



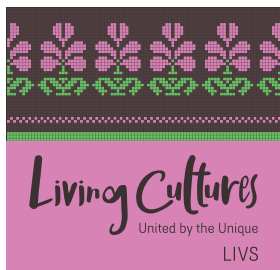
LIVONIAN COAST TRAVEL GUIDE



Irbes šaurums

RĪGAS  
JŪRAS LĪCIS  
(Pīšķi mē)





## LIVONIAN COAST TRAVEL GUIDE

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**“The Livonian coast travel guide”** was written in close partnership with Livonians and is meant for people who are interested in Livonian culture and traditions. The guide lists the main historical events that relate to the region, offers interesting facts and descriptions of 23 locations where Livonian heritage can be examined, lists important annual events and offers a brief English-Livonian dictionary. The coastline of Northern Kurzeme always welcomes travellers who are interested in the past, present and future of the Livonians. See you there!





## WHO ARE THE LIVONIANS?

**The Livonians** are an indigenous nation in Latvia of Finno-Ugric origin. They have played a great role in the emergence of Latvian language and culture. The Latvian language is the result of contacts among Livonians and ancient Baltic tribes such as the Lettigalians, Semigallians and Courlandians. Livonians have preserved the unique nature of their language and culture, developing it by merging it into Latvia's cultural world.

**The colours of the Livonian flag** are closely related to the everyday work of Livonian fishermen who go to sea (blue), but think about their homes and families while looking at the distant beach (white) and forest (green). The proportions are 2:1:2. The flag was consecrated and raised for the first time at a manse in Mazirbe on November 18, 1923. The chairman of the Livonian Association, poet Kārlis Stalte, composed a “Flag Song” (Plagā loul) in honour of the event, and the Livonians celebrate Flag Day every year on November 18, which is also Latvian Independence Day.

**The same green and blue colours** appear on the heralds of the Dundaga Administrative District and the Kolka Parish. Stalte also composed the Livonian anthem “My Fatherland, Land of my Birth” (Min izāmō, min sindimō) in preparation for the 1923 flag raising ceremony. The melody is the same as that of the Estonian and the Finnish national anthem.



The Livonian Flag



The herald of the Dundaga  
Administrative District



The herald of the Kolka  
Parish

**The Livonian Association** (*Līvod Īt*) was established in 1923 and has worked actively to facilitate the preservation of the Livonian language and culture, to examine history and traditions, to popularise Livonian heritage and to maintain links with other Finno-Ugric nations. The organisation was banned during the Soviet occupation, but reopened in 1988. **The Livonian Cultural Centre** (*Līvõ Kultūr sidām*) was established in 1994 and is responsible for studying and developing the Livonian language, culture and history. There are other organisations, too, which help to preserve and popularise Livonian culture.



### THE LIVONIAN PEOPLE'S CENTRE

In 1923, the Livonian Association began to discuss where people could gather together, coming up with a building that was designed by Finnish architect Erkki Huttunen, with Latvian colleague Visvaldis Paegle adapting the design to Latvian building requirements, preparing the construction budget, making sure that the plans were approved, and then monitoring the construction as such. The preparations took 15 years, but the building itself was erected in one year's time and opened on August 6, 1939, very shortly before World War II and the Soviet occupation, when the building was nationalised. It was restored to its rightful owners. Black granite from Finland was used to produce plaques outside the door to the building. Engraved in Helsinki, they read: "This building was built by Livonians with the help of people from their fatherland, Latvia, and of related people from Finland, Estonia and Hungary." The text is engraved in Latvian, Livonian, Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian.

## THE LIVONIAN FESTIVAL

During the Soviet era, the military controlled the coastline, and people could enter the border zone only with special permits. The territory was fully closed to foreigners. Despite this, the Livonian, Latvian, Estonian, Finnish and Hungarian flags were raised once again at the Livonian People's Centre on August 5 and 6, 1989. This was a unique event, because Finno-Ugric peoples were gathering in Mazirbe for the first time in half a century. Friends and relatives reencountered one another, and many of them were allowed to enter the territory where they were born for the first time since World War II. Ever since then, the Livonian Festival has been celebrated on the first Saturday of every August.





