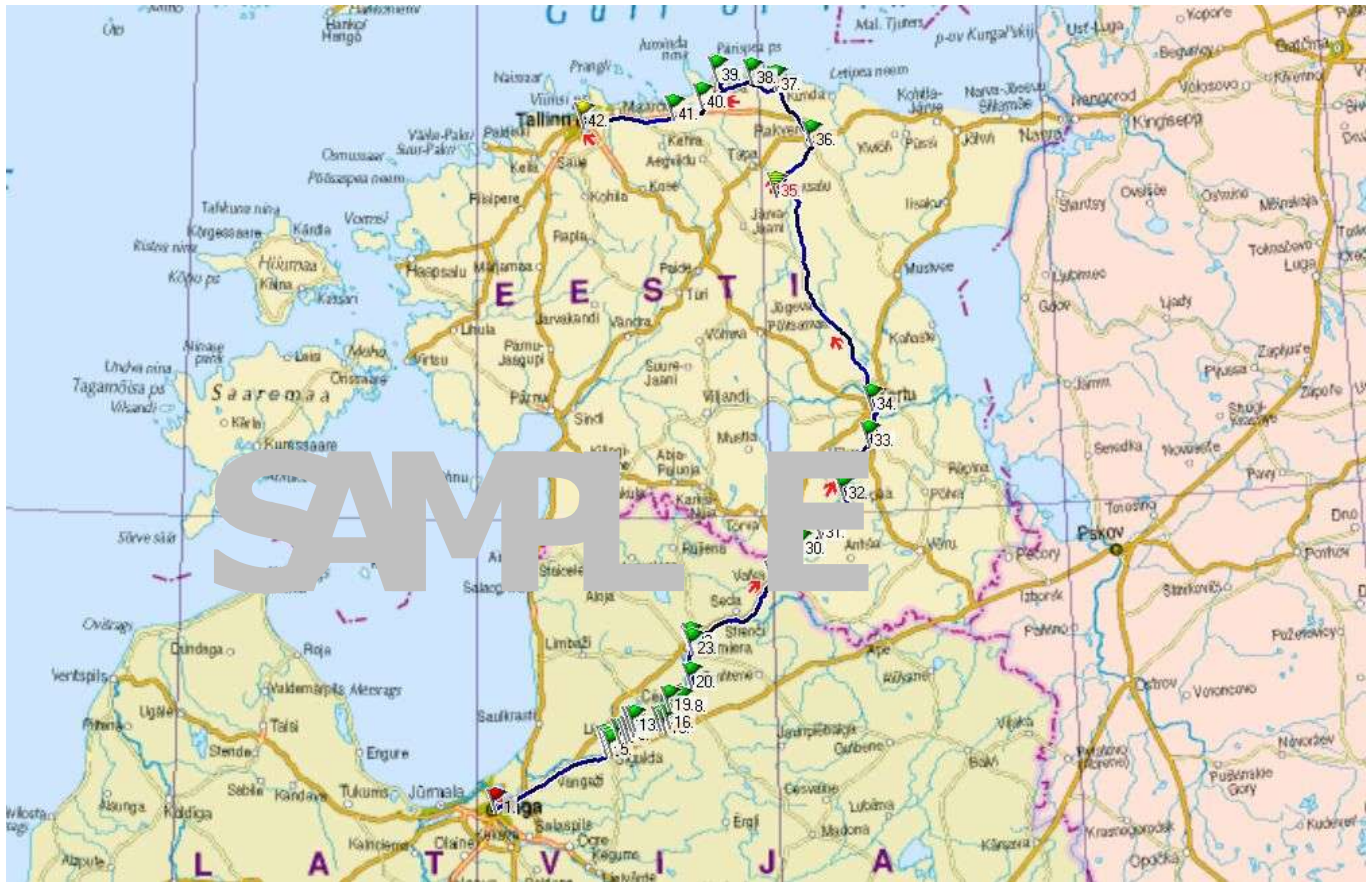


Through the National parks to the cliffs of Estonia's northern shore

(Riga – Valmiera – Otepää – Tartu – Rakvere – Tallinn, 13 days)

Map 1 – Tour overview



1st day

Arrival at the Riga airport / Transfer to the hotel. Pick up the info package with maps and a detailed itinerary description at the hotel reception. Overnight in the hotel in Riga.

