



**BALTIC
NATURE
TOURISM**

*Latvia -
Estonia*

BALTIC NATURE TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

www.balticnaturetourism.com

Interreg



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Central Baltic Programme

NAT-TOUR-EXPO

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Baltic nature tourism product development guidelines is to ensure the development of a quality, ethical and sustainable nature tourism offer. These guidelines have been developed in the “Exporting Baltic Nature Tourism to UK” (NAT-TOUR-EXPO) project. These guidelines include tourism product criteria that nature tourism entrepreneurs can use as a self-assessment checklist in order to be listed on the internet platform ‘balticnaturetourism.com’, created during the project. The guidelines also review the most important aspects of tourism services.

The Baltic Nature Tourism Product Development Guidelines also outline the target audience for Baltic nature tourism products, describing the specific consumer profile for different products.

The development guidelines and the website www.balticnaturetourism.com are divided into main topics —

Wildlife Watching,

Active Tourism,

Soul Tours,

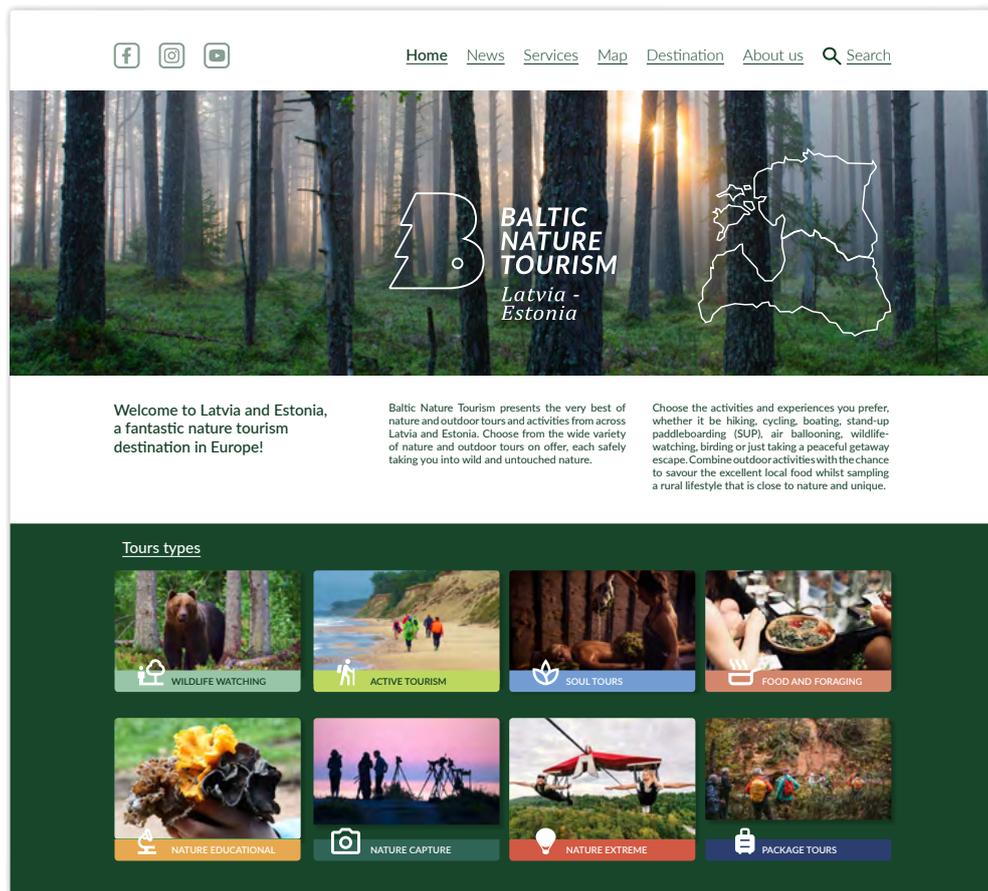
Food and Foraging,

Nature Educational,

Nature Capture,

Nature Extreme;

each containing relevant subtopics and corresponding offers.



PRODUCT CRITERIA

WILDLIFE WATCHING

Wildlife watching is a popular activity in the Baltic States of Latvia and Estonia. The region is home to a wide variety of wildlife, including many species of plants, fungus, birds, mammals, and fish. Overall, the Baltic States of Latvia and Estonia offer many opportunities for wildlife watching, with a wide variety of species and habitats to explore. It's important to follow the rules and guidelines of the protected areas and respect the animals and their habitats.



BOTANICAL TOURS

Tours with nature guides/biologists show plants in their natural habitats and highlight their biological diversity.

Guided botanical tours take you through national parks and untamed wilderness to see plants in their native habitats - natural meadows, various types of forests, wetlands, river valleys, grey dunes, coastal zones, grasslands, and more. The Baltic countries are located at the crossroads of many plant species' ranges, resulting in an impressive biological diversity of approximately ten thousand seed plants, algae, mosses, lichens, and ferns. Knowledgeable botanical guides will help identify individual species and talk about attractive plants you encounter during the tour. For example, there are 22 varieties of wild orchids and the round-leaved sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), a carnivorous plant that feeds on insects.



- ✓ *guided by a nature guide/biologist who knows the plant life in the area, is able to identify and explain in English the role of different plant species in nature*
- ✓ *safety: participants are informed about any potential hazards (poisonous plants, plants that can cause chemical burns, etc.)*
- ✓ *showing a diverse range of plant species in their natural habitats (for example, natural meadows, various types of forests, wetlands, river valleys, grey dunes, coastal zones, grasslands, etc.)*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: not damaging or removing plants, staying on designated paths, and respecting the environment*
- ✓ *adapted to seasonality*
- ✓ *optional: additional information and equipment such as field guides and tools like binoculars, magnifying glasses, applications and books, that help to detect species*
- ✓ *hands-on learning for participants: plant recognition, photography, drawing*

MAMMALS WATCHING

Specialized and prepared for observing animals in their natural habitats, based on knowledge about the life and habits of wild animals.

