

Soft adventure in Gauja National Park (cycling, canoeing, hiking)

(Rīga – Valmiera - Cēsis – Sigulda – Rīga)

1st day/ 08.07.2011

Arrival in Rīga.

Pick up the info package with maps and a detailed itinerary description at the reception.

Overnight in Rīga.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/elizabetesnams/index_en.html

2nd day/ 09.07.2011

Breakfast.

Pick up the bicycles at the hotel.

Since you have to take a train very early in the morning, the hotel will prepare a breakfast to take it away. Please remind the receptionist in the evening 08.07.2011.

In the morning take train: Rīga – Strenči (at 06:32, 2,42 hours, price Ls 3,20 per person, bicycle ~0,96 LVL). Please buy a ticket in the ticket office (opening hours 04:00 - 22:00). The train arrives in Strenči at 09:14.

Route	Rīga	Strenči	Price	Km	In the road	Runs *	Notes
662-852 Rīga - Valga	06:32	09:14	3.20	141.0	2:42	1234567	

Departure point 06:32 Rīga

		06:41 Zemitāni					
				06:46 Čiekurkalns			
					06:51 Jugla		
						07:02 Garkalne (Ropaži)	
	07:10 Krievupe						
		07:17 Vangaži					
				07:24 Inčukalns			
					07:29 Eglupe		
						07:40 Sigulda	
07:50 Līgatne							
	07:59 Ieriķi						
		08:05 Melturi					
		08:12 Āraiši					
		08:22 Cēsis					
				08:30 Jāņamuiža			
				08:38 Lode			
		08:46 Bāle					
				08:54 Valmiera			
					09:03 Brenguļi		
						Getting off 09:14 Strenči	
	09:20 Seda						
		09:30 Saule					
				09:42 Lugaži			
						Point of 09:48 Valga destination	

Map: Elizabete Hotel-Train station



Meeting with the person from Valmiera sports centre "Eži" in the train station of Strenči to deliver the baggage.

Attention!! When You leave the bicycles please be sure that they are locked and if possible leave at the guard or any person which can take a look at them at the sightseeing place.

Cycling: Strenči - Valmiera (~35 km, 5% asphalt, 10% gravel road, 85% sandy forest trails)

Sights and attractions en route:

- *Strenči city*- known for the raftsmen who made rafts from timber and over the stream float them till the port
- *Trikāta castle ruins*- built by Livonian order in 13th century.

From the train station in Strenči follow the Gaidu street, turn to the left to Pulkv. Zemitāna street and cycle till the junction with the Rigas street. There turn to the left and cycle till the Trikatas iela. There turn to the right and cross the bridge over Gauja river. Continue to drive straight 3 km (road 25), then turn to the right to Trikata another 6 km. In Trikāta visit the castle ruins. Please follow the map below "Trikata" and "Trikata-Brenguli". Pass the country house Lejasjēņi till you get on a bigger gravel road, turn to the right and go to Brenguli 6 km. The stage from Trikata to Brenguli is ~6 km.

In the village Brenguli there is a local brewery. From Brenguli follow the road to Valmiera. To the center there are 9 km. Please follow the map below "Brenguļi direction- Valmiera city centre" to enter the city and get to the hotel Wolmar.

Map: Strenči



Map: Strenči - Valmiera



Map: Trikāta



BALTIC COUNTRY HOLIDAYS

Map: Trikāta - Brengulji



Map: Brengulji direction- Valmiera city centre



Overnight in Valmiera.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/wolmar/index_en.html

(For dinner in Valmiera we suggest cafe in hotel Wolmar or restaurant Rossini, located on the basement in the house of Valmiera museum, next to the Livonian order castle ruins)

3rd day/ 10.07.2011

Breakfast.

Cycling: Valmiera - Cēsis (~50 km, 5% Asphalt, 5% gravel road, 85% forest trails), en route sightseeing of Sietiņiezis white sandstone cliffs and Ērgļu red sandstone cliffs near the river Gauja.

We suggest to by some food for lunch, because during cycling trip there will no shops. It is possible to by pastry and cookies at the bakery Ievas Maiznīca kiosk, located in the bus station and Rīgas street 26.

For the cycling route Valmiera- Cēsis, follow the cycling route signs and the map. Starting at the Valmiera bridge, ride down Plostnieku iela (along the Gauja River). When you reach the Ģīmes mill, you will turn right on Leona Paegles iela. Ride straight on – the name of the street will change to Jumaras iela, you will pass through some forestland, cross the Valmiera ring road, and then ride down a paved road toward Jumara. You will cross a small river/stream in a dip and climb the other side. On the right ahead of you on the right will be a sign Jumara. Immediately on the left is the entrance to the forest path you will be cycling on today. Be careful it is easy to miss!

