



Living Cultures

United by the Unique
SUITI



The Suiti land

Brochure and map for tourists

THE
SUITI
LAND



LATVIA

Symbols



Castle, manor house



Church



Museum



Guest house



Camping



Relief



Beautiful sights



Active leisure



Recreation park



Trail



For children and teenagers



Fishing



Canoeing



Country kitchen



Sauna ritual



For parties



Craftsmen



Herbs and tea



Wellbeing Tourism



Massage



Local lifestyle



Food producer



Small farms



Animal breeder



By the sea



Accepts individual travellers



Accepts tourist groups



Tour guide services



Copier



This destination has specific opening hours which you must determine in advance



Internet access



Disable Access



Must register in advance



Interreg
Estonia-Latvia
European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

This publication is financed within the Estonia - Latvia Programme project "Development and promotion of small ethno-cultural regions as tourism destinations".

This publication reflects the views of the author. The managing authority of the programme is not liable for how this information may be used.

Photos: Dzintars Leja, Jānis Bruklis, Lauma Migoviča, Dace Martinova, tourism entrepreneurs' private archives; Cover photo - Dzintars Leja.



The Suii are a community with among the most colourful and unique cultural traditions in Kurzeme and Latvia. This was confirmed on October 1, 2009, when the cultural territory of the Suii was included in the UNESCO list of global intangible cultural heritage, thus indicating that the traditions must be preserved. The Suii territory is also on the list of folk traditions that is part of the Latvian Cultural Canon. Manifestations of this intangible cultural heritage include traditional festivals, habits, oral traditions, traditional singing and musical skills, folk costumes and culinary traditions. Since 2009, the Suii community has been undergoing a renaissance, with people actively working to restore traditions and ensure their sustainability and promotion at the local, national and international level. The survival of the cultural territory is in the hands of the Suii themselves, and this is closely linked to the practices and the creativity of community representatives. The Suii believe the development of tourism in their area to be of great importance in this. This means emphasising a niche in cultural tourism that is based on the broader promotion of the unique cultural heritage of the Suii.

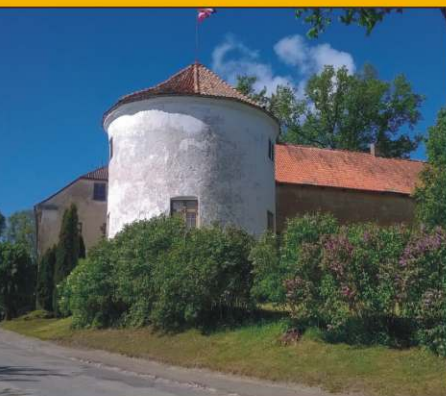


Alsunga: The Noble Suiti People

Known as Alšvanga in the past, this place was mentioned for the first time in 1231 in an agreement that was signed between the deputy legate of the pope in Rome and the Courlandian tribes of the region. The Livonian Order ruled the territory until 1561, and from 1573 until 1738 the order's castle belonged to the von Schwerin dynasty from Pomerania. It during the rule of this aristocratic family that a stone church was built in honour of Archangel Michael, and local residents began to convert to Catholicism. Alsunga became the Catholic centre for all of Kurzeme, and local residents became known as the Suiti (from the Schwerin suite).

For nearly 400 years, Alsunga has been the historical centre of the Suiti territory. This is Latvia's most conservative region and is widely known with unusual songs, colourful folk costumes and various folk traditions and beliefs. The Suiti have their own dialect, foods and many other things that have been long since abandoned or forgotten elsewhere in Latvia. The religious has commingled with the folk here in one unique whole. The Alsunga Administrative District covers 191 km² and has some 1,500 residents.

1. The Alsunga Livonian Order Castle



This Medieval castle is a complex that was established gradually between the 14th and the 18th century, and has been rebuilt several times. The castle is unique in and outside of Latvia in that it is one of the rare Medieval castles to have survived to the present day in part, but in its original historical appearance. The castle offers an exhibition about its history. Visitors can look at a Suiti kitchen, write a letter with a fountain pen in Barbara's boudoir, or celebrate a special event in the romantic venue of the castle's round tower.