## TERRITORIES POPULATED BY LIVONIANS

At the end of the 12th century, there were five large territories that were populated by Livonians: northern Kurzeme up to the Abava River, the lower reaches of the Daugava River, the lower reaches of the Gauja River, Metsepole (the region where Skulte, Liepupe and Limbaži are today), and Idumeja (on the right bank of the Gauja River between Jumara and Brasla). Beginning in the 14th century, Livonians flowed together with Lettigalians and other Baltic tribes in Latvia to establish the Latvian nation. It is believed that the Livonian language survived until the 15th or 16th century in the Daugava and Idumeja territories, until the 17th century along the lower reaches of the Gauja River, and until the mid-19th century in Metsepole. In northern Kurzeme people spoke Livonian until the 1970s or 1980s, and at the beginning of the 20th century, Livonians lived in fishing villages in the so-called **Livonian coastline**, which includes Oviši, Lūžņa, Miķeltornis, Lielirbe, Jaunciems, Sīkrags, Mazirbe, Košrags, Pitrags, Saunags, Vaide, Kolka, Mēlnsils and Ģipka.







## HOW MANY LIVONIANS ARE THERE?

A census in 2011 showed that there were 250 Livonians living in Latvia, but it is likely that each Latvian has a component of Livonians and Livonian life. During the 19th century, some 3,000 people spoke Livonian. By the middle of the 20th century there were some 1,500 people who spoke the language, and today there are at least 30 linguists who can communicate very well in Livonian.



## THE LIVONIAN LANGUAGE

The Livonian language is part of the Uralian language community and the Finnish language groups along the coasts of the Baltic Sea. The closest languages are Estonian, Finnish and Karelian, while more distant ones are Samian, Hungarian, Moravian and other Uralian languages. The Livonian language is listed as critically endangered on the UNESCO list of endangered languages. The Livonian language is based on two dialects: the Vidzeme and Kurzeme dialects. Livonian, like Estonian, does not have masculine and feminine genders. It has no future tense and does not differ between the first and third version of personal names. Print works and audio recordings in Livonian are available in Latvia, Estonia and Finland.





## LIVONIAN FOLK COSTUMES

Ethnographic and ceremonial costumes for women typically involved a bonnet with an elegant set of ornaments on the back of the bonnet, a white apron, white, red or ornate socks, and a large or small scarf that was worn under ancient capes at church or at a wedding. Livonians wore their folk costumes until the end of the 19th century. The tradition first disappeared among men. Women, however, continued to wear the costumes at church and during weddings. Today Livonian folk costumes and elements can be seen at the Livonian community house in Kolka.





## LIVONIAN FOODS

For Livonians, fish represented the main foods, particularly flounders and Baltic herring whether boiled, baked, salted, dried or smoked. During the 19th and 20th centuries, Livonians also ate porridge (*rok*), fermented milk or sour porridge (*appõnrok*) made from wheat flour and milk. Fermented milk was then added to the hot porridge. The porridge was eaten when it was cold and soured. Also popular were no-yeast buns stuffed with potatoes, carrots and cream (*sūrkakūd*). These were baked for celebrations and remain popular today. White sausages made of groats (*sūrmõd mõka*) were an ancient food. The sausages did not involve blood, but they were stuffed into cattle intestines with boiled groats, bacon and onions. Rye bread (*riggi lēba*) was baked on Saturday and eaten frugally. Traditional Livonian foods today can be found at the *Ūši* campsite in Kolka and the *Stūrīši-Branki* guesthouse in Mazirbe. Some of the foods are also served at the Dundaga Castle.



## CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVONIANS

Livonians are hard-working, honest and gifted people with harsh characteristics. Livonians strictly hold on to their views and their homes. Many Livonians are poets, and poesy goes hand in hand with their everyday lives.

## THE NAME OF LIVONIANS

In Latvian, Livonians are called “lībieši,” and that is a very old and traditional word. The word “līvi” entered the Latvian language as a poetic form in the mid-19th century (similar to “latvji” and “vāci” to represent an abbreviated form for the words representing Latvians and Germans -- latvieši and vācieši). The roots for this are in the German name for Livonians (*Liven*) and derived words in Estonian (*liivlased*) and the modern Livonian language (*līvõd*). The two words are synonyms.