At Bulini there are no obvious direction signs. Ride up the steep hill to the top and at the junction go left through the small hamlet. You will soon pick up the path again. At Jāņmuiža, cross to the

opposite bank of the river and ride on to Pieškalji (Pieškalni). From there, turn left toward Cēsis. You will enter Cēsis via Lenču iela, and it ends in the town centre.

The forest path is about 40km long. You need to look out for the orange/yellow/red paint markings on the trees throughout as these tell you that you are on the correct route. You need to be vigilant, because from time to time, the route crosses small roads or forks at junctions and does not always go straight on.

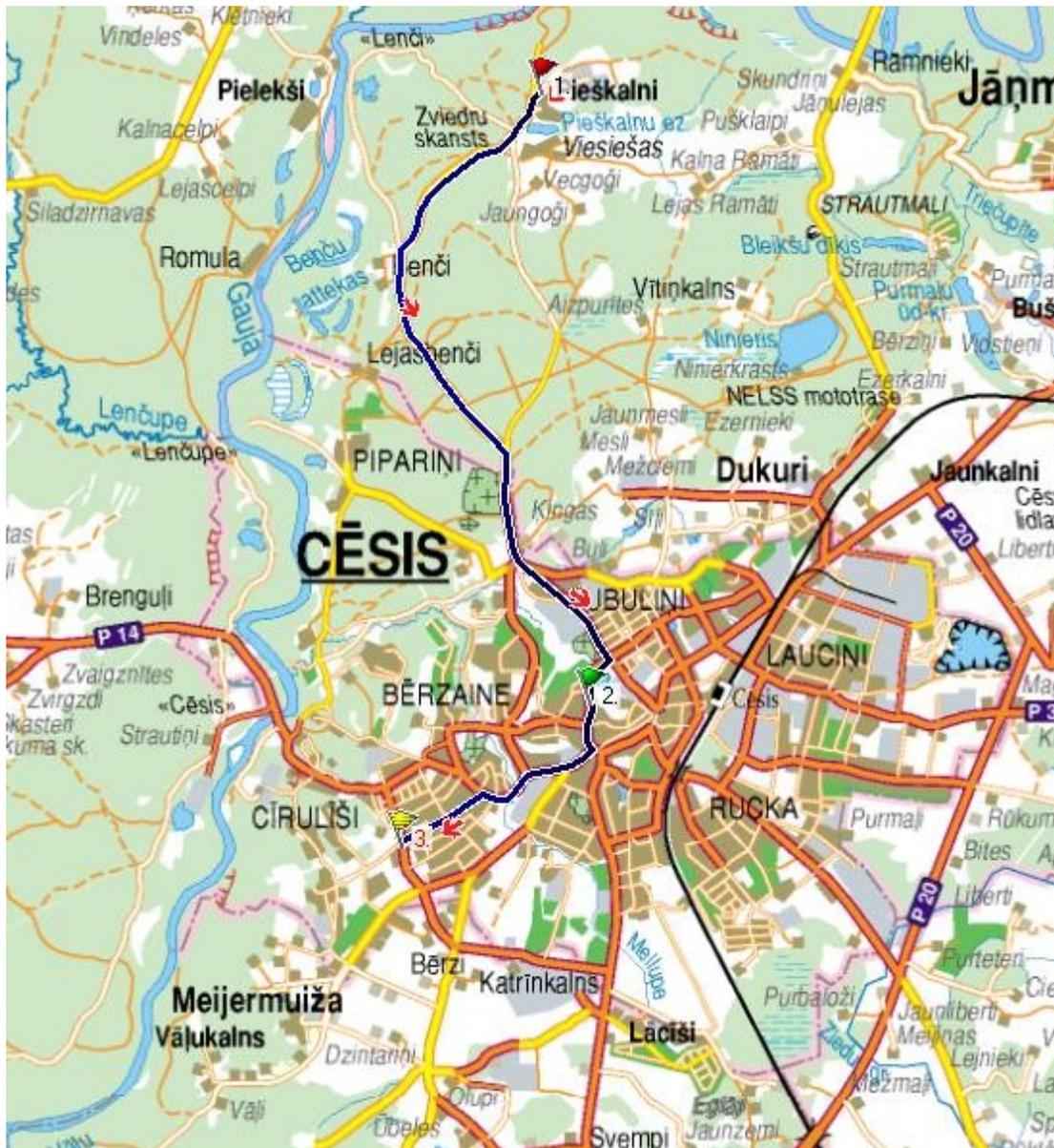
Attention! For this cycling route use the copy of map Cēsis- Valmiera.