Pils iela 1,
Alsunga

Ph.: +371 26425015
E-mail: muzejs@alsunga.lv

2. The Roman Catholic Church of St Michael



Built around 1625, this church has for centuries been the main religious centre for the Suiti community and the foundation for the community's spirituality and identity. In 1882, the church was expanded into its current cross form. Work by the Dutch wood carver Johan Mertens can be seen in the church. The organ was built in 1893 in Jēkabpils by F. Weisenborn. Under the church are the sealed graves of the Schwerin dynasty.

Skolas iela 1, Alsunga

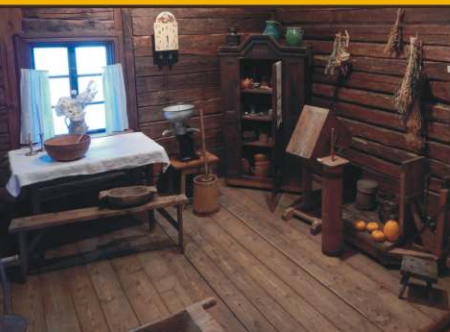
3. Dižgabalkalns Hill



Found at the centre of Alsunga, this hillock received its name in 1659, when Courlandian General Berg placed cannons here to bombard Swedish troops that had fortified themselves in the castle. The castle hill is 8 - 10 metres high, and it offers a lovely view of the church and Lake Dzirnavas alongside it.

Pils iela, Alsunga

4. The Alsunga Administrative District Museum



The museum features the living room and kitchen of a Suiti family, the liturgical wear of Catholic priests, as well as varying exhibitions about the origins and present day of the ethnographic ensemble "Women of Suiti". The museum also offers performances by Suiti women, Suiti men and Suiti pipers. The Alsunga Tourism Information Centre is housed in the museum, as are ceramics and weaving workshops.

Skolas iela 11a,
Alsunga

Ph.: +371 26425015
E-mail: muzejs@alsunga.lv

5. The Alsunga Tourism Information Centre



The centre was opened in 2017 with the aim of facilitating tourism in Alsunga and the historical Suiti territory and to offer information about the administrative district, thus establishing a positive and attractive image for Alsunga and the historical territory in Latvia and abroad.

Skolas iela 11a,
Alsunga

Ph.: +371 26425015
E-mail: muzejs@alsunga.lv

6. The Alsunga Ceramics Workshop



Found in the Alsunga Museum, the workshop has been open since 2009, showing people how various ceramics can be made from clay. Visitors can try their hand at the task or just watch as the clay is shaped, spun and, finally, glazed.

Skolas iela 11a,
(on the 2nd floor),
Alsunga

Vija Bikse
Ph.: +371 26668284

7. For Health and Beauty

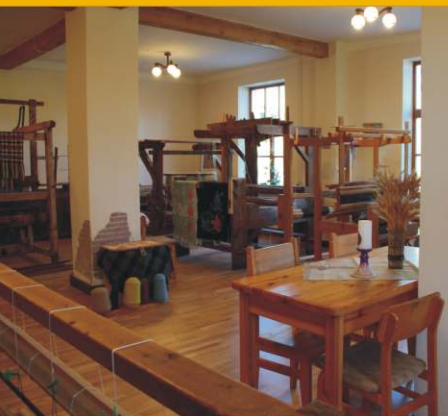


Natālija Rutule owns this workshop in the Alsunga Museum building. She teaches master's classes in preparing various health and beauty products. A sound workshop offers a chance to listen to the peaceful sounds of gongs, bells and other instruments.

Skolas iela 11a,
Alsunga

Natālija Rutule
Ph.: +37129552381
E-mail: nrutule@inbox.lv

8. The "Austuve" creative workshop



Found in the Alsunga Museum, this workshop demonstrates how the folk costumes and accessories of the Suiti community are produced. Visitors can learn about weaving traditions in the area and examine the colourful range of folk costumes. Visitors are welcome to try their hand at the work under the guidance of experienced specialists.

