

## Along nature trails in Latvia and Estonia

(Rīga – Pärnu – Saaremaa – Hiiumaa – Haapsalu – Tallinn, ~1270 km)

### Map 1 / Tour overview



### 1<sup>st</sup> day

Arrival in Rīga, pick up the rented car at the airport. Drive from the airport in the direction of Riga city centre.

Name of the hotel: .....

Address of the hotel: .....

### Free time in Riga

We recommend to visit the **Old Town** with the Dome cathedral (13<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 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 13<sup>th</sup> century **Jēkaba church** – the seat of Riga's Roman Catholic archbishop; **Latvia's parliament**; the **Swedish gate**; the round peaked 14<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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



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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**; the **Mežaparks park with Riga ZOO**; the so called **Moscow suburb** and **Pārdaugava district** – former workers districts with wooden buildings; **Vecmīlgrāvis** where the Daugava flows into the sea; the **Riga beaches** in Vecāķi or Bolderāja.

Overnight in the hotel ... in Riga.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> day

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Breakfast at the hotel. Pick up the information package with a map and a detailed itinerary from the hotel's reception desk.

### Map 2 / Riga - Saulkrasti



**Drive: Rīga – Salacgrīva - Pärnu** (190 km, 100% paved road).

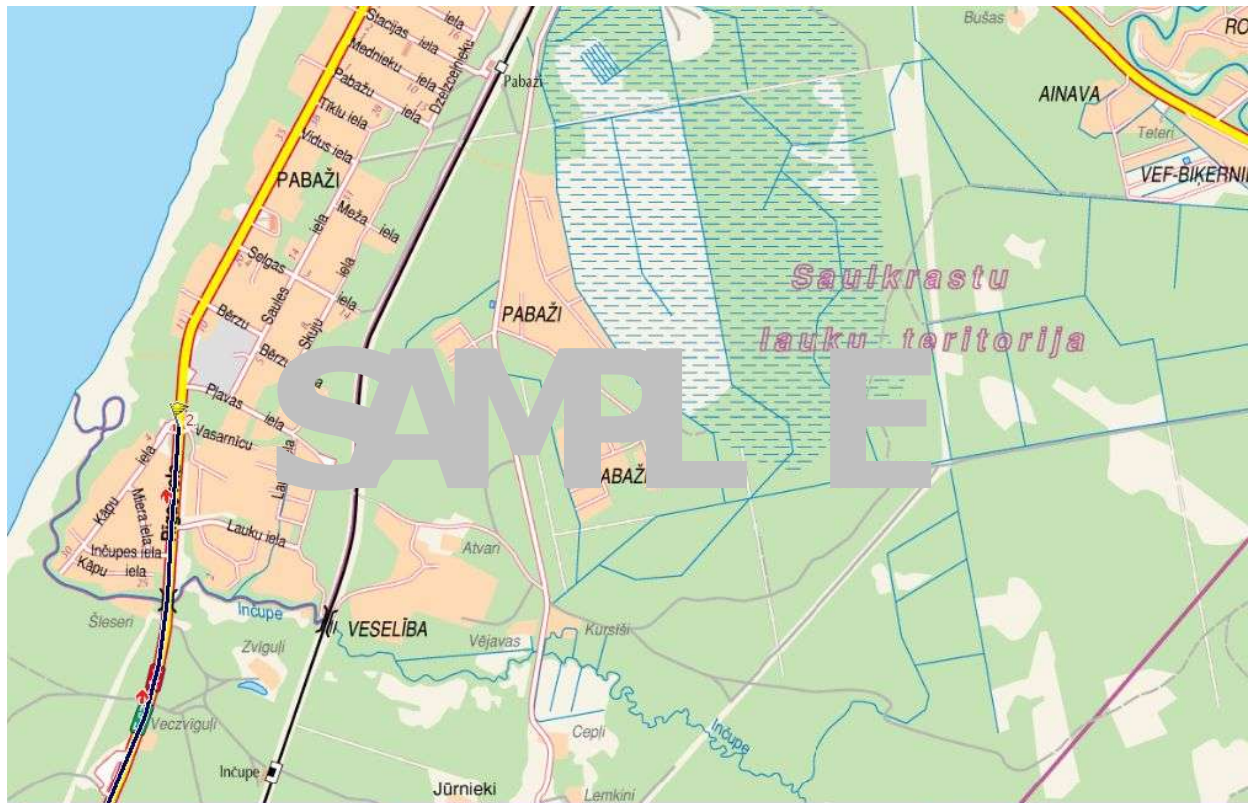
From Rīga, drive down Brīvības iela (which will continue as the A2 or E77 road). Approximately two kilometres beyond the city's borders, you will take the turn which leads to Tallinn (the A1, E67 road). Travel to Saulkrasti (~27 km). On the left side of the road, near Saulkrasti, there is a sign which reads "Saulrieta taka" (Sunset Path). This is the first stop, and here you will see the White Dune.