Mammal-watching tours offer opportunities to observe deer, elk, lynx, foxes, badgers, and other species in their natural habitats. You may encounter does with their fawns, witness beavers building their homes, hear hooting owls and howling wolves. Footprints, shed antlers, signs of “beds,” and other signs of animal presence tell a lot about their lives. For an even more exciting experience, you have the option to watch seals on a boat trip or observe brown bears from a secure hide. Mammal-watching tours are conducted in small groups. Experienced wildlife guides possess extensive knowledge about the life and habits of wild animals, providing unique and captivating watching experiences.



- ✓ *guided by a nature guide/ zoologist who can recognize and provide detailed information about mammal species encountered*
- ✓ *tour is specialised and prepared for watching animals in their natural habitats*
- ✓ *based on good local knowledge, and knowledge about life and habits of wild animals*
- ✓ *adapted to seasonality (breeding, feeding, or migration time)*
- ✓ *chances to spot wild animals are explained in advance*
- ✓ *safety: instructions provided for avoiding potential wildlife-related risks*
- ✓ *ethical practices: keep a distance from mammals and avoid activities that may cause stress or disturbance*
- ✓ *optional: binoculars and/or other equipment are provided to aid in recognising mammals, their footprints, and droppings*

BIRD WATCHING

Specialized tours for specific bird species and bird-watching sites of national and international importance, particularly during migration periods.

The number of bird species observed in Latvia and Estonia is approaching 400. Our birdwatching sites include some of the finest birdwatching spots in Europe, especially during bird migration, when it is possible to see more than 100 different bird species daily just at one place. On our birdwatching tours with professional guides/ornithologists, you will have an opportunity to observe Lesser-spotted eagles, Steller’s Eiders, Eurasian Pygmy Owls, Hazel Grouse, Capercaillies, Lapwing, Sea Eagle, Marsh Harrier, Canadian Geese, Spotted Eagle, Pallid Harrier, Crested Lark, Red Kite, Red-footed Falcon, White-fronted Goose, Mute Swan, Common Scoter, Velvet Scoter, Whooper Swan, Barnacle Goose, Velvet Duck, Marsh Warbler, and many more.

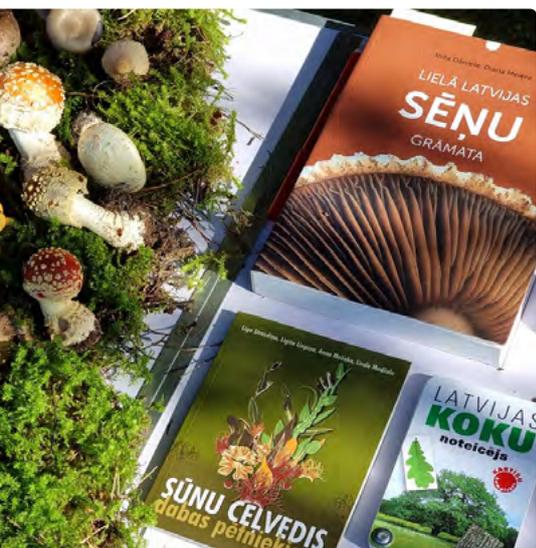
- ✓ *guided by experienced and knowledgeable birding guides who can identify and provide detailed information in English about the observed bird species*
- ✓ *specialised for particular bird species and sites*
- ✓ *adapted to seasonality: coincides with the best birding season in the region, taking into account migration periods and following a code of ethics*
- ✓ *encourage and enforce ethical birding practices, such as maintaining a respectful distance from the birds, avoiding disturbances*
- ✓ *safety: instructions provided for avoiding potential wildlife-related risks; for example, do not touch dead birds*
- ✓ *ethical practices: minimising human impact on the environment and habitats*
- ✓ *optional: binoculars, telescopes, tools that help to recognize bird species, and/or other equipment*



FUNGI TOURS

Tours with mycologists showing the diversity and species of fungi.

Our forests boast over 4,000 varieties of fungi. You can discover at least a hundred of them on our wild mushroom spotting tours, guided by mycologists who are well-versed in finding specific varieties. Mushroom hunting can be combined with a culinary interest, concluding the day with a mushroom meal. The most popular edible mushrooms are various Boletus and Chanterelles. As for other varieties, you might also encounter a diverse range of fascinating fungi species such as Horn of Plenty or Dead Man`s Fingers (Craterellus cornucopioides), Common Stinkhorn (Phallus impudicus), deadly poisonous Death Cap (Amanita phalloides), Deer Truffle (Elaphomyces sp.) along with the parasitic Slender Truffle-Club (Cordyceps ophioglossoides), and many more.



- ✓ *the main purpose is not foraging, but mainly biological interest, However, individual species can be collected for tasting, which is also important for learning*
- ✓ *guided by experienced mycologists or fungi experts who can accurately identify and provide detailed information in English about the fungal species encountered*
- ✓ *wide variety of fungal species allowing participants to learn about different fungi species*
- ✓ *seasonal adaptation: fungi can be found throughout the year, even in winter, if there is a thaw*
- ✓ *safety: educating participants about potential hazards, such as poisonous fungi*
- ✓ *ethical practices: not overharvesting and minimising harm to the fungi and their habitats*
- ✓ *optional: provide foraging knives, baskets, books and applications for the identification of fungi species, microscopes for the identification of fungi spores*

INSECT WATCHING

Tours showing insect species, including butterflies, moths, dragonflies, and beetles.

The abundant world of insects in the Baltics contains at least 13,000 varieties. Guided insect-watching tours, led by enthusiastic entomologists, take you to diverse habitats of butterflies, moths, dragonflies, and beetles. You might get to know the life stories of a European antlion (Myrmeleon formicarius) and a red-banded sand wasp (Ammophila sabulosa L.). During night-time tours, particular species of insects can be observed using a "light trap" - lamplight on a white background. In the evenings, thousands of moths and beetles emerge from their hiding places, and only in the dark do we notice the mysterious bioluminescent fireflies (Lampyridae).