## INFORMATION FOR TRAVELLERS

Along the route from Oviši to Vaide (inclusive), only a few homesteads are populated in each village. More people live there during the summer season. There is just one store in Mazirbe, while meals are available during the summer at Miķeltornis, Mazirbe, Kolkasrags and Kolka. Opposite the villages, there are still remnants of breakwater facilities for collecting sea mud that offers a good way of making one's way through the region. This also indicates that there are populated areas behind the dunes. The sea mud been used to improve the sandy and not particularly fertile land along the seashore.







### ANCIENT HISTORY

- The concept of the Livonian land was mentioned for the first time in the 11th century on a rune stone in Sweden. The stone honours a Viking, Barkvir, who drowned near the Livonian land. Cape Kolka (*Domesnes, Tumisnis*) was mentioned on another rune stone around the same time, and it is found on the Selan Island in Lake Melaren.
- An ancient Russian chronicle known as the Nestor Chronicle mentioned the Livonian nation for the first time during the 12th century, as did other documents.
- In 1881, Livonians were mentioned as soldiers in the Polotsk military force which took part in an attack by noblemen from Kyiv and Chernigov against David of Smolensk.
- Rīga started to become an urban centre during the 12th century. Near the current Dome Cathedral was a settlement that was mostly populated by Livonians.
- During the late 12th and early 13th centuries, Livonians were mentioned in the chronicle of Indriķis from Livonia (the first written phrase in Livonian and the first written phrase in the Finnish languages of the Baltic Sea). Events from the late 13th century are mentioned in the Chronicle of Echoes, in which Livonians are described as pagans who are very courageous on the battlefield.



### THE 19TH CENTURY

- The last known speaker of the Vidzeme Livonian language, Gusts Bisnieks, died in 1868.
- The so-called Livonian riot in 1859 was on the coasts of Kurzeme, when Livonian fishermen who were owned by the Dundaga Estate refused to do excessive indentured servitude work. Among 77 fishermen who had lived there for a long time, one-half were kicked out of their homes.
- The first books in Livonian were published in London in 1863 -- the Gospel of Matthew translated into the Eastern Livonian and Western Livonian dialects.
- During the 19th century, Livonians built ships and sailed the seas of the world.

### THE LIVONIAN SHORE BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

- During World War I, many Livonians became refugees elsewhere in Latvia, as well as in Estonia and Russia.
- In 1916, German forces began to install a narrow-gauge railroad that passed through Livonian villages.
- After the establishment of the Republic of Latvia, the social and culture life of coastal Livonians once again began to flourish.
- The first Livonian Association choir was established in Sīkrags in 1922. Another choir was established in Košrags one year later, and the first Livonian Song Festival was held in Mazirbe on June 24, 1924.
- Beginning in 1923, all local schools except the one in Melnsils taught the Livonian language.
- During the early 1920s, Estonian enthusiasts helped to publish five books in Livonian.
- During the 1930s, Finnish pastor Kalervo Ervie, who had learned Livonian, delivered sermons in Livonian at the Mazirbe church three or four times per year.
- The first Livonian monthly, *Līvli*, was printed in Jelgava for the first time in 1931, and it was published until 1939.
- The Livonian People's Centre was opened on August 6, 1939.



## THE SOVIET OCCUPATION

- The Soviet Union installed military bases in the former Ventspils District. All along the Livonian shoreline there were border control points, as well as inspection points on roads. Economic activities and freedom of movement were limited in the region, so many Livonians moved further inland.
- In 1972 the Līvlist and Kāndla Livonian ethnographic ensembles were established.
- In 1978, a group of members of the Livonian and Latvian intelligentsia submitted a proposal to the government of the Latvian SSR to declare the Livonians as a separate ethnos and to allow them to list their nationality on their passports. The proposal was rejected. Also in 1978, a collection of ethnographic objects was opened at a boarding school in Mazirbe. It was called a collection of ethnographic, not Livonian objects, because the regime was intolerant toward the word “Livonians.” Today part of the collection can be visited on the second floor of the Livonian People’s Centre.





