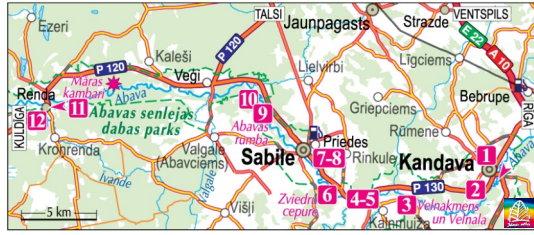




CANOEING FROM KANDAVA TO RENDA

Welcome to Abava!

In the nature park you are free to walk around, ride your bike or your car, watch birds and animals, and take trips in rowboats. Tenting and campfires are permitted only in places that have been improved specifically for that purpose. When observing migrating birds, please try to avoid any disruptions of their routine when they are resting or feeding.



Along its entire length, this route is in the Abava Ancient River Valley Nature Park. Between Kandava and Sabile, you will see some of the most beautiful landscapes and terrain in the historic region of Kurzeme. The river valley is up to 40 metres deep and as wide as 300 and more metres. There is vast diversity in plants (more than 800 kinds) and habitats. There are natural monuments such as streams, waterfalls, cliffs, and huge stones. There are also cultural and historical monuments such as castle hills, churches, ancient graveyards, cult locations and cultural landscapes. The small towns of Kandava and Sabile have town centres which are monuments of urban construction. Popular tourism facilities include the Wine Hill of Sabile and the Pedvāle Open Air Art Museum. Livestock has been released into the wild to graze in the river valley. There are nature trails and routes for tourists.

The Abava is the one river in Kurzeme that has the most impressive ancient river valleys. It is hard to see from the level of the river itself, but the Abava remains one of the most classic aspects of water tourism in Kurzeme.

TOURISM SERVICES

Nearby accommodations:

- Mežtīni, 29418603
- Plosti, 63123237
- Imulas, 63123647
- Mucenieki, 26489596
- Valdeķu muiža, 26452948
- Pils, 63124919
- Kandava, 26406733
- Indāni, 29259272

Accommodations and places of leisure for water tourists: The Abava is one of just a few rivers for water tourists in Latvia with plenty of accommodations and places for tents on its shores (examples include areas opposite the Čuži swamp, at Plosti, Lejaslangšēde, Drubazas, at the Abava rapids, in Vecupe and in Avoti). Before setting off on a trip that will take several days, however, please get in touch with the management of these facilities.

Shops: In Kandava, Sabile and Renda

Dining: In Kandava, the Zvedu cepure (Swedish Hat), Sabile and Renda

Boat rentals: www.campo.lv, 29404049; www.seakayak.lv, 29464901

Tourism information:

www.celotajs.lv, 67617600 www.sabile.lv, 63252344
www.kandava.lv, 63181150 www.renda.lv

THE ROUTE

During the summer, you need no special preparedness to take this route. The Abava is sufficiently wide between Kandava and Renda. Apart from the Abava rapids, you can take the whole route without ever leaving your boat. The river is rapid in some places, particularly where there are small dolomite cliffs in the riverbed and on the shores (opposite the Velnakmens rock, where the Amula and Imula rivers flow into the Abava, at the Abava rapids, and some 1.5 kilometres beyond it). True, the rapids can disappear when the water level is high during flooding season and at other times. The fall in the river diminishes between Vegī and Renda, and it is only in a few places after that that the water flows more rapidly. Between Kandava and Sabile, the Abava route is one of few in Latvia with such a high diversity of tourism services on its shores.

Season: Year-round, preferably between May and September, particularly in the summer

Boats: Boats, kayaks; inflatable boats can be used, but then the trip will take more time and require more physical effort

Beginning: Field stone bridge across the Abava in Kandava. Start on the left bank upriver from the bridge.

End: The Renda Bridge; disembark on the Left Bank

Length: 42 km

Duration: ~ 9 – 10 hours; if you want to take two days for the trip, try to get to Sabile on the first day

Difficulty: Easy, usually a two-day route and appropriate for friends and families

River fall: 12.3 m along the route, with an average of 0.29 m/km. The largest fall is found along several kilometres past the Abava rapids

Route: Kandava - Sabile - Renda

Distance from Rīga: 95 km

Logistics: You can leave your car at a car park in Kandava and return from Renda with a second car (35 km of paved road). You can also take a bus – just check the schedule for public transportation.