- ✓ *guided by experienced entomologists or insect experts who can identify and provide detailed information in English about the insect species encountered*
- ✓ *a variety of insect species allowing participants to learn about different insect orders, genera, and species*
- ✓ *adapted to seasonality: taking place when different insect species are most active or visible, ensuring that participants can observe a variety of insects*
- ✓ *ethical practice involves minimising interference with the lives of insects during the observation process*
- ✓ *safety: educating participants about potential hazards, such as insect bites or stings*
- ✓ *optional: provide equipment and tools, such as magnifying glasses, nets, and containers for temporary insect observation, insect detectors, binoculars (for observing dragonflies), instruments for observing insects at night (white surface, UV lamp, insect catching net), etc.*



ACTIVE TOURISM

Active tourism in Estonia and Latvia is a popular way to experience the natural beauty of the region. The Baltic States are known for their diverse landscapes, including forests, lakes, rivers, bogs and coastlines, which offer a wide range of outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, kayaking, including winter activities.



HIKING/WALKING

Guided or independent tours, ranging from a few hours' walk to multi-day hikes.

Hiking and walking routes lead you through nature trails and into the wild countryside. Nature trails are equipped with info stands, markings, and resting places. Choose from independent hikes or guided tours led by nature experts, suitable for beginners and skilled hiking enthusiasts. Options include short few-hour walks to multi-day hikes. Some tours combine hiking with birdwatching, walking with a husky dog, SUP boarding, or even hot air ballooning. You can follow routes that coincide with the European long-distance hiking paths E9 and E11, as well as the pan-Baltic Forest Trail and Coastal Hiking Trail. Look for the Hiker-friendly sign marking specialized accommodations and eating places.



- ✓ *guided or self-guided hiking/walking tours*
- ✓ *scenic and safe hiking/walking routes*
- ✓ *guided tours: led by an experienced guide who knows the area well and speaks English*
- ✓ *self-guided tours: minimum information should include trail name and location, terrain and environment, distance and estimated time for completion, difficulty level, trail description and highlights, maps and navigation*
- ✓ *seasonal relevance: the best times to explore the area, highlighting seasonal features*
- ✓ *food and refreshments: depending on the tour's duration, consider providing participants with snacks, meals, or information about where to find local food options; plan rest stops*
- ✓ *transportation: transportation options or clear instructions on how participants can reach tour location*
- ✓ *safety: participants should be informed about potential hazards*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: adhere to Leave No Trace principles, minimizing the impact on the nature*
- ✓ *optional: combine hiking with meals or other activities to diversify the experience*

BOGSHOE HIKING

Guided bogshoe hiking tours in wetlands.

Bogshoe hiking allows you to explore unique wetland landscapes known as mires or bogs, which are home to a diverse range of plant and animal life. These bogs are characterized by spongy peat moss, which can be several meters deep and unstable. To ensure safety, special bog shoes are provided. It is crucial to follow designated trails and boardwalks to protect the delicate ecosystem. This experience is only available with a guide, and a bogshoe tour takes 2-3 hours on average. The activity is also available in wintertime, known as snowshoeing.

- ✓ *guided by experienced naturalists who speak English*
- ✓ *information provided on the unique features and ecological importance of bogs, including the role of sphagnum moss, carnivorous plants, and wildlife*
- ✓ *equipment: special bogshoes are provided, as well as instructions on their proper use; the equipment is well-maintained and fits participants comfortably*
- ✓ *seasonal relevance: highlighting seasonal features*
- ✓ *safety instructions are provided*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: staying on designated paths, avoiding trampling sensitive areas, and respecting the nature*



HORSEBACK TOURS

Guided horseback riding tours in nature, with observing wildlife.

Guided horse riding tours blend horseback riding with nature-watching in beautiful forest, field, and riverside landscapes where birds and wild animals can be spotted. Instructor services and shorter routes are available for beginners, while experienced riders might opt for multi-day horseback tours with camping overnights. The guides/owners of stables are passionate horse enthusiasts and will gladly share with you their knowledge and experiences about the native horse breeds.



- ✓ *guided horseback riding tours in nature with picturesque landscapes, such as forests, meadows, or coastal areas*
- ✓ *knowledgeable guides who are experienced with horses and the specific trails and who speak English*
- ✓ *the required riding skills level clearly stated in advance*
- ✓ *riding safety instructions provided in the beginning of a tour*
- ✓ *well-maintained tack (saddles, bridles, etc.) and safety equipment, such as helmets provided*
- ✓ *well-trained and healthy horses suitable for riders of varying skill levels*
- ✓ *strict adherence to safety protocols and regulations to protect participants and horses*
- ✓ *access to facilities such as a stable, restrooms, changing rooms, and equipment rental areas*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, including minimizing waste*
- ✓ *do not ride horses on dirt roads, where there are pre-established bicycle routes, cross-country ski tracks*
- ✓ *optional: meal services, packed lunches during the tour*

CYCLING TOURS

Guided cycling tours and independent cycling routes.

The Baltic landscape features gentle rolling hills. Cycling is not particularly challenging, and most routes are suitable for beginners. Cycling routes use asphalt, gravel, earthen, and forest roads. You can rent bicycles that are suitable for all surfaces, including electric bicycles, to use on routes for independent touring or choose a guided tour with services included. It is possible to choose traffic-free routes that combine cycling with the enjoyment of scenic landscapes and nature. Tailor-made cycling routes can be designed upon request.

