



LAUKU CEĻOTĀJS

Green Advice for Boaters

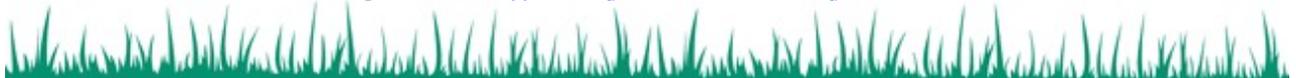
Most of the environmental, historical and cultural objects which are listed in our tours are protected as natural or cultural monuments. What is more, most of them are in NATURA 2000 and other specifically protected natural territories. This means that when you look at the water tourism routes, you must think and act green!

Reaching your destination

- As you approach your starting or finishing point, please remember that proper people in Latvia drive their automobiles exclusively on roads that are meant for them.
- Leave your car where it will not harm nature and will not hinder other travellers.
- Get into your boat at a location where the river is easily accessible and where you will not erode the soil on the shoreline.

"Green" boating

- Don't dump your garbage on the banks of the river or along your route. Take it with you, and you will soon find out how much trash you produce. That's something to think about.
- On the river, speak quietly, and don't make lots of noise – then you'll see lots of forest and water-based animals right nearby, as if you were in a National Geographic special.
- During your trip, pack up your *mobile* boat carefully enough that you don't want to drag it out unnecessarily. Turn off the sound – it won't bother you or the residents of the environment.
- Read Latvia's fishing rules and make sure that you are familiar with them insofar as fishing in lakes and rivers is concerned.
- Respect limitations on travel where there are seasonal restrictions aimed at protecting nesting birds.
- Don't try to chase families of wild ducks, swans and other water fowl down the river, particularly if they have young. Instead, carefully boat around them and leave them behind.
- Don't leave anything in the water – and we mean anything. Otherwise you might be part of a big problem for Latvian waterways – overgrowth. Do you like swimming or boating in an overgrown river or lake? Of course you don't.
- Any improvements on the shoreline should be treated carefully and politely, because others will want to use them, too.
- Boating will offer you new knowledge, experience and emotions, and it will improve your health and your fitness.





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Boating in NATURA 2000 territories

- Learn about the rules related to each specific territory. The Internet pages of the Environmental Protection Board and of the Country Traveller organisation will help.
- Visit the visitors' centre of each national park.
- Build campfires only where that is permitted.
- If there is no firewood, try to buy some from a nearby farm. If there is a larger group of travellers, bring your own firewood, or perhaps charcoal and a grill for cooking purposes. Don't use open fire during the season when forest fires are a risk. Please do not dump ashes from a campfire into the water, because that will promote overgrowth.
- Remember that in NATURA 2000 territories, you may spend the night only at facilities that are meant specifically for that purpose. If there are no such facilities, you will have to spend the night at countryside tourist accommodations.
- You probably shouldn't bring man's best friend along on a boat ride, but if you have to bring a dog, then remember that it must always be on a leash and with a muzzle in these territories.
- Don't write or draw anything on outcrops – after all, you wouldn't draw or write anything on your walls at home.
- Think about what you're doing. Don't hurt species and their habitats, because they're the reason why protected territories are established in the first place. After all, your purpose in taking this trip was to enjoy the beauty of nature and the environmental treasures that are all around you.

Learning about nature in a friendly way

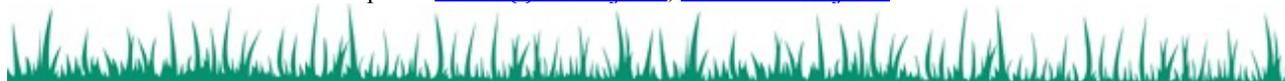
- Pieces of outcrops, fossils and snail shells are not souvenirs. Although they are not alive, they are a very important part of the environment and the ecosystem. You know, after all, where they'll end up.
- Use binoculars to view landscapes and animals.
- If you watch birds or animals, do it from a distance, and don't disturb them where they relax or nest. The welfare of animals is the main thing.
- When you see a rock or a sandstone or dolomite outcrop, don't clamber on it or walk on its surface. That's no way to treat a cultural and historical object!
- Don't damage outcrops or crawl into caves, because those are important habitats for many species. You wouldn't like it if someone poked his head into your lair.
- Don't go into caves during the autumn, winter and spring, when bats and other animals live there. You don't like to be woken up in the middle of a deep sleep, and bats perish if they are woken up at the wrong time.
- Sometimes it's more interesting to learn about those species that are encountered frequently, not seldom, and on an everyday basis.

Local residents

- Don't stock up with food from a city supermarket. Shop at a small village store instead.

Vīlīpa iela 12-21, Rīga, LV-1083, Tālr.: 67617600, Fakss: 67830041

E-pasts: lauku@celotajs.lv, www.celotajs.lv





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- Use local services as much as you can – eat at a countryside café, spend more than just one day in the territory that you've selected.
- Buy country goodies from local farmers.
- Use inventory offered by local businesses, thus supporting them.
- At a country tourism facility or hotel, make sure that you don't waste natural resources. We pay "European prices" for electricity, heat and gas.
- Respect local residents and their way of life. Demonstrate an interest in the environment, history and cultural heritage of the place which you're visiting.



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