Skolas iela 11a,
Alsunga,
Alsungas nov.

Director of Ethnic Cultural
Centre "Suiti": Dace Martinova,
Ph.: +371 29222103,
E-mail: dace.martinova@inbox.lv
Weaver: Kristīne Brūkle,
Ph.: +371 29379430,
E-mail: kristinebr@inbox.lv

9. Ethnic Cultural Centre "Suiti"



This collection features the heritage of the Suii people, including an exhibition of folk costumes. Visitors can learn about the costumes and try them on. This is a cosy place for meetings, with well-equipped rooms for seminars and various types of training sessions.

Ziedulejas iela 1,
Alsunga,
Alsungas nov.

Director of Ethnic Cultural
Centre "Suii": Dace Martinova,
Ph.: +371 29222103,
E-mail: dace.martinova@inbox.lv

10. The "Rija" Suii crafts and arts space



Founded in a former threshing barn, this centre offers crafts, games, handicrafts and meetings with Suii women. All kinds of workshops teach useful and not particularly useful everyday activities, and things are on sale at the space, as well. The work of local craftspeople is beautiful, interesting and original.

Ziedulejas 3,
Alsunga

Inga Šēna-Laizāne
Ph.: +371 29446594
E-mail: inga.senalaizane@gmail.com

11. The "Pūralāde" store and creative workshop



Mareta Petroviča owns this creative weaving workshop, where she produces colourful textiles and teaches master's classes. Souvenirs produced at the workshop are for sale.

Skolas iela 6-3a,
Alsunga

Mareta Petroviča
Ph.: +371 20203115

12. The Mežvidi maze



This labyrinth covers 3,300 m². Visitors can make their way through the maze, trying to find the exit and handling clever tasks at some of the special twists and turns in the labyrinth. There is a playground for children, along with a workshop, a mud café and the "fir tree village."

"Mežvidi",
Alsungas nov.

Ph.: +371 29474677,
+371 20150506 (cash desk)
E-mail: mezvidu.labirints@inbox.lv

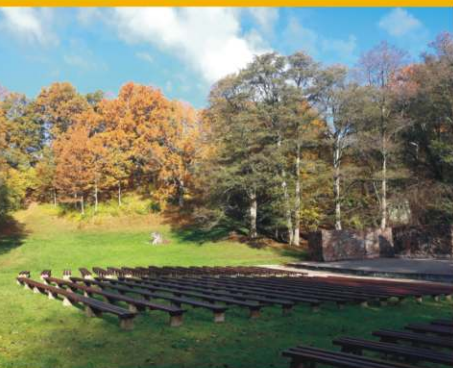
13. The Žibgrava health trail



1.2 km long, the trail passes through a unique terrain of hillocks and forests, with the height of the valley rising to as much as 15 metres. Visitors will find a diversity of plant life, as well as the beautiful little Kauliņupīte River, which crosses the trail at two points. The health trail was established in the late 1990s.

Alsungas nov.

14. The Zieduleja park



Here you will find an open-air stage in a lovely landscape. Each summer, this is the venue for concerts, theatrical performances, balls, Summer Solstice celebrations, etc. An international drone singing festival brings together bourdon singers from all around the world.

Alsunga,
Alsungas nov.

15. The Suiťi bakery



Bread for tourists, including the baking of carrot buns, tasting of bread, dressing of a Suiťi woman, games and songs.

Magoņu iela 1 a,
Alsunga

Ruta Sokolovska
Ph.: +371 29411730
E-mail: rutasokolovska@inbox.lv

16. The Spēľmaņu Cafē



The cafe sets the table á la Suiťi, with various dumplings and porridges, among others. You can take part in the cooking of your meal together with the ladies of the cafe.