**Walking along the nature trail "Saulrieta taka"** over the dunes and through the pine forest on the shores of the Baltic Sea at Saulkrasti (1 hour).

**Map 3 / Saulkrasti „Saulrieta taka”**

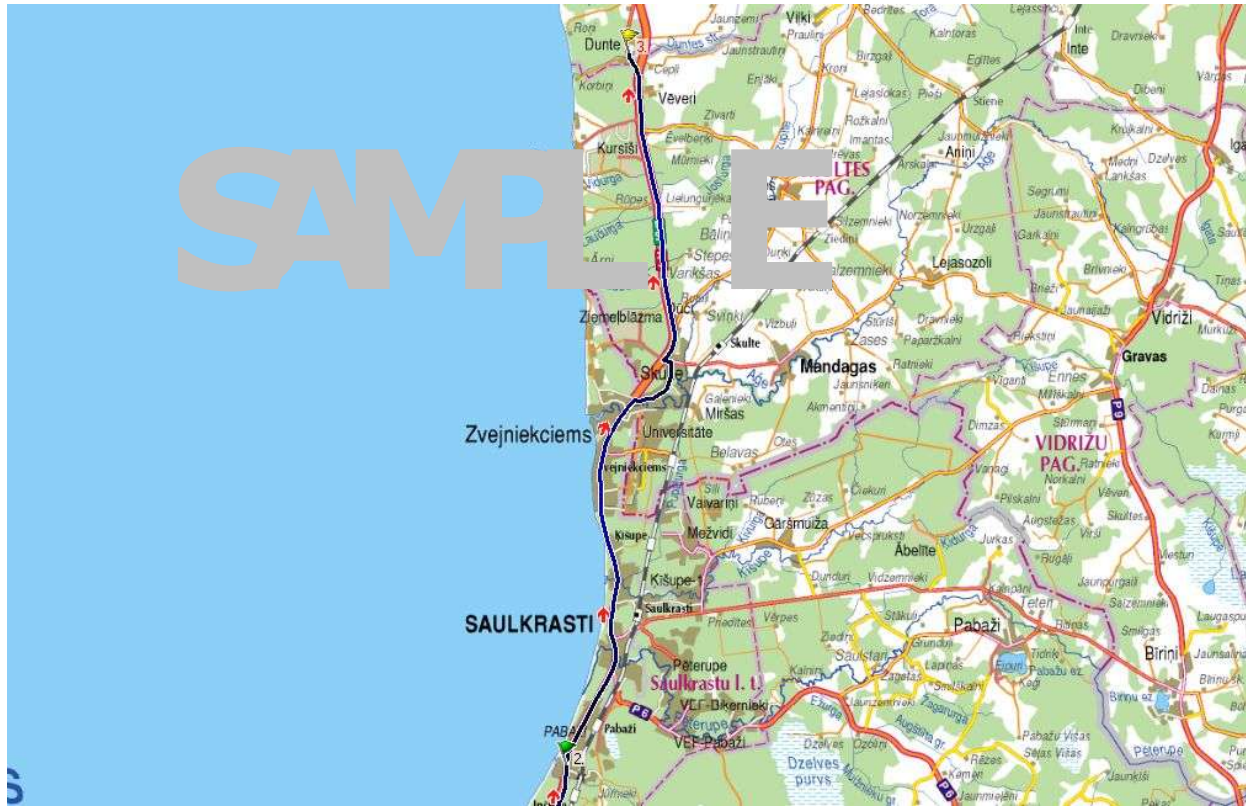


Next you will continue your drive from Saulkrasti to Dunte (~20 km). There you will find a sign which reads "Minhauzena muzejs" (Münchhausen's Museum).



