



CANOEING

FROM JAUNĶEMERI TO KLAPKALNCIEMS

Welcome to Ķemeri!



The Ķemeri National Park, apart from its nature reserve zone is open to hikers, plant, animal and landscape watchers, berry and mushroom hunters, swimmers, sunbathers, bicyclists and boaters. Mechanised motor vehicles are allowed only on general use roads. Please let's make sure to nurture the values which led us to visit the park in the first place!



ROUTE

This route involves special "SitOnTop" boats which are stable and appropriate for travel on the sea, or sea kayaks. The route passes along the former fishing villages of Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems and Klapkalnciems. From the sea, a very different and unseen image of the villages can be found. An interesting place is Cape Ragaciems, which stretches deep into the sea underwater – as much as 500 metres from the shore. The seabed is rocky here, and the water is no more than one metre in depth. The shoreline road between Ragaciems and Klapkalnciems has been known as the Slow Mile since olden days, because it is a long and isolated route – one along which robbers once used to lurk. The trip can be ended at the place where the Lāčupīte River flows into the sea. There is a bridge and a car park nearby. This route is appropriate for all kinds of people, particularly if the wind is relatively slow (3-4 m/s). When planning the route, choose a day when the wind is blowing from your back or side. Beginners should hire a knowledgeable guide.

The aquatorium opposite the Ķemeri Natural Park is a NATURA 2000 territory – "The Western Shore of the Bay of Rīga."

Season: Recommended during the summer, particularly the first half thereof

Boats: SitOnTop boats, sea kayaks

Beginning: Jaunķemeri, with a car parking nearby

End: Klapkalnciems, where the Lāčupīte River flows into the sea

Length: 16 km, can be handled in one day's time

Duration: ~4 h, which is "net time," i.e., not counting stops along the way

Difficulty: Easy or of medium difficulty, depending on the wind direction and speed, as well as the height of waves; beginners should take the route only when the wind is slow

Route: Jaunķemeri – Bigauņciems – Lapmežciems – Ragaciems - Klapkalnciems

Distance from Rīga: 40 km

Logistics: You can return to your car via public transport or a second car left at the final destination of the route

Alternatives: You can travel the route in the opposite direction (Klapkalnciems-Jaunķemeri) if the wind is right. You can also continue along to Apšuciems (another 5 km, or slightly more than an hour) or Pliņciems (8 km, 2 h)

Note! Make sure you observe safety rules (life preservers, taking into account the speed and direction of the wind, staying close to the shore). The most dangerous possibility here is wind which drives your boat out to sea. If there are waves, watch out for fishermen's nets. You can leave your car only at specifically designated locations. Take care of your own safety and that of your children while taking this route.

Emergency services: 112

TOURISM SERVICES

Nearby accommodations:

- „Stēršītes”, +371 29283162
- „Monikas”, +371 26161247
- „Jūras mols”, +371 27099099
- „Smaidas”, +371 29265552
- „Nordes”, +371 63163563
- „Lapmežciems”, +371 67298303
- „Melnais stārķis”, +371 26751543

Leisure facilities: A small dining facility with benches and chairs on the beach at Ragaciems

Shops: In Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems, Klapkalnciems

Dining: In Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems

Boat rentals: www.seakayak.lv

Information: www.celotajs.lv, +371 67617600

www.jurmala.lv +371 67147900;

www.enguresnovads.lv;

www.visittukums.lv +371 63124451;

www.daba.gov.lv, +371 67730078



The Ķemeri National Park was established in 1997, primarily for the purpose of protecting wetlands – the shallow western shore of the Bay of Rīga, overgrown seaside lakes, extensive swamps, damp forests, and lowland meadows as important locations for plants (fully one-quarter of the endangered plants which are listed in the Latvian Red Book are found in the park) and animals (particularly nesting and migrating birds). The park territory also includes one of the largest swamps in Latvia – the Great Ķemeri Heath, as well as other fairly large swamps such as Raganu Swamp, Zajais Swamp, Čaukciems Swamp and Sloka Swamp. Some of these were once used for peat extraction. The area around Ķemeri has long since been known as a source of sulphurous streams, and it remains an important location for obtaining sulphurous water and medicinal mud which at one time served as the foundation of the widely known Ķemeri Spa. Interesting historical objects in the park are completely linked to the seashore as a place where people could relax and recover their health. Today the territory of the national park includes educational nature trails (the Melnalkšņi Marsh trail, the Lake Sloka trail), bike routes, three bird-watching towers, etc. The administrative and informational centre for the park is found in the "Forest House" (Meža māja) in Ķemeri.