## THE RENAISSANCE AND CONTEMPORARY LATVIA

- The Livonian Association was reinstated in 1988, and the first Livonian festival was held in 1989.
- In 1991, the Livonian coastline (*Līvõd rānda*) was designated as a particularly protected cultural and historical territory. This continued until 2003, but the words “Livonian coastline” are still used today.
- The monthly *Līvli* was released once again beginning in 1992.
- Livonian almanacs were published for the first time in 1994.
- In 1998, Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari and Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis visited Mazirbe during the Livonian festival.
- The Livonian culture and language portal *Livones* was established in 2006.
- 2011 and 2012 were the international year of the Livonian language and culture.
- In 2012, the Livonian coastline was visited by Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Latvian President Andris Bērziņš.
- In 2013, the Livonian Summer University was opened in Košrags, and that is now a tradition.
- In 2018, Livonian Institute was established.
- In 2018, Livonian Cultural space was included in the national list of Intangible Cultural heritage of Latvia.



**Estonians earning a living.** “Each spring, some 100 Estonians from Saaremaa travelled to Mazirbe as farmworkers. They usually arrived in single-mast ships, bringing along geese, horses and pigs. Eventually they returned to their motherland, though some remained for life in Mazirbe.” *From memories about Mazirbe dictated by Kārlis Baranovskis to Teiksmā Pobuse, c. 1989)*

**A trip to Ruhnu Island.** “A trip to Ruhnu Island. The Mazirbe Culture Promotion Association is organising a trip to Ruhnu Island on Summer Solstice Day. The motor boats will leave Mazirbe at 3:00 AM on the morning of the Summer Solstice and return that same evening. The cost is 3 lats.” This advertisement was found in the newspaper *Ventas Balss* on June 18, 1926.

**Alcohol smuggling.** It said that during the 1920s and 1930s, there was an active process of smuggling alcohol between Saaremaa and the coast of Kurzeme. Estonian smugglers sank full cans of vodka in the sea, leaving a bobber that allowed people from Kurzeme to find them.



The places from which fishermen went to sea and then returned are known as **sedumi** in Latvian. There were huts for nets and bars to dry nets on the shoreline. During the 1920s and 1930s, these areas were of great importance in preserving the Livonian language and the ethnic self-understanding of the Livonians. Many Latvians lived in Livonian villages at that time, but few of them were fishermen, so the main language was still Livonian. The words “sedums” itself comes from the Livonian (*sadāmō*). In Estonia, “sadam” refers to a port. On the western shore of the Bay of Rīga, the word “valgums” is also used to describe the same kind of territory.



**The Irbe Narrows** are known in Estonia as *Kura kurk*. The first word, *kura*, probably comes from the Livonian Kurāmō and the Estonian *Kuramaa* (Kurzeme in Latvian), referring to the territory that is on the southern end of the narrows. The second word, *kurk*, means “throat” in Estonian.

One of the most popular legends in Northern Kurzeme concerns so-called “**leg cutters**”, who used misleading campfires on shore to tempt ships into getting stuck on a shoal so that they could be pillaged. The long and very valuable leather boots that drowned sailors were wearing were hard to remove, and that is why the legs of the victims were simply cut off.







## WORTH SEEING

1. **Oviši (Patīkmō).** This is an ancient populated area. There were 50 homesteads here during the 1930s, with only ten remaining in 1990. The Livonian scholar and entomologist **Kārlis Princis** (1893-1978) was born in Oviši. In 1944, he emigrated to Sweden. The **Oviši lighthouse** (1814) is 38 metres high and is the oldest functioning lighthouse in Latvia. There are lovely views from the top of the lighthouse. The building in which employees of the lighthouse used to live was erected in 1905 and has been preserved. A narrow-gauge train station was in the building at one time. The **Oviši Lighthouse Museum** is nearby, as is the metal **Tree of the sun**. Opposite Cape Oviši is a great place for bird watching.
2. **Lūžņa (Lūž).** A long village stretching along both banks of the Lūžņa River. In 1937, there were 36 houses and two boat piers here. During the 1860s, ships were built here, but during the Soviet occupation, there were military bases there. During the 1930s, the village was visited several times by the Finnish linguist Lauri Kettunen and Estonian student Oskar Loorits. They were working on a Livonian dictionary. Another resident of Lūžņa was the first Livonian artist, **Jānis Belte** (1893-1946). The “Dēliņi” fisherman’s homestead has been transferred to the Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum and can be seen there.