Free time in Cēsis – visit to the Livonian Orders castle ruins, the manor complex and the old town.

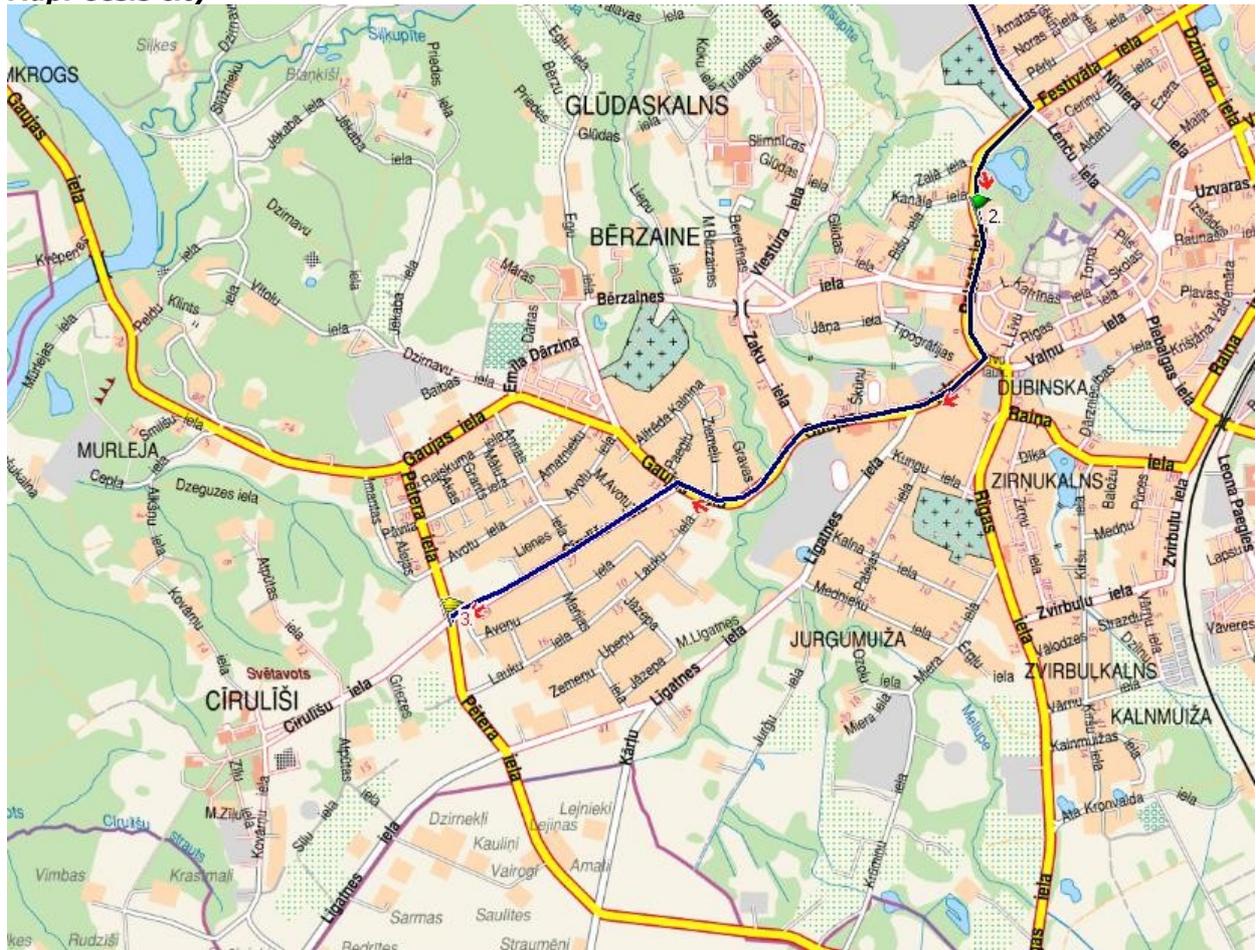
Map: Beginning of cycling tour in Valmiera



Map: Valmiera- Cēsis



Map: Cēsis city



Cēsis- hotel Atpūta: from city centre take Gaujas street and follow the signs to "Cīruliši". From Gaujas street turn on the left to Cīrulišu street and cycle till crossing with Pētera street. Hotel is located on the corner.