- ✓ *guided or self-guided cycling tours*
- ✓ *scenic, safe, and well-maintained cycling routes*
- ✓ *guided tours: guided by experienced cycling guides who are familiar with the routes, local conditions, and speak English*
- ✓ *independent cycling routes: minimum information should include description of the cycling route, including start and end points, total distance, route maps, GPS coordinates, or access to GPS navigation apps for easy navigation, information about traffic conditions, road types, and surfaces (paved, gravel, off-road)*
- ✓ *plan rest stops or include visits to local eateries where participants can sample regional cuisine or enjoy refreshments*
- ✓ *safety: instructions provided, bike maintenance or repairs during the tour, a backup plan for more extensive repairs if necessary*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: emphasise responsible cycling practices, such as minimising environmental impact and respecting the local environment and community*
- ✓ *optional: bicycle and safety gear for rent (helmets, gloves, repair tools, etc.)*
- ✓ *optional: a support vehicle available for emergencies, gear transport, or assisting participants who may need a break from cycling*



WATER ACTIVITIES

Canoeing, boating, SUP, rafting, snorkeling, diving, and sailing tours in rivers, lakes, the sea and floodplains.

Rivers, lakes, and the Baltic Sea offer a variety of experiences. River canoeing and boating provide soft adventures in summer, with calm waters and occasional small rapids. Spring brings challenging high streams for experienced paddlers, while the 5th season offers unique floodplain canoeing. Sea kayaking trips offer stunning views of archipelagos, cliffs, and coastlines. Stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) adventures in rivers and lakes can be combined with hiking or island exploration on lakes. Enjoy twilight on a river, explore an illuminated city channel by evening, or greet the sunrise on an SUP in a bog lake.



- ✓ *canoeing, kayaking, boating, rafting, SUP, snorkelling, diving, and sailing tours in rivers, lakes, the sea and floodplains*
- ✓ *experienced group leaders, guides or instructors who have learned water safety and the basic principles of group management and speak English*
- ✓ *strict adherence to safety protocols and regulations to protect participants from potential hazards associated with water activities*
- ✓ *well-maintained equipment such as boats, kayaks, life jackets, and safety gear provided in good working condition*
- ✓ *clear instructions on how to use equipment safely*
- ✓ *clear instructions on meeting points and schedules*
- ✓ *information about transportation to and from the activity site, including pick-up and drop-off options*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices that protect and preserve the natural environment, natural values, including ensuring that the amount of waste is reduced*
- ✓ *seasonal nature restrictions on water are respected; the restricted sites are not visited during this time*
- ✓ *optional: availability of food and refreshments on longer tours or the option to bring packed lunches*

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Cross-country skiing, snowshoe hiking, skating, kick-sledding, dog-sledding and ice-fishing tours.

Snow and ice enable awesome outdoor activities in winter. The natural landscapes, including forests, meadows, frozen lakes, and the seashore, provide an ideal terrain for cross-country skiing on groomed trails. Skiing equipment can be rented, and instructor services are available for beginners. Kick-sledding is now a popular winter pastime using modern kicksledges - light, comfortable, and ergonomic. Dog-sledding offers not only a speedy ride through snow and frost-covered winter landscapes but also the enjoyment of the company of friendly and energetic sled dogs. Snowshoeing tours take you to frozen lakes and bogs and to snow-covered forests to watch wildlife.

- ✓ *snowshoe hiking, cross-country skiing, skating, kick-sledding, dog-sledding and ice-fishing tours*
- ✓ *led by knowledgeable and experienced instructors and guides who can provide training and support to participants (especially beginners) in English*
- ✓ *strict adherence to safety protocols and regulations to protect participants from cold-weather hazards*
- ✓ *well-maintained equipment, such as skis, snowboards, ice skates, or other, provided to participants*
- ✓ *clear instructions on how to use equipment safely*
- ✓ *preparedness for changing weather conditions, including clear communication of cancellation or rescheduling procedures in case of severe weather*
- ✓ *access to facilities such as lodges, heated restrooms, changing rooms, and equipment rental areas*
- ✓ *information about transportation to and from the activity site, including pick-up and drop-off options*
- ✓ *clear instructions on meeting points and schedules*
- ✓ *optional: availability of hot beverages, meals, and snacks at the activity site or nearby facilities*



SOUL TOURS

These tours cater to the spirit, soul, and body. There are few places in Europe where such abundant pristine nature is available, allowing everyone to enrich their yoga, meditation, sauna rituals, and nature escape experiences.



NATURE RETREATS

Meditation, yoga, and other spiritual practices in rural and natural setting or outdoors.

Achieve harmony with your inner self on a nature retreat by practising yoga, meditation, or simply by reconnecting with nature. Group programmes are available with practices and rituals to rid yourself of the blocks and release your inner energy, to cultivate awareness, and to lead your life full of happiness. The surrounding natural environment will enhance relaxation and mindfulness while rural guesthouse or campsite facilities with a fresh and natural look and all modern conveniences will ensure comfort.



- meditation, yoga, and other spiritual practices in rural and natural setting*
- tailored and guided programs for spiritual practices*
- location and setting: a serene and scenic location in a natural environment, such as a forest, lakeside, or coastal area with emphasis on being away from urban noise and distractions*
- comfortable and well-equipped accommodation such as tents, lodges, treehouses, or wild huts*
- availability of essential amenities and services, including heating and bathrooms*
- food and dining: fresh and locally produced food, incorporating regional flavours; light but nutritious meals*
- environmental responsibility: commitment to sustainable and responsible tourism practices to minimize the impact on the environment*

NATURE THERAPY

Nature wellness experiences - forest therapy, phyto sauna, nature SPA, barefoot trails, herbal tea mandala workshops.

The use of wild plants for health and beauty is an authentic and traditional practice that dates back to pre-Christian times and continues in the Baltic countries. Guided forest bathing or Shinrin-yoku tours, outdoor nature SPA based on herbal infusions, surrounded by birdsongs and nature sounds, along with sauna rituals using wild flowers and plants, will allow you to experience the curative powers of nature. Nature healing experts will guide you through the processes and share their knowledge.