3. **Miķeltornis** (formerly **Pize** and **Pizā** in Livonian). The current name of the village comes from a lighthouse (Mihailovskii majak) that was built during the age of the Russian Empire and named for the nephew of Tsar Alexander II. The lighthouse that is there now is the third one to be built on the site. It was built in 1957 and is the highest lighthouse in Latvia (57 m, can only be viewed from the outside). The **Lutheran church** in Miķeltornis was built in 1893, and nearby is the **Pize Saloon** (1857), which is in poor condition. The saloon has a typical design from the 19th century and is the only venue of its type on the Livonian coastline. The first Livonian cultural activist, **Jānis Princis** (1796-1868), was born in Miķeltornis, and he and son **Jānis** translated the Gospel of Matthew into the Western Livonian language. The two of them also wrote a collection of poetry, “Holy Songs and Prayers for Sailors.” The only poetry book in Latvia prior to that was published by Blind Indriķis. A student of Vilhelms Purvītis, Livonian painter **Andrejs Šulcs** (1910-2006), was born at the Olmaņi homestead in Miķeltornis. A **monument** to Livonian poets was installed at the local cemetery in 1978 and was the first monument dedicated to Livonians. There are plans to open an environmental object by artist Ģirts Burvis, “**Century of Sailing Ships**”, in 2019.





4. **Lielirbe (Īra).** This village is at the place where the Irbe (Dižirve, Īra) River flows into the sea, and it is on both shores of the river (sea side and land side). The name of Irbe was recorded for the first time in a 1310 border agreement between the bishop of Kurzeme and the Rīga Dome Capitol. The name of Lielirbe (*Irvemūnde*) was recorded for the first time in a document from an arbitration court in 1387. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the largest number of sailing ships among villages on the western shore of Kurzeme was built there. In 1939, the village had some 300 residents, more than 70 houses and a Baptist church which is now at the Ventspils Open Air Museum. A narrow-gauge railroad passed through the village, which had a post and telegraph office, two grocery stores, an elementary school, a choir and a brass band. Lielirbe was one of the largest villages to disappear after World War II. Cultural historian **Valda Marija Šuvcāne** (1923-2007) was born in Lielirbe, and her daughter, **Baiba Šuvcāne**, is continuing her mother's work by writing important papers about life along the Livonian coastline. In 2019, a **bridge** is to be reinstalled across the Irbe River.
5. **Jaunciems (Ūžkilā).** Jaunciems has always been a small village. Nearby there are leisure locations on the right bank of the Irbe River. Jaunciems is linked to Sīkrags by the former tracks of the narrow-gauge train. There is also a bridge for hikers and bicyclists.



6. **Sīkrags (Sīkrōg).** This is one of the oldest Livonian villages, recorded in documents for the first time in 1387. During the 17th century, Sīkrags was one of the most important small ports in Northern Kurzeme, receiving ships from England, Holland and Lubeck that carried coal, grain and other products. Before World War I, there were five sprat smokehouses in the village, and some 55 fishermen lived there during the 1920s and 1930s. Among those to have been born in Sīkrags was the Livonian cultural activist **Hilda Grīva** (Cerbaha, 1910-1984), seafaring captain **Kārlis Anbanks** (1884-1937), linguist and tradition specialist **Pēteris Dambergs** (1909-1987), and poet **Baiba Damberga** (b 1957). Today the village is a cultural monument of national importance. It is crossed by a bike route, with a **commemorative stone** where the narrow-gauge railroad station once stood.



7. **The Šlītere lighthouse** is the second oldest navigation structure in Latvia and the only one that is five kilometres from the shore, at the upper edge of the ancient Baltic Ice Lake. Since 2000 the lighthouse is home to the **Nature Education Centre «Slītere»** of the Slītere National Park. The centre offers exhibitions about lighthouses in Latvia and the history of the Baltic Sea. From the upper floor you can see the coast of Saaremaa (approximately 33 km away). Alongside the lighthouse is the 1.2 km **Šlītere nature trail**.  
*GPS: 57.62861, 22.28906.*