Pils iela 7,
Alsunga

Mairita Slavinska
Ph.: +371 26179298
E-mail: slavinski@inbox.lv

17. The “Zeijas” farm



A true Latvian landlady, Skaidrīte Nagļina, will welcome you to this farm and show you how to bake traditional bread. Old recipes and a bread oven heated by firewood will lead to beloved and tasty carrot buns, fresh sourdough bread and “pizza” á la the Suiťi. For groups up to 10 people. Please contact the farm in advance of your visit.

“Zeijas”,
Alsungas nov.

Skaidrīte Nagļina
Ph.: +371 26032206
E-mail: sknaglina@inbox.lv

18. The "Gāčas" farm



This is the home of singer and oral tradition keeper Lidija Jansone, who is a holder of the Latvian Order of Tree Stars and a fierce defender of the cultural heritage of the Suiti people. She will tell you about her community's history and traditions and about the special bourdon singing of the Suiti. Lidija will also talk about how beer was once brewed by our ancestors for various celebrations.

"Gāčas",
Alsungas nov.

Lidija Jansone
Ph.: +371 26010239

19. The "ķīši" guesthouse



On the banks of Lake Zvirgzdi, this is an ideal place for family recreation or weddings. The landscape is beautiful. The hall with a fireplace seats 50 people. The venue has a sauna, a kitchen, four well-appointed rooms and a dormitory room with 17 beds. Four cottages for four persons are also available. There is a space for tents. Boats can be rented for licenced fishing in the lake.

Alsungas nov.

Anita Raģele
Ph.: +37129244221
www.kisi.lv

20. The "Ezermalī" leisure complex



This centre offers recreation in a lovely venue on the banks of Lake Zvirgzdi without overnight accommodations. There is a lovely sandy beach for swimmers, as well as boating and fishing. Children can ride a water bike. Active leisure with a country sauna. There is a guesthouse with two rooms for eight people, as well as six camping trailers, 18 sites for tents, and an opportunity to rent a boat.

Alsunga,
Alsungas nov.

Aiga Ķikure
Ph.: +371 29122870
www.ezermali.lv

21. Suiti meeting places - Alsunga, Gudenieki, Jūrkalne



The environmental object "SUIČI MEETING PLACE" was established during an international arts plénière session in Jūrkalne, and the originator of the idea was the musician Igo. Sculptor Ivars Miķelsons with assistants Didzis Grodzs and Juris Krafts produced the environmental object. The idea of marking out the Suiči cultural space among Gudenieki, Alsunga and Jūrkalne in nature began in 2013, when the first Suiči meeting place was established where the Gudenieki-Ēdole and Alsunga-Basi roads cross. The second meeting place was established the next year where the Kuldīga-Alsunga-Jūrkalne road crosses the town in the direction of Jūrkalne past the Alsunga centre. The third Suiči meeting place was established in Jūrkalne. The objects were established in partnership with local governments and landowners by the "Vēju sēta" association.

The Suiči of Gudenieki

22. The Birži Manor Complex

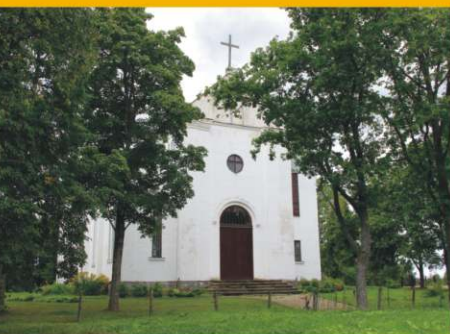


The manor is in Basi in the Gudenieki Parish of Kuldīga District, some 20 km from the district centre. The manor was built in the 19th century, burned down in 1905, and then restored. A former residence for servants and an old magazine barn have survived. The surrounding park covers 4.5 ha, and the estate is a cultural and historical monument of local importance. The barn was fully reconstructed in 2009 and 2010 with co-financing from the European Union, and today it is the Basi Culture Centre.