- forest therapy, sauna experiences, nature SPA, barefoot trails, herbal tea and mandala workshops, etc.*
- a therapeutic, healing, and transformative experience in natural surroundings*
- the work is performed by therapists with experience in nature-based therapy; specialists who have obtained a certificate in forest therapy; bathers; other professionals*
- effective communication and interpersonal skills to create a safe, confidential and supportive environment for participants*
- serene and natural location such as a forest, beach or meadow, emphasis on a calm and soothing atmosphere*
- tailored therapy programs that address the specific needs and goals of participants, considering their physical and emotional well-being*
- compliance with health and safety measures*
- environmental responsibility: commitment to sustainable and responsible tourism practices to minimize the impact on the environment*



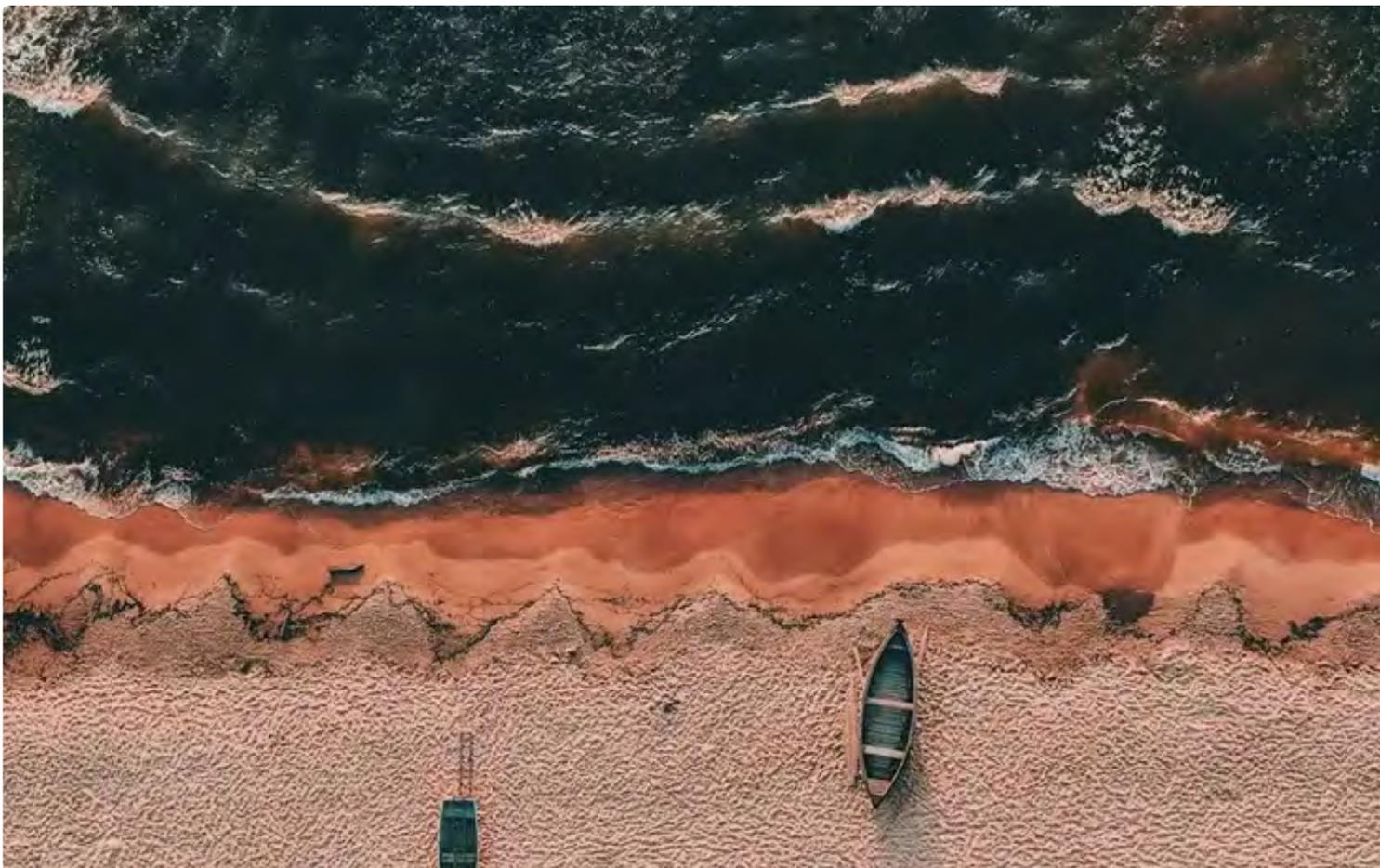
NATURE ESCAPE

Getaway, off-grid, and reconnection with nature. A combination of nature experience and comfort.

Nature escape offers a relaxed hideaway holiday in wild and beautiful nature, allowing you to stay in cosy comfort and privacy in a well-equipped lodge. Start your day by sipping your morning drink immersed in the soothing sounds of nature while planning your activities. There are options to follow personalized itineraries crafted by the hosts or to explore on your own. Take a leisurely stroll in the forest, spot wild animals and birds, enjoy a relaxed bicycle or boat ride, or simply immerse yourself in the surrounding beauty and energy of nature.



- ✓ *relaxing, rejuvenating, and immersive experiences in a natural and tranquil environment*
- ✓ *availability of essential amenities and services, including heating and bathrooms*
- ✓ *peaceful and scenic location in a natural environment, such as a forest, lakeside, beach, or remote wilderness area, emphasis on providing a break from the hustle and bustle of urban life*
- ✓ *opportunities for nature walks, light physical activities, practicing music, painting or similar activities in nature*
- ✓ *private and secluded spaces for participants to relax and unwind without disturbances*
- ✓ *flexibility to tailor the experience to the preferences and interests of participants*
- ✓ *well-maintained and comfortable lodging options, such as cabins, cottages, lodges, glamping tents, or remote eco-resorts*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: commitment to sustainable and responsible tourism practices to minimize the impact on the environment*



FOOD AND FORAGING

Forest food is an important part of the cuisine in both Latvia and Estonia, and includes a variety of wild berries, mushrooms, and herbs that are gathered from the forest.