8. **The Pēterezers nature trail.** Wavy dunes and swampy areas among them, as well as trails -- all of these were closely linked to the everyday lives of Livonians. Each has a Livonian toponym. The 3.5 km trail leads through a landscape that is unique in Europe and emerged some 6,000 years ago as the sea was receding. *GPS: 57.6544, 22.27056.*

9. **Mazirbe (Irē).** In a document from 1387, the village is named *Minor Irva*. Until the mid-20th century, Mazirbe was the largest Livonian village on the coast of Kurzeme. It was a fishing village and a centre for fishing. The village had a church, school, pharmacy, forestry company, several stores, a post and telegraph office, train station, barber shop, bakery and photo workshop, as well as a brick kiln. The Livonian Association was established here in 1923, and the **Livonian People's Centre** was opened in 1939. Opposite the centre is the Stūrīši homestead, where you can learn about everyday household objects and, by ordering it advance, taste local foods. The first chairmen of the Livonian Association, **Kārlis Stalte** and **Māriņš Lepste**, lived in Mazirbe. Cultural worker **Kārlis Stalte** (1870-1947) spent many years as the verger and organist of a church in Mazirbe. **Mārtiņš Lepste** was a Livonian language teacher in the 1930s. The former **Maritime School building** can be viewed from the outside. Some 2,000 students attended the school between 1894 and 1914.







**10. The Mazirbe Lutheran Church.** A wooden church was built here in 1766, and the new brick church was built on the foundations of the old church and consecrated in 1868. The tall steeple of the church helped ship captains orient themselves during the daytime. An altar painting by Gunta Liepiņa-Grīva, “Christ and Peter on the Sea,” was consecrated in 1993 to replace the former painting, which was lost. The blue-white-green Livonian flag was consecrated at the **Mazirbe manse** (now a recollection centre) on November 18, 1923. Near the manse are several rocks which stand witness to the Black Plague in 1710 and 1711. The text in Latin said that Livonians on the coastline were conquered by Swedish King Karl IX and the bubonic plague. The texts on the rocks have eroded away, but records of them were made. The **Mazirbe cemetery** has a monument to Old Taisel, a monument to the parents of captain A. Bertholds, and the legendary grave of a werewolf. *GPS: 57.67152, 22.33057.*



**11. Košrags. (*Kuoštrōg*).** The newest village along the Livonian coastline. It was established during the 17th century. Košrags had 78 residents in 1826. The first reading school for Livonian children in the Dundaga seashore villages was opened at the Žoki homestead in 1832. One of the teachers was **Nika Polmanis**, who was the first Livonian to have completed a professional education. He also translated the Gospel of Matthew into the Eastern Livonian dialect. Košrags had a windmill, water mill and boat building facility. During the spring, job seekers from Saaremaa stopped here. A port was installed in 1932, and a breakwater to collect sea fertiliser followed in 1938. During the 1930s, Košrags was regularly visited by Finnish and Estonian linguists to study the folklore of the Livonians. The Norpiedagi homestead was built by Livonian activist **Didriķis Volganskis** (1884-1968). His son, Livonian cultural worker and pastor (in Finland) **Edgars Vālgamā** (Volganskis, 1912-2003) was born there. He translated the Andrejs Pumpurs epic “Lāčplēsis” into Finnish. Košrags today is a cultural monument of national importance.



**12. Pitrags. (*Pitrõg*).** First recorded in documents in 1582. The shallow water around the village contains many sunken ships. In 1826, Pitrags had 11 farms and 190 residents. A saloon was opened in the mid-19th century. In 1937, the village had 12 old farms and 38 fishing operations (mostly new farms). One of the local residents was the distinguished Livonian language storyteller **Marija Šaltjāre** (Bertholde, 1860-1930). She shared more than 200 fairy tales and legends, more than 90 songs and games, etc. **The Pitrags Baptist Prayer House** was built in 1902. It was burned down during World War I, rebuilt in 1925, and renovated in the late 20th century. The Krogi homestead in the centre of Pitrags has a collection of **27 old types of Livonian coastline fencing**. The owner also offers a chance to help with the smoking of fish and then to taste the resulting product.