Option:

Hiking along the Cīruliši hiking trail in Gauja River valley (4,5-7,2 km) en route possibility to see various sandstone cliffs and holes.

Overnight in Cēsis.

<http://www.celotajs.lv/a/atputa/index.en.html>

(For dinner we suggest cafe in guest house, Restaurant or Cafe in Kolonna Hotel Cēsis, Cafe Aroma club, Cafe Province).

4th day / 11.07.2011

Breakfast.

For the lunch at the canoe trip You have to take food with You, because there will be no possibility to buy it.

At 10:00 in the Hotel Atpūta you will be picked up by a person from Valmiera sports centre "EŽI", who will bring you the river Gauja.

Canoeing on the river Gauja: Cēsis – Līgatne (~20 km, 4.5 h), en route possibility to see the castle mount of Kvēpene, various cliffs and the wooden ferry which is driven by the river stream in Līgatne.

The canoe tour will end at the wooden ferry of Līgatne. Here you will meet the company providing the canoe boats, give the boats to them and receive your bicycles and bags.

Cycling in the Līgatne Nature park (Asphalt, 5,1 km). Cycle further along the gravel road in the direction of Līgatne. The road will convert in Gaujas iela. After that turn right in the first asphalt road to the Gaujas Nacionālais parks (Gauja National park) and cycle approx. 1,9 km until the visitors centre. Entrance fee in the park: 2,50 LVL per person.

Map: Līgatne ferry- Nature park/ Līgatnes dabas takas



Map: Līgatne nature trails



Hiking along the nature trails in Līgatne nature park (5,5 km), where wild animals of the Baltic region can be observed in special enclosures. Further nature trails possible: the trail of the untouched nature in the fern glen (1,3 km) and the trail along the River Gauja (1,3 km).

After visiting the park, cycle back to the village Līgatne. Turn right to the Gaujas iela and cycle straight (the road goes up in a hill) until you see a log house *Lāču miga* on the left side.

Overnight in Līgatne

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/lacumiga/index_en.html

(For dinner we suggest guest house *Lāču miga* restaurant in Līgatne village, on Gaujas street)

5th day/ 12.07.2011

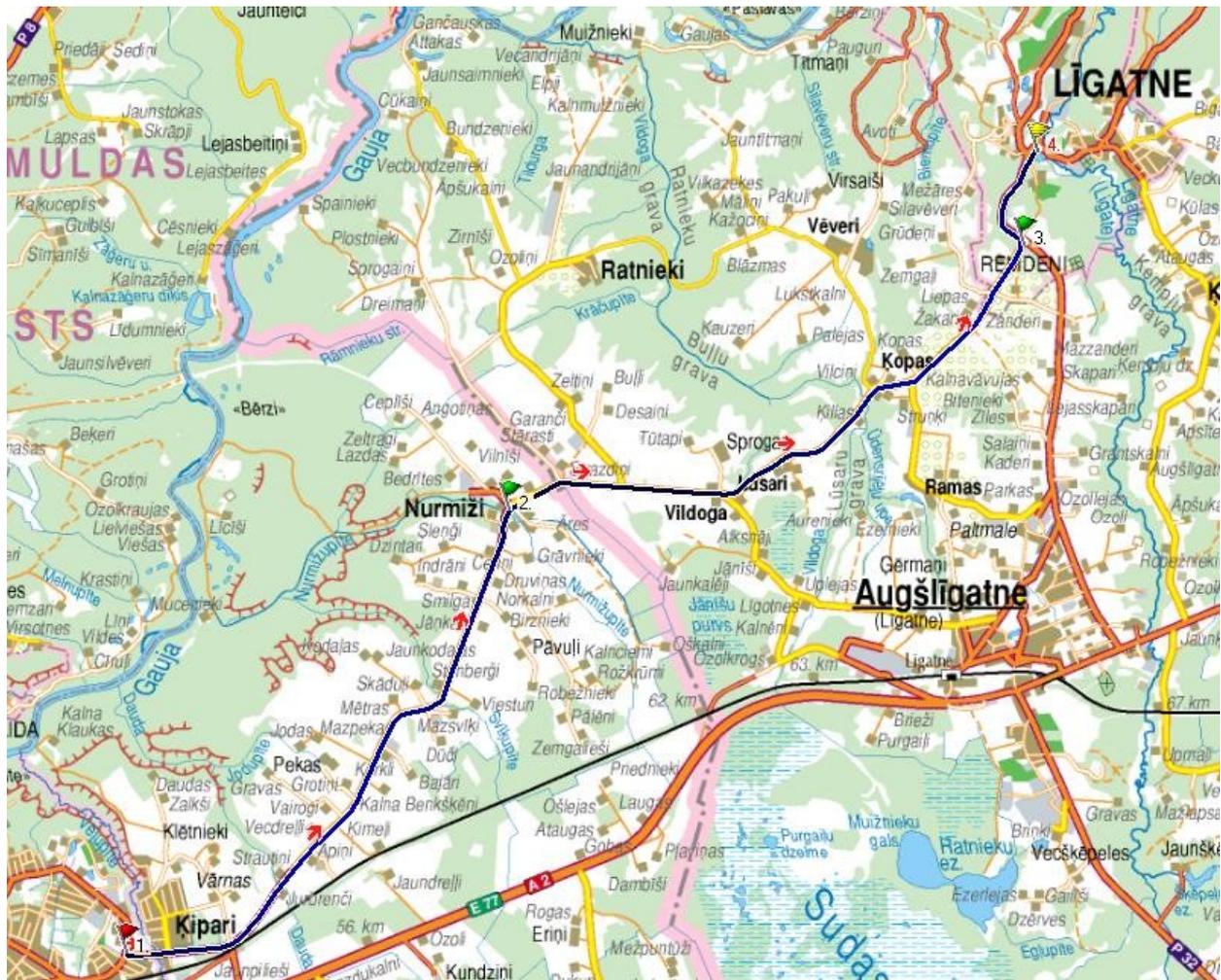
Breakfast.