2nd day

Breakfast at the hotel.

Free time in Riga

We recommend to visit the **Old Town** with the Dome cathedral (13th – 18th century) with its huge organ (to be the world's fourth largest); **Museum of history of Riga and navigation**; the **Riga castle** built for the German knights now home to Latvia's president and hosting **Museum of foreign arts**; the **3 brothers** houses – the oldest in Riga, the **St. Saviour's church** built in 1857 by a small group of British traders on 30 feet of British soil brought over as ballast in the ships transporting building materials; the 13th century **Jēkaba church** – the seat of Riga's Roman Catholic archbishop; **Latvia's parliament**; the **Swedish gate**; the round peaked 14th century **Pulvertornis** (powder tower) where there is a **War museum**; the red brick Gothic **St. Peters church** - its 72m spire has been built three times in the same baroque form, originally in 1660, again in 18th century after being hit by lightning and most recent after the destruction during WWII, now there is a lift to the



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second gallery of the spire for a marvellous panoramic view of Old Riga; the **Occupation museum** - an impressive account of the Soviet and Nazi occupations of Latvia between 1940 and 1944; the reconstructed **Blackhead's house** – an architectural gem built in 1344 for the Blackhead's guild of unmarried merchants, it was damaged in 1941 and rebuilt in 2000, the **Great and the Small guildhalls**.

Outside the Old Town in the centre we recommend to visit the **Monument of freedom**; the **Bastejkalns park**; the Alberta iela and the beginning of Elizabetes iela with the famous **Art nouveau buildings** and the **Central market**.

Outside the centre of Riga we recommend to visit the **Ethnographic open-air museum**; the **Mežaparks park with Riga ZOO**; the so called **Moscow suburb** and **Pārdaugava district** – former workers districts with wooden buildings; **Vecmīlgrāvis** where the Daugava flows into the sea; the **Riga beaches** in Vecāķi or Bolderāja.

Overnight in the hotel in Riga.

3rd day

Breakfast at the hotel / pick up the bicycles at the hotel.

To get to the central rail station in Rīga, ride down the 11. novembra shore road and then along 13. janvāra Street to Station Square. Ride carefully, stay on the right side of the street. For traffic safety reasons, ride on the sidewalk wherever possible.

Take the train: Riga – Sigulda.

