

# Along the Baltic National Parks – Latvia and Lithuania



During the Cambrian, Silurian and Devonian eras, the territory of the current Baltic States was often covered by seawater, which is why there are places where lots of geological evidence of the region are manifested not just in fossils and various geological objects, but also in the unique landscape. For example, The Gauja River basin is an outstanding locations for Devonian cliffs and caves. Several elements related to the former Baltic Ice Sea and the Littorine Sea are well presented at the Slītere National Park. The Ķemeri Slītere and several other parks were established to protect wetlands. There are two "lands of lakes" in the Baltic States – Latgale and Augštaitija. Some national parks have been established to protect distinctive local cultural heritage.



approx 1,745 km (14 days)



A Grey Heron



Steep coast at Jūrkalne



Church of St. Joseph at Palūše, Auskaitija

**General Route:** *Rīga – Koknese – Rēzekne – Daugavpils – Ignalina – Vilnius – Trakai – Druskininkai – Kaunas – Klaipėda – Nida – Liepāja – Ventspils – Kolka – Ķemeri – Rīga*

## Day 1

*Arrival at Rīga.* Overnight at Hotel in Rīga.

## Day 2

*Rīga-Ķekava-Ķegums-Koknese-Atasiene-Vijāni- Rēzekne (~ 254 km)*

Breakfast. The route goes along the right bank of the Daugava, then crosses the river at Kegums HES. Picturesque Koknese Castle Ruins and park. Skrīveri Dendrology Park with 372 foreign trees and shrubs. Teiči Nature Reserve is the largest untouched raised and moss bog in the Baltic. In the middle of the bog there is a unique islet Siksala where Old Believers still live. Vijāni Catholic Church and Bernadine monastery. Overnight at the guest house near Rēzekne

## Day 3

*Rēzekne – Mākoņkalns – Andrupene-Daugavpils (~130 km).*

Breakfast. Latgale region is Latvia's "land of lakes" and there is Rāzna National Park. Lake Rāzna with typical landscapes of ancient hillocks. Mākoņkalns Hill with lovely view of Lake Rāzna. Latgale famous pottery workshops. Typical regional meals. Aglona Basilica – the pilgrimage place. Overnight at the guest house near Daugavpils.

## Day 4

*Daugavpils - Zarasai – Ignalina – Palūše – Ginučiai – Strīpeikiai – Ignalina (~160 km).*

Breakfast. Bordercrossing. 70% of the Augštaitija National park comprises of forest. Most of it is pine, about 200 years old. There are 126 interconnected lakes and several ethnographic villages. Ginučiai village and its watermill with preserved original mechanisms. Ancient Beekeeping Museum at Strī-

peikiai. Guided birdwatching and other wildlife excursions are available. Overnight at the guest house in Ignalina.

## Day 5

*Ignalina – Moletai – Vilnius (~233 km).*

Breakfast. Vilnius – the capital of Lithuania. Vilnius attractions include Old Town with its many churches, Vilnius University, Higher and Lower Castle Museums, the Gates of Dawn. Overnight at the guest house in Vilnius.

## Day 6

*Vilnius – Trakai (~28 km).*

Breakfast. Trakai Historical National Park preserves mainly monumental part of Trakai. Trakais Island Castle is the most popular Lithuania's tourism sites. The Karaites' cultural heritage (ethnic group of Turkish origin settled here in 14th-15th cent). Overnight at the guest house in Trakai.

## Day 7

*Trakai – Merkinė – Marcinkonys – Druskininkai (~63 km).*

Breakfast. Dzūkija National Park include several well preserved traditional farmsteads and villages worthwhile a visit. The park's is a good place where to experience Lithuanian crafts and traditions. Ancient Castle Hill at Merkinė provides fine views at the rivers Merkys and Nemuna. Druskiniekiai is Lithuanian historic health and spa resort. Grutas Park where exhibition was based on the Soviet time monuments demolished during 1989-91 restoration of independence. Overnight at the guest house in Druskininkai.

## Day 8

*Druskininkai – Kaunas (~126 km).*

Breakfast. Kaunas was a Lithuanian capital between wars (1920-40). The attractions include Town Hall at the Old Town, some churches as well as pedestrian Laisves Avenue with shops, cafes and restaurants. Here are also located the State Museum to the



## TRIP DETAILS

Package price from  
**EUR 485.00**

*per person in a shared double room*

### INCLUDES:

- 13 overnight with breakfast in hotels and guest houses with shower and WC
- Maps and detailed description of the itinerary

### EXTRA COSTS:

- Car rental for 12 days
- Single supplement per person during the whole tour (13 nights): from 215.00 EUR
- Transfer to/ from Rīga International Airport: from 15 EUR one way (1-3 persons)
- Other meals than breakfast
- Ferry tickets to Curonian Spit
- Tickets and entrances to the attractions and sites
- Additional night in hotel in Rīga: from 65 EUR (double room with breakfast)

most prominent Lithuanian artist Mikolojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis. Overnight at the guest house in Kaunas.

### Day 9

**Route: Kaunas – Klaipėda – Nida (~267 km).**  
Breakfast. Curonian Spit National Park is a sand-dune spit that separates Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea. Several small ethnographic villages. Nida – pretty holiday resort with writer's Thomas Mann house and impressive sand dunes. Sea Museum, Aquarium and Dolphinarium. Near Juodkrantė there is grey herons and large cormorants colony. Overnight at the guest house in Nida.

### Day 10

**Route: Nida – Liepāja (~120 km).**  
Breakfast. Palanga is a busy beach resort with an excellent Amber Museum. Bordercrossing. Liepāja is a lively town with distinctive cultural and military history. The places of interest include old town, promenade with cafes and restaurants and nice beach, naval forts and Military prison. Overnight Overnight at the guest house in Liepāja.

Sand dunes at Curonian Spit



Slītere lighthouse



Birdwatching tower at Ķemeri National Park



### Day 11

**Liepāja – Ventpils (~124 km).**  
Breakfast. Distinctive Jūrkalne steep coast. Ventpils places of interest includes: Old Town with Livonian Order Castle, promenade, market place, ancient crafts house, breakwater as well as Blue Flag beach. Overnight at the guest house in Ventpils.

### Day 12

**Ventpils – Kolka – Ģipka (~102 km)**  
Breakfast. Slīteres National Park is as an open-air museum which shows the historical development of the Baltic Sea. Cape Kolka where the waters of Baltic Sea meet with the Gulf of Rīga. Traditional Livs' villages along the coast. Livs are one of the smallest ethnic groups in Europe. Tasting of smoked fish. Slītere lighthouse which provides fantastic panoramic

view. Guided wildlife tours are available. Overnight at the guest house in Ģipka.

### Day 13

**Route: Ģipka – Ragaciems – Ķemeri – Rīga (~138 km)**

The Ķemeri National Park mostly involves wetlands – the shallow shores of the Bay of Rīga, an overgrown seaside lake, vast swamps, damp forests and fens, and flood-land meadows. Lake Sloka walking trail, Kaņieris Castle Mound trail and birdwatching tower. Historic centre of Ķemeri health resort and sulphuric waters. Jūrmala, the most popular holiday and spa resort of Latvia. Overnight at the guest house in Rīga.

### Day 14

**Rīga.** Breakfast. Departure