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

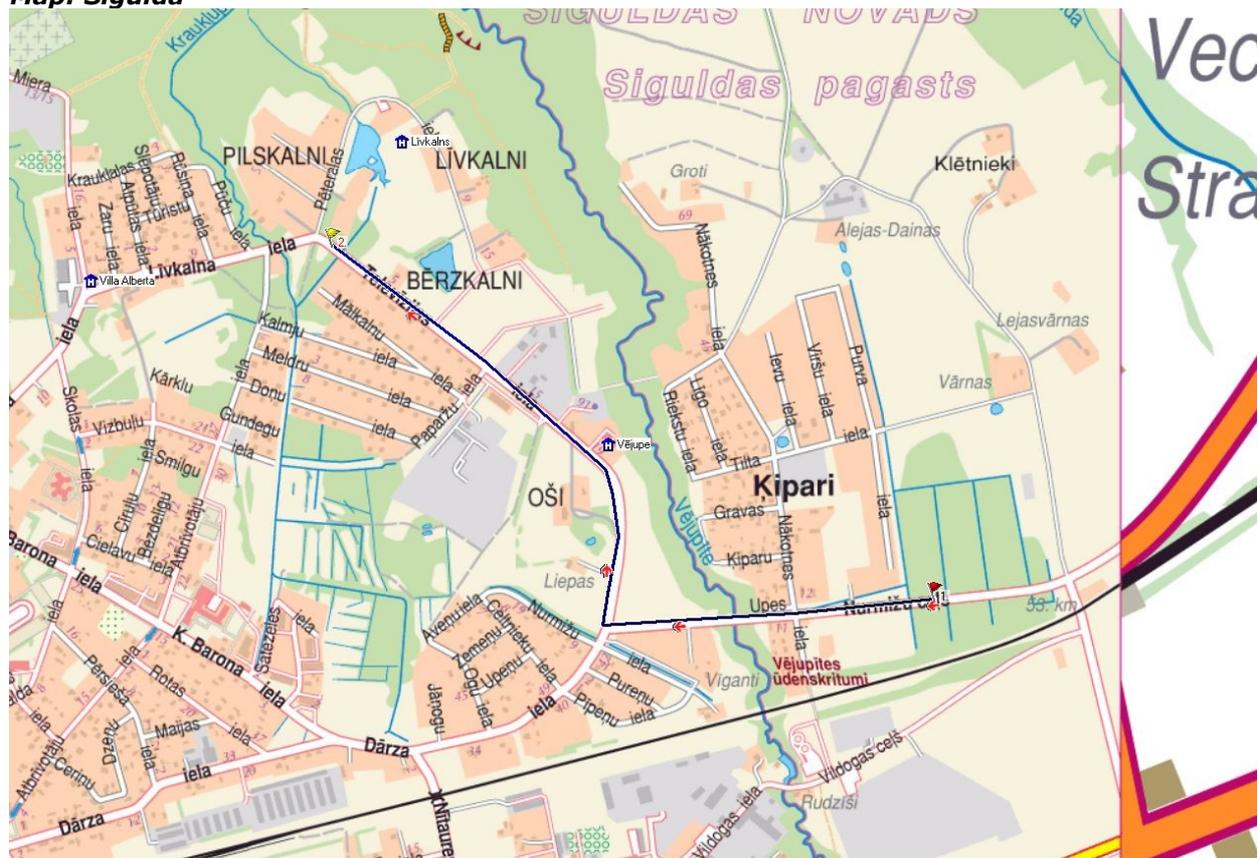
Leaving the front door of the guest House Lacu Miga, turn left. Continue along this road and down a hill until you reach a T-junction. There is a large pond straight ahead. Turn right up the hill and continue for about 1km. Take the first turning right (it is unmarked), which is also uphill. This is the 'back road'.