**13. Saunags. (*Sānag*).** This village appears in historical documents from 1310. A census in 1935 showed that all 49 Livonians in Saunags spoke the Lithuanian language, but only 11 of them spoke the language at home. There was a store that was owned by **Kārlis Tilmanis**, who also owned a factory where sprats were salted. Also born in Saunags was the seafaring captain **Arvīds Ludevīks** (1912-1996). In May 1945, he captained a tugboat, the Rota, in an attempt to bring Latvian refugees to Sweden. The ship was detained, and the captain was sent to Siberia. Another seafaring captain from Saunags was **Visvaldis Feldmanis** (1938-2017).





**14. Vaide (Vaid)** was first mentioned in written form in 1582. A census in 1736 found two farms, Lekši and Žonaki. A census in 1935 found that there were 106 people in Vaide, including 40 Livonians, 60 Latvians and a few Estonians and Germans. **Nika Polmanis** (1823-1903) was born at the Lāži homestead. He was the first educated Livonian and lived in the region for all his life. Livonian poet **Alfons Bertholds** (1910-1993) wrote a poem about a **noble oak tree** that grows alongside the homestead. The vast **Berthold family** is linked to Žonaki -- Livonian storyteller Marija Šaltjāre, yacht captain **Andrejs Bertholds** (USA), his son, library scholar **Artūrs Benedikts Bertholds** (USA), Livonian poet **Alfons Bertholds**, Livonian language specialists **Paulīne Kļaviņa** and **Viktors Bertholds**, Swiss doctor **Marsels Bertholds**, globally renowned pianist **Arturs Ozoliņš** (Canada), and Livonian language storyteller and poet **Grizelda Kristiņa** (1910-2013), who was the last native speaker of Livonian. The Ozolnieki homestead is also linked to the Bertholds family. **Paulīne Kļaviņa** (1918-2001), a specialist in the fields of Livonian traditions and language, and her mother, Livonian storyteller **Katrīna Zēberga**, both lived there. Paulīne collected ethnographic objects that can be seen at the Latvian Ethnographic Open Air Museum in the granary of the Livonian Dēliņi farm. The Purvziedi homestead in Vaide is owned by forest ranger Edgars Hausmanis, who has a collection of forest animal horns and antlers.



15. **The Pine nature trail** is 1.2 km long and passes through pine trees that are several hundreds of years old and have long since been partly covered by sand from the local dunes. There is a viewing tower at a former Soviet army base.  
*GPS: 57.75654, 22.59116.*



16. **Cape Kolka (Kūolka nanā)** is the northernmost point on the Kurzeme Peninsula. Two seas meet there, as do the sunrise and the sunset. During the migration season, countless birds rest there. Krišjānis Valdemārs did calculations to suggest that Cape Kolka is **the centre of Europe**. Shallows that are approximately 6 km long and up to 1.5 m deep with dolomite foundations stretches into the sea from Cape Kolka, and that is why one of the largest ship graveyards in the Baltic Sea is found here. The Baltic Sea (Big Sea/*Sūr mer*) is separated from the Bay of Rīga (Small Sea/*Piški mer*) at this location, and during storms waves here are as much as 7 m in height. The safety of shipping was assisted for many years by local lighthouses. The foundation of the old **light-house** can be seen at the tip of the cape. The present-day **Kolka lighthouse** is on an artificial island in the sea that was completed in 1875. The light in the lighthouse was turned on in 1884. Today it switches on and off automatically. The **Kolkasrags Visitor and Information Centre** is open all year long, though during the cold season it is only open on weekends and depending on demand.  
*GPS: 57.7566, 22.59988.*





17. **Kolka (*Kūolka*)** was mentioned in 1387, when it was called *Domesnes*. That was the name until the early 20th century. A ledger at the Irbe-Ģipka church states that there were four farms in Kolka in 1770 -- *Krogi*, *Ūši*, *Vecvagari* and *Kabriki*. In 1844, a school for vergers was established, and **Nika Polmanis** worked there as a teacher. Kolka's first **school** was built in 1881, and Livonian **Kārlis Bernšteins** (1881-1951) worked there for nearly half a century as a teacher. The Dundaga riots that began in 1859 were led by Livonian **Nika Šūbergs** (1833-1884), the son of the owner of the *Sār-nasti* farm. At the end of the 19th century, there were 392 residents in Kolka, and in 1935, 145 of the 343 residents were Livonians. During the mid-1980s, 13 Livonians spoke their language freely. Kolka is the only coastal Livonian village that continued to develop during the frontier regime of the Soviet Union, because it was the centre of a fishing kolkhoz. The number of residents increased rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s because new homes, a school, a people's centre, a kindergarten and several fish processing factories were built there. Today Kolka has 700 residents and is the largest village along the Livonian coastline. The "Līcis-93" fish processing factory is there, and local fishermen and smokers of fish work in the village. The Livonian ensemble *Laula* operates there, as well. The *Ūši* farm offers tastings of Livonian foods.