Birži,
Gudenieku pag.,
Kuldīgas nov.

Olita Ulmkalne
Ph.: +371 25623832

23. The Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist



This is the church of the Liepāja Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church and is in Gudenieki in the Kuldīga District. This is one of three historic churches in the Suiti area and as part of the cultural space was inscribed on the list of UNESCO cultural heritage. The church was built between 1930 and 1948. The organ with wooden pipes was built by Juris Bokums.

Gudenieku pag,
Kuldīgas nov.

Dace Nasteviča
Ph.: +371 26321397

24. Farm "Zemgaļi"



This farm welcomes groups and individual travellers for a smoke sauna, lunch, and a chance to taste Suiti bread, buns and special seed pastries that are based on ancient recipes.

"Zemgaļi",
Alsungas nov.

Ingrīda Jēkabsone
Ph.: +371 22847232
E-mail: ingridajekabsone@inbox.lv

25. The "Aploki" farm

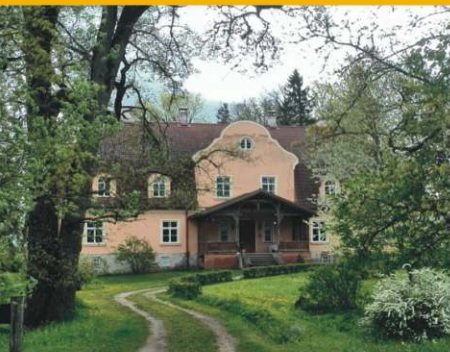


The landlady of this farm will tell you about healthy herbal teas and home-based goodies. If you wish to spend the night under the stars, we offer a place for tents and a campfire on the banks of local river by the old Lūkas windmill. "Aploki" will welcome anyone who wants to relax in a peaceful and quiet atmosphere.

"Aploki",
Gudenieku pag.,
Kuldīgas nov.

Ineta Eglīte
Ph.: +371 28605261
E-mail: tukkis@inbox.lv

26. The Mara Manor



The estate is located in the Turlava Parish in Kuldīga District. Guests are offered comfortable and well-appointed rooms with breakfast in the morning. There is also an apartment for up to five people with a separate entrance, a living room, two bedrooms and a kitchen. The owners of the manor offer tours of local German castles and estates in Kurzeme, as well as of Kuldīga, the pearl of Kurzeme.

"Maras muiža",
Turlavas pagasts,
Kuldīgas novads

Ilga Pranča-Hartinger
Ph.: +371 26376974
E-mail: maras.m@inbox.lv

The Suiti of Jūrkalne

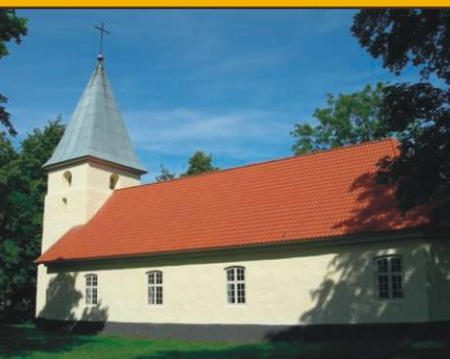
27. The steep shores of Jūrkalne



This is one of the most beautiful seashores in Latvia with a quiet and untouched beach and a steep shore that stands up to 20 m high.

Jūrkalne, Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils novs.

28. The Jūrkalne Catholic Church



An old legend about this church says that once upon a time, a worship service was being held during a storm, and a ship was sinking near the old cemetery. The priest picked up a flag and an incense dish and asked congregation members to join him in a rescue effort. A rowboat was dispatched to the sinking ship, which managed to rescue some of the crew, while the ship with the captain and the other crew members eventually washed up on shore. In honour of this rescue, the captain dubbed the place Felixberg (or fortunate shore). Later the territory became known as Pilsberga, and it became Jūrkalne during the first period of Latvian independence.