Turn on the way to Vildoga. From there, continue on to Nurmīži and then Sigulda (9 km in all). You will enter Sigulda via the Normiži road.

Map: Līgatne - Sigulda



Map: Sigulda



Overnight in Sigulda.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/livkalns/index_en.html

(For dinner we suggest restaurant in Hotel Ezeri Spa, guest house Livkalns, guest house Aparjods, TIMIĀNS (Hotel Santa), Restaurant KUNGU RIJA in Krimulda)

6th day/ 13.07.2011

Breakfast.

Cycling: Sigulda – Turaida – Sigulda (~20 km, forest trails, gravel road and Asphalt,) en route possibility to visit the Gūtmaņa cave – the largest in Latvia, the Bobsleigh track, the palace with the park of Krimulda, the museums reserve complex of Turaida with the castle, observation tower, history museum and sculpture garden.

Sights and attractions en route:

- Sigulda- 3 years ago city celebrated 800th Anniversary.
- Gutmaņa cave- the biggest internal erosion cave in the Baltic States. It started forming before 10 000 years when after the Ice Age the water streams gnawed through a sandstone rock. It is an ancient cult site as well as protected geological object. Height – 10 m, width - 12 m, depth – 18,8 m. It is famous with the inscriptions on the cave walls.
- Turaida museum reserve and Livonian order castle- Turaida Medieval Castle was built in 1214 according to the Bishop Albert's directive. Gradual expansion and building continued until the 16th century. The castle was one of the Riga Archbishops' residencies. After the collapse of Livonia states, Turaida castle became a private property and a part of the manor. After the fire in 1776, it was not renovated but the manor owners' living house was built in the castle yard. Romantic castle ruins attracted the tourists' attention already in the 18th/19th century. The sight area in the big round tower was built in 1936 but its restoration was started in 1953. 1973 was the start time for archaeological excavations that lasted for more than 25 years followed up by restoration and reconstruction. Nowadays the expositions about its history and epoch events are located in the castle halls. Possibility to take a horse ride in the museum reserve territory.

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From the Sigulda centre, drive down Raiņa and Gaujas street. At the Lutheran church can turn on the right to the Sigulda New castle and Livonian order ruins. From here is a nice view to Turaida castle. If at the church You take the road to left, it will lead You to the air cable tram. (It price per one way is Ls 2, on Saturdays and Sundays Ls 2,50)