FORAGING

Guided foraging tours for mushrooms, berries, herb teas, and more. Cooking and enjoying the meal together with the hosts.

Guided foraging tours take you into the wild nature to gather mushrooms, berries, or herbs. Mushroom hunting is a national passion in the Baltic States. The most popular edible mushrooms are various Boletus and Chanterelles. Berries such as wild blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, and blackberries are commonly found in the forest and used in a variety of dishes and desserts. Wild herbs like wild chamomile, yarrow, rowan, St. John's wort, evening primrose, rush, mint, and many others are commonly used for teas and to add flavor to dishes. Foraging tours often conclude with cooking together with your hosts and enjoying the wild food meal together.



- ✓ *guided foraging tours for mushrooms, berries, herb teas, and more; cooking and enjoying the meal together with the hosts.*
- ✓ *guided by experienced connoisseurs of mushrooms, berries and plants who know the species and can explain in English how to correctly recognize edible species and avoid poisonous ones*
- ✓ *it is forbidden to collect protected species*
- ✓ *participants are provided with knives, baskets, and other necessary tools, along with instructions on how to responsibly collect mushrooms, berries, and plants without harming the surrounding environment*
- ✓ *safety: educating participants about potential hazards, such as poisonous mushrooms, berries and plants*
- ✓ *ethical practices: minimizing harm to the mushrooms, berries and plants and their habitats*

WILD FOODS

Restaurants offering wild foods on their menu and wild food cooking master classes.

Specialised restaurant chefs use fresh, locally-sourced ingredients, including wild mushrooms, berries, herbs, and game, to create seasonal meals reflecting the availability of what ripens and can be foraged in nature. You can also try masterclasses where they demonstrate how wild foods can be creatively integrated into tasty recipes. Wild food is abundant with natural flavors and free of chemicals. Baltic traditional cuisine is distinctly seasonal, as each of the four seasons offers specific ingredients coming from the forest, waters, meadows, or our own garden.

- ✓ *restaurants offering wild foods on their menu and wild food cooking master classes*
- ✓ *all wild foods should be sourced responsibly and legally; emphasize sustainable foraging or sourcing practices to protect local ecosystems*
- ✓ *wild food dishes are prepared by chefs who are well-versed in wild foods and trained in their preparation*
- ✓ *customers are provided with accurate and detailed descriptions in English of dishes that include wild foods, clearly stating the names of the wild ingredients used*
- ✓ *information provided on allergens that wild foods may contain*
- ✓ *masterclasses are designed to be hands-on, allowing participants to actively engage in cooking*
- ✓ *master class participants are provided with the necessary tools*
- ✓ *safety: safety instructions given by the participants of the master classes, which should be taken into account when cooking*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, including minimizing waste*



NATURE EDUCATIONAL

Nature educational guided trips and excursions focus on educational experiences about natural history, local ecosystems, flora, fauna, geology, and celestial bodies. The tours offer insights into the billion-year history of our planet as well as the secrets of space.



ASTRONOMICAL TOURS

Stargazing tours and lectures about the universe in observatories equipped with telescopes.

The Baltic countries are excellent destinations for stargazing, thanks to their low light pollution and expansive open spaces. Observatories and stargazing locations offer captivating lectures about planets, stars, galaxies, and nebulae. Specialized guides lead nighttime tours with stationary and portable telescopes, providing insights about celestial bodies. You can observe various objects within the solar system, explore lunar seas, delight in the Aurora Borealis, and gaze into the distant past by witnessing galaxies at the very beginning of the universe.



- ✓ *stargazing tours and lectures about the universe in observatories equipped with telescopes*
- ✓ *guided by specialists with knowledge of astronomy who are proficient in English*
- ✓ *the content of the lectures and tours are designed to be understandable by people of all ages and various levels of prior knowledge*
- ✓ *portable telescopes, binoculars, star maps, applications for finding stars, visualizations, etc., serve as additional means*

GEO TOURS

Tours exploring nature processes, geological formations, landscapes, and fossils.

The diverse landscape and rich geological heritage in the Baltic countries include limestone and sandstone cliffs, sand dunes, glints, rock formations, craters, fossils, natural springs, and ancient glacial formations. Specialized geotourism guides will show you how to read the history of our planet and nature from the landscape and identify amazing witnesses of the ancient past, from majestic red rock outcrops to fossils of trilobites, tetrapods, and Devonian fish.

- ✓ *tours exploring nature processes, geological formations, landscapes, and fossils*
- ✓ *guided by experienced naturalists, geologists, or experts in the field who can identify and provide detailed information in English about the natural processes, geological formations, landscapes, and fossils encountered*
- ✓ *adapted to seasonality: planned so that the excursion corresponds to the optimal times for observing specific natural processes, geological formations or fossil discoveries*
- ✓ *it is allowed to collect only those fossils found on the ground; must not obtain them from rock outcrops*
- ✓ *safety: participants are informed about any potential hazards*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, including minimizing waste*
- ✓ *optional: equipment and tools to enhance the exploration experience, such as magnifying glasses.*



NATURE CAPTURE

Known as some of the greenest countries in Europe, the Baltic States are ideal destinations for nature capture holidays. While our landscapes may not be called dramatic, their subtle beauty that changes throughout the four seasons of the year is inspiring. The great diversity of wildlife and flora adds extra value to your photo, video, and drawing sessions in nature.



NATURE PHOTO / VIDEO

Guided nature and wildlife photography and videography tours.

Four seasons open up a variety of possibilities for nature photo and video, with each season bringing different colours, light, and mood. The scenic landscape offers diverse settings for your photos and videos, as it includes forests, bogs, meadows, sandstone outcrops, rivers, and seacoasts. Wildlife is rich with birds, animals, and a great diversity of plants and trees. Capturing the cloudy sky over the sea, early morning mist, shimmering frost, or even the Aurora Borealis can be a truly rewarding experience.