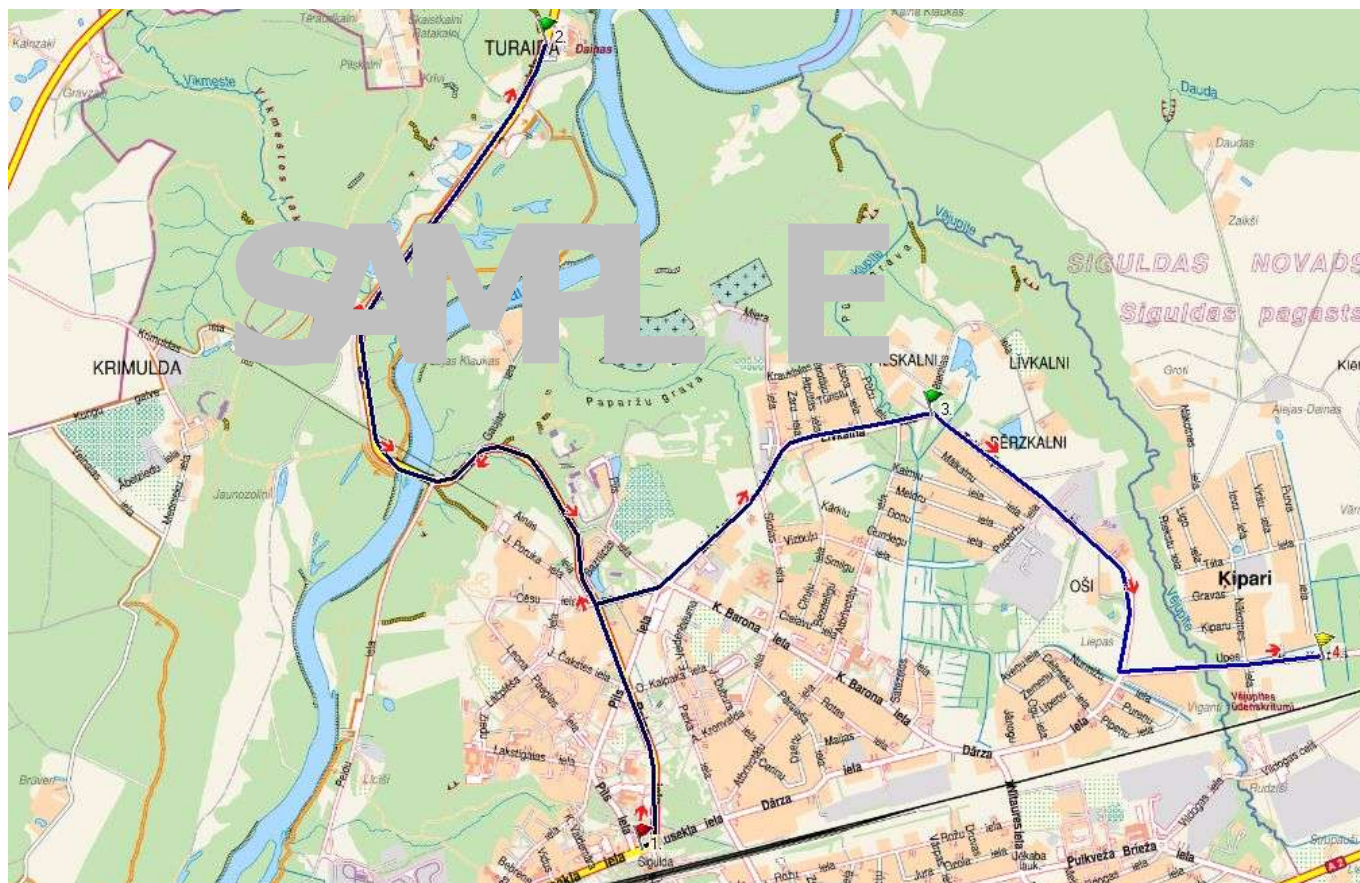
Timetable:

We suggest that you take the train which departs from Rīga at 9:35 AM and arrives in Sigulda at 10:51 AM (information as of February 2006)

Cycling: Turaida – Līgatne (30 km, 60% Asphalt, 40% gravel road).

En route, visit the Turaida museum reserve with the ruins of a Livonian Order castle. There is an observation tower and a sculpture garden on the banks of the Gauja. Also do some sightseeing in Sigulda.

Map 2 - Sigulda



From the Sigulda railroad station, ride down Raiņa, Gaujas and Turaidas streets to get to Turaida. Be very careful in riding down into the ancient Gauja valley from Sigulda or Turaida – ride slowly and carefully along the steep banks of the valley, and observe traffic safety rules. The distance is 5 km. Visit the Turaida Museum Reserve. On your return route to Sigulda, visit the Gūtmaņala cave and the town of Sigulda itself.