Jūrkalne, Ventspils novads

29. A regional research centre: “Little Chamber of Ancient Items, Writings and Photographs”



The ground floor of the local library underwent capital renovations in 2014, and the first floor was reconstructed to diversify free time opportunities not just for local residents, but also for tourists. On the first floor now is a collection of traditional historical objects from Jūrkalne and the Sui people. There are several looms for creative workshops, with separate spaces for seminars, training sessions and other events. This helps to develop lifelong learning opportunities and to restore historical traditions.

"Kraši",
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

The Jūrkalne Library
Ph.: +371 28696228
jurkalnes.biblioteka@ventspilsnov.lv

30. A monument to Latvian refugees fleeing to Sweden



Sculptor Ģirts Burvis created this memorial as a sail that symbolises the hopes of Latvian refugees toward the close of World War II. The gap in the sail represents the dramatic splitting up of families, and it stands for difficulties and pains that one part of our national suffered and overcame abroad.

Sārnate,
Ventspils nov.

31. The Culture Centre



The Culture Centre is in a building that was built in the mid-18th century as a saloon. Major restoration in 2011 was conducted to preserve this cultural and historical treasure. The centre offers various events, an exhibition hall and the aforementioned "Little Chamber of Ancient Things."

"Tautas nams",
Jūrkalnes pagasts,
Ventpils novads

Ph.:+371 26261884
E-mail: jurkalnes.tn@ventspilsnd.lv

32. The Storm Museum

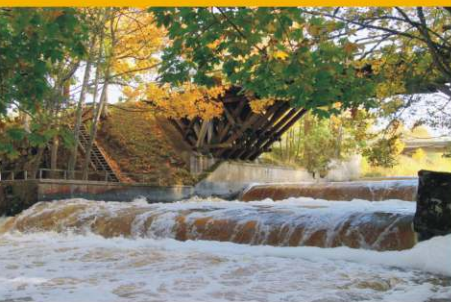


The Baltic Sea gave this territory one of the old names of Jūrkalne Felixberg, and people still talk about the interesting legend that is the origin of the name. Several wrecked ships have been found in the Baltic Sea off the coast of Jūrkalne. An exhibition in the museum visualises the underwater world as the deck of a ship that has sunk into the depths of the sea. The exhibition focuses on the cultural and historical heritage of underwater Latvia, allowing visitors to learn all about the history of sailing ships, steamships and other objects that have been raised from the depths. Small children will start to learn about the underwater world, and researchers with broader knowledge will find something new here.

"Tautas nams", Jūrkalnes pag., Ventpils nov.

Ph.: +371 26261884
E-mail: jurkalnes.tn@ventspilsnd.lv

33. The wooden bridge across the Rīva River



This fairly large wooden bridge across the Rīva River is a fairly unique phenomenon in Latvia, but it is one of few, if not the only bridge of its type. The bridge is in a convenient and easily accessed place, and of interest is the fact that it was once part of the Liepāja-Ventpils railroad that was installed during the first half of the 20th century.

Labrags, Jūrklalnes pag., Ventpils nov.

34. The Rīva Cafē



The café is at the side of the aforementioned bridge along the Ventspils-Liepāja highway. This is an excellent place for leisure, entertainment and small parties. During cool autumn days, visitors can watch leaping salmon through the windows of the saloon while drinking hot tea and enjoying a hearty meal.

Labrags, Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +371 26140577
E-mail: jurislaidze@inbox.lv

35. Guesthouse "Pilsbergi"



This guesthouse is in a historical former estate at a two-minute walk from the most beautiful natural formation in Kurzeme the steep shores of Jūrkalne.

Jūrkalne,
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +371 27436888

36. The Zaķi Cafē

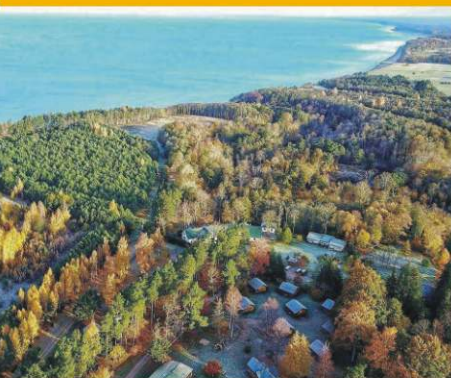


The Zaķi café welcomes guests for tasty meals and the purchase of local souvenirs. The café often features exhibitions of artworks by Latvian artists.