- ✓ *guided nature and wildlife photography and videography tours*
- ✓ *led by guides who know the area well, know the wildlife, know their habits, have experience in taking nature photos and videos and speak English well*
- ✓ *tours are carefully scheduled to coincide with the best seasons for nature photography or videography*
- ✓ *safety: instructions provided for avoiding potential wildlife-related risks*
- ✓ *ethical practices: maintaining a respectful distance from the animals and avoiding any actions that could stress or harm them*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, including minimizing waste*

NATURE DRAWING / PAINTING

Nature and wildlife drawing and painting tours.

Natural diversity, the presence of wildlife, seasonal changes, a variety of water bodies, an abundance of flora, and inspiring landscapes allow you to fully immerse yourself in the beauty of the environment and create stunning artworks that reflect your connection with nature.

- ✓ *nature and wildlife drawing and painting tours*
- ✓ *led by knowledgeable English-speaking guides familiar with the area, who also possess hands-on experience in nature drawing and painting*
- ✓ *materials for drawing and painting are provided*
- ✓ *ethical practice: when drawing or painting wildlife, keep your distance from the animals and do not perform actions that may cause stress or injury*
- ✓ *safety: instructions provided for avoiding potential wildlife-related risks*



NATURE EXTREME

Extreme sports and nature survival tours can be a unique and exciting way to experience the natural beauty of Estonia and Latvia. All activities are designed with safety in mind.



EXTREME SPORTS

Hot air ballooning, bungee jumping, zipline rides, paragliding, skydiving, and windsurfing – guided and instructed.

Embarking on a hot air balloon ride, bungee jumping, zipline ride, paragliding, skydiving, windsurfing, or other extreme sports allows you to connect with nature in a thrilling and exhilarating manner. Guided by professional instructors, you will discover the beauty of nature from an unusual and adventurous perspective. Thanks to careful safety measures, several of the extreme tours are also suitable for children and people without previous experience in extreme sports.



- ✓ *hot air ballooning, bungee jumping, zipline rides, paragliding, skydiving, and windsurfing – all guided and instructed*
- ✓ *English-speaking guides or instructors with specialized training in extreme sports ensure a safe adventure, bringing expertise in providing tailored information and assistance for each activity*
- ✓ *strict adherence to safety protocols and regulations for each activity; regular equipment maintenance to ensure participant safety*
- ✓ *preparedness for changing weather conditions with communication on cancellations or rescheduling*
- ✓ *clear instructions on equipment use, safety and emergency response. Participants are explained exactly what they can and cannot do during the activity*
- ✓ *well-maintained equipment provided to participants*
- ✓ *access to facilities such as briefing areas, restrooms, changing rooms, and equipment rental*
- ✓ *information about transportation to and from the activity site. Clear instructions on meeting points, schedules, and pick-up/drop-off options.*

NATURE SURVIVAL

Nature survival skills training events with experienced instructors.

Nature survival tours are designed to test and improve your survival skills in nature. Experienced instructors help those wishing to push their limits prepare for an outdoor adventure and guide through challenges. Nature survival training hikes are available in demanding yet beautiful terrain, regardless of weather conditions, both during the day and at night. Cooking your evening meal over an open fire and building an overnight shelter after a hike in the wild will make you feel at one with nature and boost your self-confidence.

- ✓ *nature survival skills training events with experienced instructors*
- ✓ *guided by knowledgeable and experienced survival instructors; instructors with expertise in nature survival and wilderness navigation; instructors possessing good local knowledge about the terrain, flora, and fauna*
- ✓ *training adapted to seasonality, considering variations in weather, plant life, and animal behaviour*
- ✓ *focus on specific survival challenges during different seasons*
- ✓ *safety: safety instructions are provided as well as advice on how to move around different areas without disturbing the natural ecosystems*
- ✓ *strict adherence to ethical practices, ensuring no harm to the environment or animals during training*
- ✓ *the training includes the provision of essential survival equipment*
- ✓ *environmental responsibility: tourism practices to protect and preserve the natural environment, including minimizing waste*



SERVICE ASPECTS

TOURISM SERVICES

Inventory rental

for winter activities

- skis, ski boots, ski poles, cross-country skis, cross-country ski boots, forest skis, snowboard, snowboard boots, bindings, ice skates, kick-sledge, safety helmets etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- the equipment is regularly checked and maintained so that it is in working order and safe to use, clean; the condition of rented items is clearly communicated to customers during the pickup process
- brief demonstrations on the proper and safe use and adjustment of equipment are provided; assistance for fitting and adjusting equipment is offered
- regular cleaning and sanitization procedures are implemented for all equipment



for cycling

- bikes, helmets, knee pads, elbow pads, bike locks, lights, repair kits, child seats etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- all cycling equipment is regularly inspected and maintained for safety and performance

- brief demonstrations on the proper and safe use and adjustment of cycling equipment are provided
- assistance for fitting and adjusting cycling equipment is offered
- regular cleaning for all cycling equipment are implemented
- helmets and other personal items are thoroughly cleaned between rentals
- information is provided on natural values and the careful use of natural resources, as well as traffic regulations along the route chosen by the client



for water activities

- canoes, kayaks, paddles, boats, SUP, snorkelling inventory, life jackets, waterproof bags etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- clear instructions, including GPS coordinates and times, are provided if equipment is taken to a specific location, such as a river or other body of water
- the equipment is regularly checked and maintained so that it is in working order and safe to use, clean and dry; the condition of rented items is clearly communicated to customers during the pickup process
- brief demonstrations on the proper and safe use of water activity equipment are provided