Map 3 - Sigulda - Līgatne

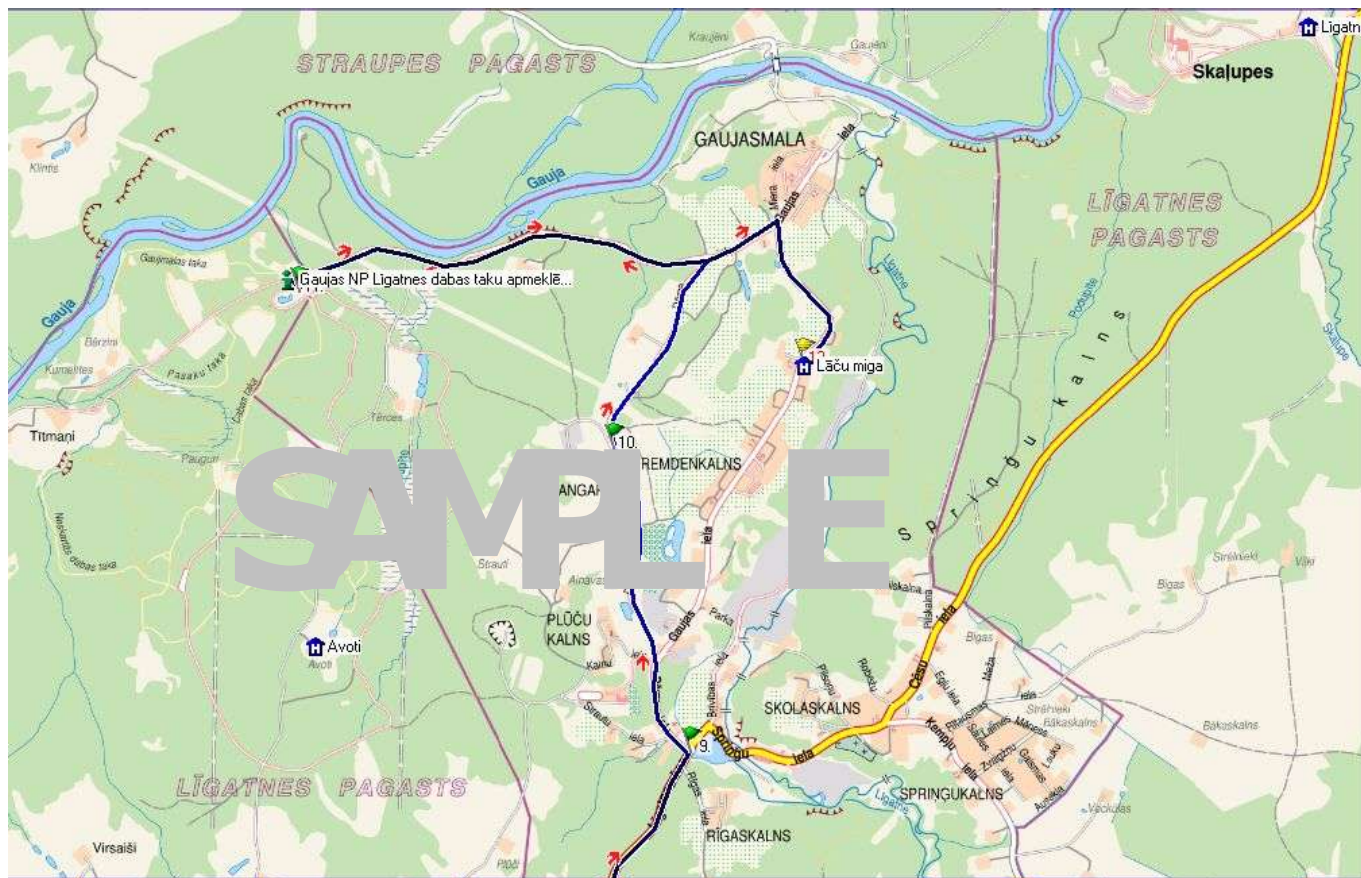


From the Sigulda church, take Līvkalna Street to the road to Nurmiži. Continue the route along a gravel road to Nurmiži and Vildoga (~9 km). On Vildoga, take a gravel road to the left. After ~4.5 km or so turn left again onto a paved road (the Augšlīgatne-Līgatne road). One more kilometre, and you are in the centre of Līgatne.

If you have time, you can visit the Līgatne nature trails, which are among the most popular tourist destinations in Vidzeme. Before the pond in the Līgatne centre, turn left on Dārza Street, and then ride along the shores of the Gauja to the visitor's centre.

In the evening, you can walk or bike through the Līgatne Nature Park, where fauna from the Baltic region can be observed in special enclosures.

Map 4 - Līgatne



Dining facilities we recommend en route:

- Bistro „Terase” in Sigulda, Address: Pils iela 10
- Restaurant „Lāču miga” in Līgatne, Address: Gaujas iela 22
- Pub, Pizzeria in Hotel Cēsis “Aleksis” in Cēsis: Address: Vienības laukums 1

Food shops: in the towns Sigulda and Cēsis.

Dinner and overnight in the guest house

Notes

Similar descriptions and maps are used for each day of the tours. The maps used are from the publishing company “Jāņa sēta”.