"Jaunarāji",
Jūrkalne,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +371 26133995

37. The “Imantas” guesthouse



The “Imantas” leisure centre is at the old Labrags Estate, 300 m from the sea and on the steep shore of the Rīva River Valley. This is a special place with tall, tall trees, and beautiful river valley, a wooden bridge and a waterfall. The “Curves of Rīva” nature trails weaves through the ancient river valley. The guesthouse is open all year long with a café, bar and sauna. During the summer season there are four and five-bed cottages and a kitchen for visitors.

Labrags,
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +37129479335
E-mail: rezervacija@imantas.lv

38. Suiti bread at “Bērziņi”



This farm offers wonderfully tasty bread from wheat and rye that is based on recipes that have been handed down for generations. The taste and smell are certainly boosted by the special oven that is more than 70 years old. You can order bread in advance or, by contacting the farm in advance, arrange to shape and bake your own loaf of bread.

“Bērziņi”,
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Juris Lastovskis
Ph.: +371 29471655

39. The “Straumēni” carpentry workshop



Guntis Niedoliņš is a master craftsman, and at this workshop he manufactures wooden jewellery, furniture, interior design objects, spoons, shovels, etc.

“Straumēni”,
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Guntis Niedoliņš
Ph.: +371 29197399

40. The "Cīruļi" farm



Contact her in advance, and the landlady here will bake various cakes, pastries, carrot buns and pierogi with various fillings. You can also order smoked fish.

"Cīruļi",
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +37125463928
or +37126556612
E-mail: anitaseiko@inbox.lv.

41. Nature trail "Curves of Rīva"



Nature trail "Curves of Rīva" starts at Ulmale-Labraga Lutheran Church and continues 3 kilometres down the picturesque downstream of river Rīva. Rīva here flows in a canyon-type ravine which reaches 12 meter rise at some points. The trail reveals countless river twists and turns and steep coastal cliffs.

The air here is unusual, filled with sea and pine tree aroma. You'll be able to enjoy an undisturbed peace and quiet, watching the magnificent scenery and the tranquil flow of the river.

The trail is partly accessible with an assistant and is marked with green paint.

"Imantas",
Jūrkalnes pag.,
Ventspils nov.

Ph.: +371 29479335

The Sūti Land

LEGEND

..... Travel route

1 Tourism sites



Living Cultures

United by the Unique

SUITI



Lauku
Ceļotājs
celotajs.lv

Baltic Country Holidays
Kalnciema iela 40, Rīga
Ph.: +371 67617600
E-mail: lauku@celotajs.lv
www.celotajs.lv



Alsunga Tourism Information Centre
Skolas iela 11a, Alsunga
Ph: +371 26425015
E-mail: muzejs@alsunga.lv
www.alsunga.lv



Kuldīga Tourism Information Centre
Baznīcas iela 5, Kuldīga, LV-3301
Ph.: +371 63322259
E-mail: tourinfo@kuldiga.lv
www.visit.kuldiga.lv



Jūrkalne Parish Administration
"Krasti", Jūrkalnes pagasts,
Ventspils novads, LV-3626
Ph.: +371 26261884
E-mail: jurkalne@ventspilsnd.lv
www.jurkalne.lv



Ethnic Cultural Centre "Suiti"
www.suitunovads.lv

*Explore other ethno-cultural
regions in Estonia and Latvia*

Setomaa, Estonia:

www.visitsetomaa.ee

Kihnu Island, Estonia:

www.visitkihnu.ee

The Liv Coastline, Latvia:

www.livones.net

***Living Cultures:
United by the Unique***