Alternatives: You can continue the route to the place where the Abava flows into the Venta River (another 30 km.). That is a lovely trip with rapids and beautiful cliffs on the shores. There are few improvements here, it has to be said. If you feel athletic, you can start the trip upriver, from the Pūre Bridge (another 10 km)

Note! During flooding season, the Abava rapids and the river past the rapids can be dangerous!

Emergency services: 112



Sabile and its former synagogue



The Abava rapids



Dawn on the Abava



The ancient Abava river valley



Near the end of the Abava route

Look for a list of active tourism routes on www.countryholidays.lv!

POINTS OF INTEREST

1 Kandava – the “gate” to the Abava ancient river valley. It is a lovely small town on the banks of the river. Points of interest: **The Courland Castle Hill; the Knights’ Castle Hill with its ruins and its Gunpowder Tower; the Lutheran Church; Latvia’s oldest stone bridge; the District Museum with its unique safe; the old town with its Market Square, Lielā Street**, etc. The old town is a monument of urban construction.

2 The Fishermen’s Bridge – an unfinished cement bridge across the rapids of the Abava.

3 The Abava Devil’s Rock – for a long time this has been one of the most popular tourism objects in what is known as the “Switzerland of Kurzeme”. It offers a lovely view of the ancient river valley. If you’re taking a boat downriver, you have to know where to go ashore to see the bridge.

4 Plosti – the first well-improved water tourist settlement, offering a variety of services.

5 The estuary of the Amula and Imula and the Abava River between the two estuaries – a place where the water is quite rapid, and there are small dolomite cliffs on the bed and along the banks of the river. The “Lejas Langsēde” campsite is at the estuary of the Amula.

6 „Zviedru cepure” (Swedish Hat) – an ancient graveyard or cult location that is near the sliding and ski trail that can be seen from the curves of the river

7 The Drubazi Botany Trail – one of the most interesting nature and information trails in the area, with livestock adapted to life in the wild, a guide, transport across the Abava, etc. There are places for tenting here.

8 Sabile – the “wine capital of Latvia” with **Wine Hill, the Sabile Castle Hill, the Lutheran Church and the former Synagogue** (all of them visible from the river). There is also the **Craftsmen’s Centre, the Pedvāle Open Air Art Museum, and the historical town centre of Sabile**, which is a monument to urban instruction. Swimming is possible at several locations in Sabile.

9 The Abava Rapids, which are at several levels. Beyond the rapids, on the right bank, is the **Cigani Island**, and the water remains swift after the rapids, as well. Beyond the rapids is an unusually wide part of the river (**Platene**). Try to touch the river bed with your oar. Tenting and leisure facilities are nearby.

10 The Kaķi Rapids has underwater dolomite cliffs, and it is approximately two kilometres downriver from the Abava Rapids. This is a slower part of the river, it has to be said. Beyond the island, on the left bank of the river, there is a **sandstone and dolomite cliff** that is several metres high. The leisure facility “Kaķu rumba” is nearby.

11 Avoti – boat rental place. It’s on the left bank of the Abava, and there are well-appointed accommodations for water tourists here

12 Renda, where Duke Jacob had manufacturing facilities in the 16th century. Points of interest include **the Ivande Waterfalls, the Lutheran Church, the Devil’s Boat, the Lielrenda Baronial Estate**, and others.



1 The Laukakmeņu (field stone) Bridge in Kandava



3 The Devil’s Rock in Abava



6 The ski and sliding trail at the Swedish Hat



5 The “Lejas Langsēde” campsite



11 Avoti – “Seakayak” base on the left bank of the Abava



9 Boaters at the Abava Rapids



7 Livestock adapted to life in the wild near the Drubazi Nature Trail



8 A view of Sabile from Wine Hill



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Photo: Lauku ceļotājs (Juris Smajņinskis)

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