- safety instructions are given before starting water activities
- information is provided about the natural values and their careful use along the route chosen by the client



for different outdoor activities

- tents, sleeping bags, mats, backpacks, dry bags, stoves, tableware, vacuum flasks, trekking poles, bogshoes etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- instructions are provided on how to use the equipment correctly and safely
- all equipment is regularly inspected and maintained for safety and performance; the condition of rented items is clearly communicated to customers during the pickup process
- regular cleaning and sanitization procedures are implemented for all equipment



for nature photography or videography

- cameras, lenses, tripods, monopods, camera bags, camera accessories, drones, lighting equipment, camera rain covers etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- instructions are provided on how to use the equipment correctly and safely
- all equipment is regularly inspected and maintained for safety and performance; the condition of rented items is clearly communicated to customers during the pickup process
- regular cleaning and sanitization procedures are implemented for all equipment



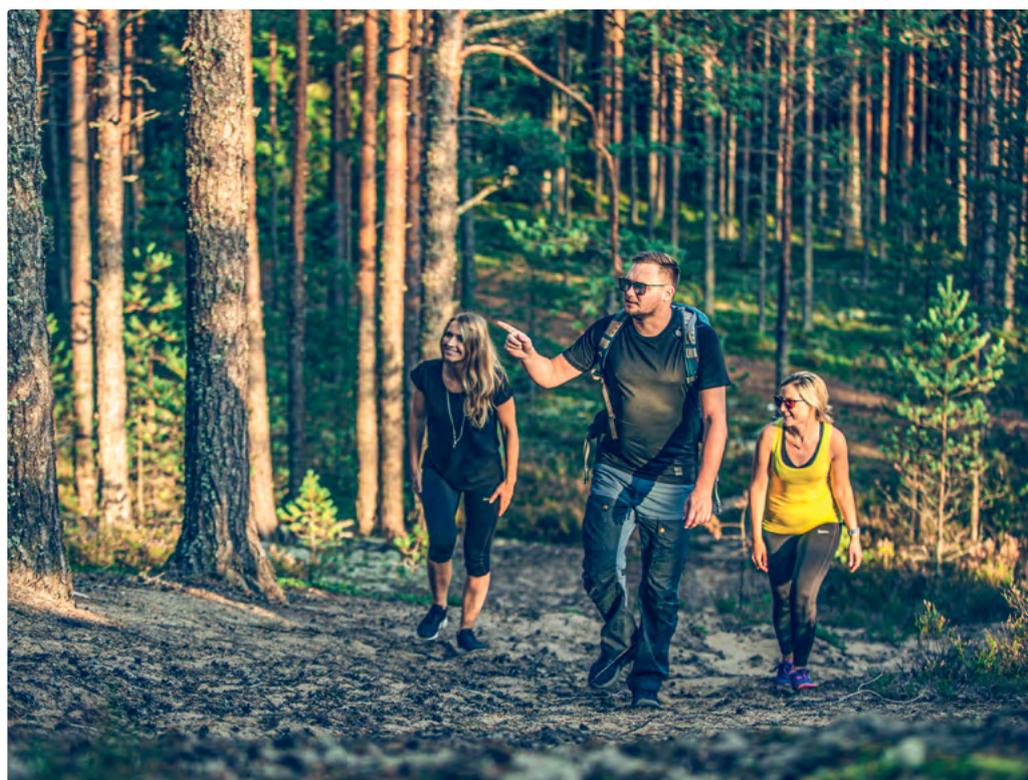
for nature and wildlife observation

- binoculars, magnifying glasses, telescopes, camouflage equipment, hides, etc.
- rental prices for each item are clearly indicated; deposit requirements and payment policies are clearly stated; any additional charges such as late return fees etc. are listed
- instructions are provided on how to use the equipment correctly and safely
- all equipment is regularly inspected and maintained for safety and performance; the condition of rented items is clearly communicated to customers during the pickup process



Guide services

- the nature guides are well trained and speak English
- guides have learned basic first aid and safety principles to deal with emergency situations while out in nature
- sustainable tourism practices should be promoted and embraced, with a focus on reducing the impact on the environment and preserving natural values
- meeting points (GPS coordinates), times and any special requirements must be clearly communicated to clients in advance
- reasonable limits on group sizes should be established to ensure a quality experience and safety
- guides and tourists should show respect for local customs, traditions, and communities
- recommended: create a system that allows tourists to provide feedback on their experience



CUSTOMER PROFILES

Customer attraction

The Project “Exporting Baltic Nature Tourism to UK” (NAT-TOUR-EXPO) outlines three main directions for customer attraction, targeting:

- independent travelers
- specialised interest groups
- tour operators specialising in Baltic States offerings.



Needs of customers

The Baltic nature tourism offer, tailored for the UK market, must align with the needs of customers. According to market research surveys in the UK, the needs of the target audience (tourists from the UK) when taking a rural holiday include:

- unwinding, resting, relaxation, and stress relief
- spending time outdoors
- discovering new places
- bonding with family or friends
- creating lasting memories
- experiencing the positive impact of nature
- engaging in outdoor activities
- digital detox and time away from technology and social media.



Groups of customers

Based on customer needs and interests, UK tourists can be divided into several groups, including:

- **Nature Lovers:** Those who want leisurely enjoy untouched nature, be away from cities
- **Adventure enthusiasts:** Tourists who relish outdoor activities and seek exhilarating and extraordinary experiences
- **Wellness Seekers:** Individuals interested in soulful retreats and nature therapy
- **Culinary Connoisseurs:** Travelers with a keen interest in foraging for wild food and discovering local culinary traditions
- **Nature Explorers:** Travelers interested in educational nature tours and workshops
- **Creatives:** Travelers who find joy in expressing themselves through creative pursuits like photography, drawing, painting, and more

Baltic Nature Tourism products cater to a diverse audience, including individuals across various age groups, families with children, and persons with special needs. Therefore, it is important to ensure that our tourism products are inclusive and suitable for different people.



Additional sources:

Latvian Nature Common Code of Conduct:
<https://celotajs.my.canva.site/dabas-turista-etikas-kodekss>

“Leave No Trace” principles:
<https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>

Interreg



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NAT-TOUR-EXPO

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