**Walking along the forest trails** featuring the legendary Karl Friedrich Hieronymus Baron von Münchhausen (3 hours).

**Map 4 / Saulkrasti - Dunte „Minhauzena muzejs”**

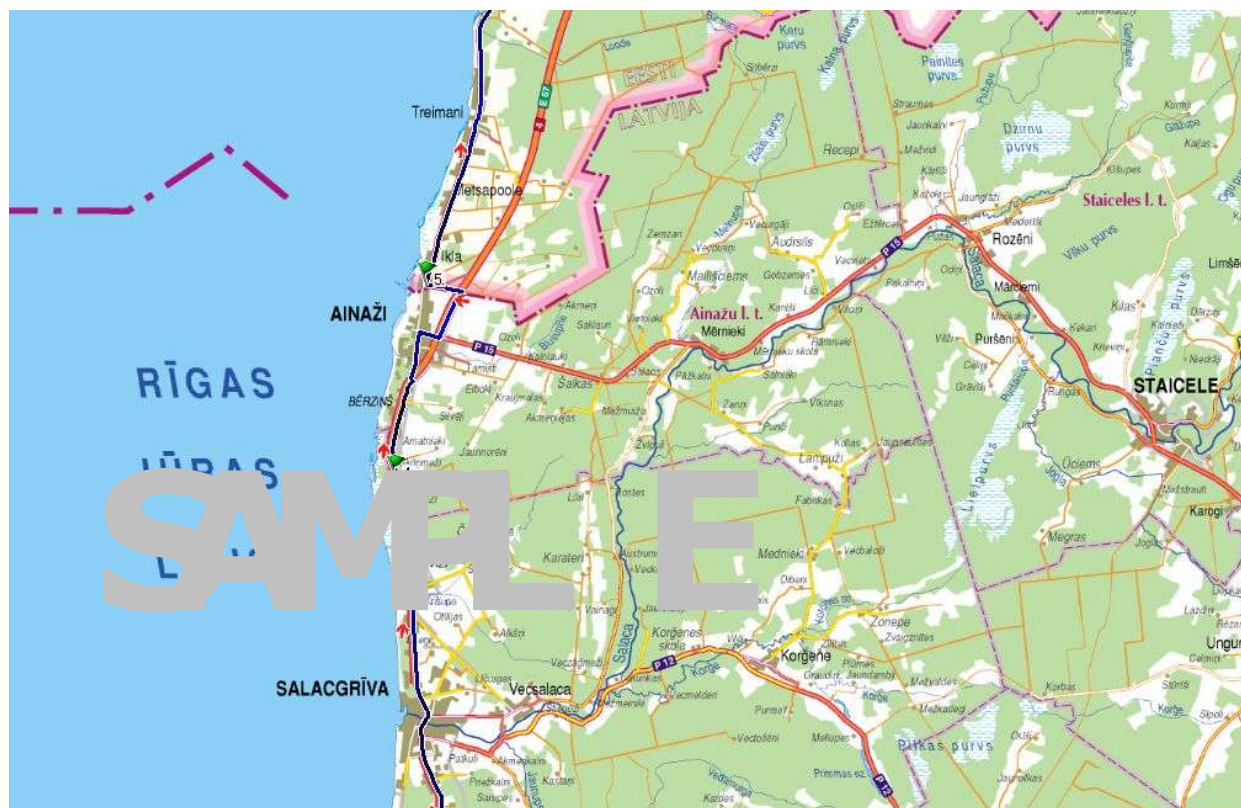


After this tour, drive to Salacgrīva and then on to the Latvian border with Estonia (~51 km). Before Ainaži, on the left side of the road, you will find an information stand. It is expected that during the 2006 season, a nature trail and bird-watching tower will be restored in the area.



**Walking along the trail through the meadows of the Baltic coast "Randu pļavas" – birdwatching in the spring and autumn (1 hour).**

**Map 5 / Salacgrīva - Ainaži „Randu pļavas” trail – Kabli**



You will then cross the Latvian-Estonian border and take the road in the direction of Pärnu. Stop at Rannametsa (~35 km).

**Dining facilities we recommend en route:**

- Pub "Grilbārs" in Saulkrasti, address: Ainažu iela 42, within the territory of the open air stage.
- Pub "Pernigēle" near Dunte, address: village Jelgavkrasti, near the A1, E67 road (right side if driving from Riga)
- Restaurant "Zvejnieku sēta" in Salacgrīva, address: Rīgas iela 1.

**Food shops:** in the towns Saulkrasti and Salacgrīva.

**Notes**

Similar descriptions and maps are used for each day of the tours. The maps used are from the publishing company "Jāņa sēta".