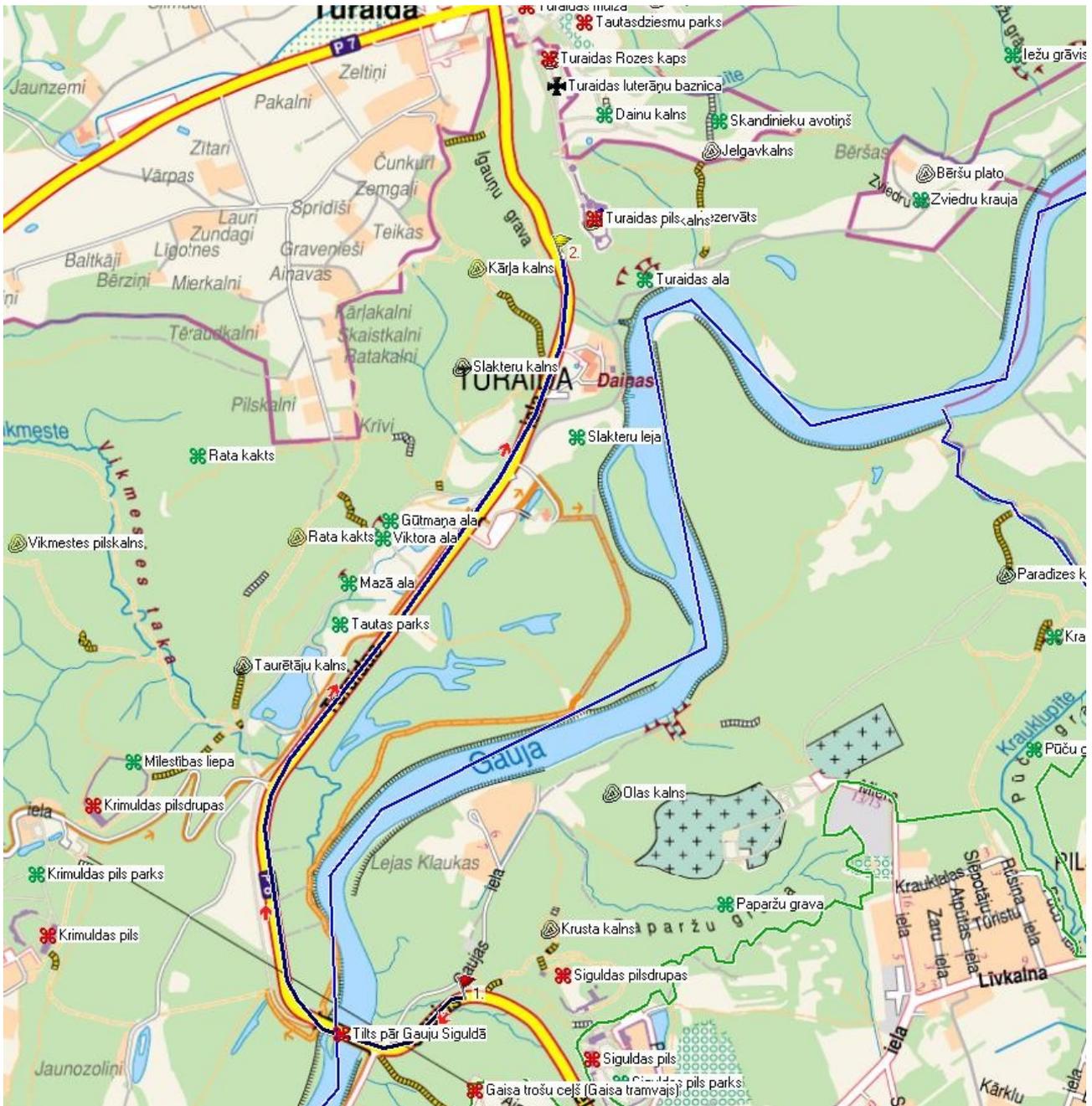
Sigulda - Krimulda

10:00; 11:00; 12:00; 12:30; 13:00; 13:30; 14:00; 14:30; 15:00; 15:30; 16:00; 16:00*; 16:30*; 17:00*;
17:30*; 18:00*; 18:30*; 19:00**; 19:30**

Krimulda - Sigulda

10:08; 11:08; 12:08; 12:38; 13:08; 13:38; 14:08; 14:38; 15:08; 15:38; 16:08; 16:38*; 17:08*; 17:38*;
18:08*; 18:38*; 19:08**; 19:38**

Map: Sigulda- Turaida



Return to Gauja street and cycle down the hill on Turaidas iela to reach Turaida. Be careful, however – as you descend into the Gauja River valley from Sigulda and Turaida, ride very slowly and carefully, because the road is steep, and there can be significant traffic. Turaida is at a distance of 5 km. Visit the Turaida museum and reserve. Along your way back to Sigulda, visit the Gūtmaņala cave and other points of interest in Sigulda.

Or hiking in the surroundings of Sigulda.

Points of interest:

- Sigulda New castle and Livonian order castle ruins- The building of the Castle started while the Order of the Brethren of the Sword Master Venno in 1207. Initially – a “Castellum” type fortress with a chapel. After the Order was defeated in 1236, the Livonian Order took over the site that carried out major reconstruction modifying it to a convent type building. When the fire-shooting weapons developed, medieval fortresses gradually lost their initial importance. The castle was ruined during the Great Northern War in the early 18th century and was not renovated since then. All that is left today is the south-western part of the convent building,

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with Gothic window apertures and the tower of the main gate. The New castle was build as living house instead of the ancient building at 19th century.