Sea kayak at the seashore in Lapmežciems

The Ķemeri National Park has several bike, water and automobile routes. Look for a list of routes on www.countryholidays.lv and for markings out in nature!

POINTS OF INTEREST

You can't see any of the listed objects (apart from Cape Ragaciems and the Ragaciems Lighthouse) from the sea, and it is worth stopping from time to time. You can visit them by car, as well, either from the beginning of the route or upon returning to the starting point when you have completed it.

1 **The Great Pine of Bigauņciems** outside the Dižpriede café.

2 **The Kupskalns Nature Trail** – a wooden pathway leading from the P 128 road in Bigauņciems along the Siligupe River to the sea. From the sea, an orienteering element is the remnants of the old Lapmežciems boat plank way.

3 **A Stone Age site at Lapmežciems.** There was a fishing and hunting settlement here during the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC. The informational **memorial rock** was sculpted by Oļegs Skarainis.

4 **A memorial stone to Augusts Muižulis**, a recipient of the Lāčplēšis Military Order is found at the edge of the P 128 road at the marker for the 9th kilometre. Muižulis (1893-1941) was a lieutenant colonel in the No. 4 Valmiera Infantry Brigade.

5 **The Lapmežciems Museum** features information about the history of the local parish, its school and its fishing industry. There are also exhibits featuring World War I battles near Klapkalnciems which involved Finnish soldiers. The museum also organises theme-based exhibitions. Alongside it is a **memorial rock** for the politically repressed.

6 **The Lapmežciems People's Centre** was built in 1957 and is home to the local administrative district's council at this time.

7 **Kaņieris** is a seriously overgrown and shallow seaside lake. Its water level was adjusted several times during the 20th century so as to obtain agricultural lands. The lake has 14 islands, among which nine are natural and the rest are artificial and aimed at attracting nesting water birds. Lake Kaņieris has one of the richest diversities of birds in Latvia. An ornithological nature reserve was established here in 1964. In 1989, the lake was placed on the list of major birding locations in Europe, and in 1995 it was put on the list of the Ramsar Convention. At the south-eastern shore of the lake is a boating facility (only rented boats are permitted on the lake). **A bird-watching tower** was erected on the Riekstu peninsula in 2009.

8 **Starpņupīte** is an artificial canal between Lake Kaņieris and the Bay of Rīga. It helps to regulate the water level in the lake with a system of locks. This is a fine place for bird-watching in the spring and autumn. From the sea, the location can be identified via the place where the little river flows into the sea.

9 **The Ragaciems Fish Market** sells smoked fish.

10 **Cape Ragaciems** – a promontory from the western shore of the Bay of Rīga which ends with a shallow and rocky submarine shallows reaching several hundred metres into the sea. The **Ragaciems Lighthouse** is at the tip of the cape.

11 **The Slow Mile** – a route that is around 6 km in length and is quite isolated, it stretches between Ragaciems and Klapkalnciems. Robbers used to attack travellers in the olden days here.

12 **A memorial to Finnish soldiers in Klapkalnciems** – five such soldiers from World War I are buried here. The memorial was first erected in 1929, but it was destroyed by the Soviet authorities. It was recreated in May 2004. The Lapmežciems Museum features photographs and more information about the Finnish soldiers.



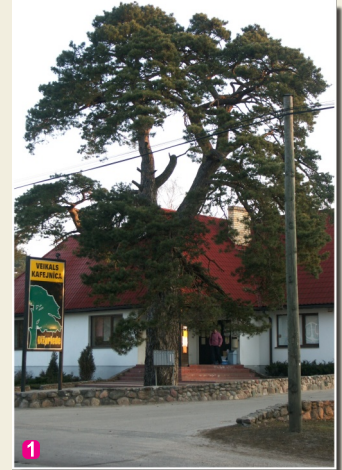
The Lapmežciems People's Centre



The Bird-atching tower at Lake Kaņieris



The Ragaciems Fish Market



The Great Pine of Bigauņciems



A beach cafe



Kaiting



Boaters at seashore of Ragaciems



The Ragaciems Lighthouse



A memorial to Finnish soldiers in Klapkalnciems