- The air cable train- can take a ride above the Gauja river from Sigulda to Krimulda or in the opposite way.
- Paradise hill (Paradīzes kalns/ Gleznatāju kalns)- a beautiful sight towards the River Gauja primeval valley and the River Gauja 80m below greets from this hill.
- Amusement park "Wild cat" in Senču street 1
- Rodel track in the Peldu street 1

Overnight in Sigulda.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/livkalns/index_en.html

7th day/ 14.07.2011

Breakfast.

Take the train: Sigulda – Rīga (1,13 h)

Route	Sigulda	Rīga	Price	Km	In the road	Runs *	Notes
655 Valmiera - Rīga	06:12	07:25	1.55	53.0	1:13	1234567	
637 Sigulda - Rīga	06:49	07:49	1.55	53.0	1:00	12345--	Ekspressis
857-667 Valga - Rīga	07:16	08:28	1.55	53.0	1:12	1234567	
639 Sigulda - Rīga	08:16	09:31	1.55	53.0	1:15	12345--	
641 Sigulda - Rīga	09:55	11:10	1.55	53.0	1:15	1234567	
643 Sigulda - Rīga	11:12	12:27	1.55	53.0	1:15	-----67	
851-661 Valga - Rīga	13:49	15:05	1.55	53.0	1:16		Runs on 29th and 30th June. In Valga transfer from train No 0210 Tallin-Tartu-Valga.
851-661 Valga - Rīga	13:49	15:03	1.55	53.0	1:14	1234567	Will not run on 29th and 30th June. In Valga transfer from train No 0210 Tallin-Tartu-Valga.
645 Cēsis - Rīga	15:55	17:08	1.55	53.0	1:13	1234567	
649 Sigulda - Rīga	17:30	18:45	1.55	53.0	1:15	1234567	
651 Sigulda - Rīga	18:56	20:05	1.55	53.0	1:09	12345-7	
853-663 Valga - Rīga	19:35	20:39	1.55	53.0	1:04	1234567	
653 Sigulda - Rīga	21:29	22:44	1.55	53.0	1:15	1234567	

* **Notes:** 1234567 runs on all days 12345-- runs only on working days -----67 runs only on Saturdays,

Map: Sigulda



Map: Train station - Elizabete Hotel



Free time in Riga.

In the evening return bicycles at the hotel' s reception.

Overnight in Riga.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/elizabetesnams/index_en.html

8th day/15.07.2011

Breakfast.

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 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** (with tram Nr 1, 6, 3 or bus Nr 1); **the Mežaparks park with Riga ZOO** (can be reach by tram Nr 11); the so called **Moscow suburb** and **Pārdaugava district** – former workers districts with wooden buildings; **Vecmilgrāvis** where the Daugava flows into the sea; the **Riga beaches** in Vecāķi or Bolderāja.

We suggest to take a ride with the new Art Nouveau style retro trolley.

Riga retro tram runs on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays during the summer season, from June 4 till the end of August, offering Riga citizens and guests to enjoy the city from a 1901 model tram.

The tram will be running in two routes, the Big circle and the Small circle:

- The Big circle goes from Radio Street to Mežaparks and back. Mežaparks is not only called *Riga lungs*, being one of the biggest forests within Riga borders, but is also interesting for its architecture, particularly many samples of functionalism. Mežaparks is also home to Riga Zoo.
- The Little circle from Radio Street to Ausekļa Street goes through the historical part of the city surrounded by old parks, with splendid buildings of the National Opera, National Theatre, Latvian Naval School and famous quarters of Riga's Art Nouveau.

The retro tram is a small carriage which immediately stands out against the modern urban background with its Art Nouveau design elements. It has 18 seats plus 10 places for standing.

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Retro tram departure times

Radio Street - Ausekļa Street	Ausekļa Street - Radio Street	Radio Street - Mežaparks	Mežaparks - Radio Street
11:00	11:13	11:30	12:15
13:00	13:13	13:30	14:10
16:00	16:13	16:30	17.10

From Stone bride/ Akmens tilts which is located next to Old Riga, can take a boat trip in Daugava or till sea and Mezaparks where Riga Zoo is located.

Overnight in Riga.

http://www.celotajs.lv/a/elizabetesnams/index_en.html

9th day/16.07.2011

Breakfast.

Departure.