**18. Churches in Kolka.** The Kolka Evangelical **Lutheran** church was built in 1886, and the altar is decorated by an unusual altar painting by Helēna Heinrihsone. Kolka is the only Livonian village with an **orthodox** church devoted to the birth of Christ. The **Roman Catholic** church was opened in 1997. The building was erected in 1935 and was transported to Kolka from the village of Saka.



19. The **Livonian community House in Kolka** opened in 2019 is also a tourist information centre which offers a look at printed works, movies, recordings of Livonian storytellers, songs and spoken language. There you find exhibits household objects, fishing and fish processing equipment, handicrafts and the famous boots that were yearned by “leg cutters”.



20. The **steep shores of Ēvaži** are one of the few shores of this type along the coast of the Bay of Rīga. The shore is 8 to 15 m high. There is a 300 m **nature trail** that leads to the shore from the car park (where a café operates during the summer). This is the boundary of the Slītere National Park, and other destinations to the South of the boundary are not part of the park. *GPS: 57.6778, 22.56799.*





21. **Melnsils (*Mustānum*)** is the last village in the south-easterly direction, and during the mid-20th century, just a few Livonians lived there. Of 307 inhabitants in 1935, only 15 were Livonians. At the beginning of the 19th century, there were six farms and a lagoon here, but at the end of the century there were 63 farms. The valley of the **Bakupīte River** and the sea had remnants of pilings that provided evidence about a Medieval port. Legends say that the sea robber Trommel had a castle on the left bank of the river during the 14th century. Sailing ships were once built in the region, as well.



22. **Ezermuiža and Dūmele.** To the East of the Ezermuiža-Dūmele road you will find the bed of the ancient Lake Dieviņezers. It was one of the largest lakes in Kurzeme in the past, being 7.5 km long and 1.6 km wide. A canal was dug in 1838, and the water from the lake was siphoned to the sea so as to create fertile farmland. It is now the Melnsilupe River. **Residents of Ezermuiža** have been involved in forestry work since the age when barons ruled the land. Dūmele is connected to Košrags by a lonely forest road that is known as the Bottom Road. A bike route runs down it. The Ziedkalni weekend house is in Dūmele.



23. **Ģipka (Gipkō)** used to be a place where sailing ships were built. The building in which the Ģipka Maritime School operated between 1869 and 1894 is still there. The school was then transferred to Mazirbe. Approximately one km in the direction of Kolka is Pūrciems with its **White Dune**. It is 20 m high, and it was a place of a Stone Age settlement along the lagoon of the Littorina Sea. There is a 900 m **nature trail** along the banks of the Pilsupe River.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Early to mid-April

**BIRDWATCHING / Cape Kolka**

*putnudienas.lv, facebook.com/dabasparvalde*

Early June

**SLĪTERE TRAVELLER DAYS / Slītere National Park,**

*sliteresdiena.lv, visit.dundaga.lv*

Mid-July

**SEA FESTIVAL / Entire coastline**

*visit.dundaga.lv, kolka.lv*

July 21, (2019)

**AVOUSTIC CONCERT / Oviši lighthouse**

*facebook.com/ovisuakustiskaiskoncerts*

Late July

**INTERNATIONAL ART FAIR „Līvzeme”**

**Mazirbe / +371 20383578**

Early August

**INSECT NIGHT / Šlītere lighthouse**

*facebook.com/dabasparvalde*



First Saturday in August

**LIVONIAN FESTIVAL / Mazirbe**

[livones.net](http://livones.net) / +371 28603233

Late August

**ANCIENT FIRE NIGHT AND RELAY RACE**

**“Heartbeats to the Sea” (Dundaga-Mazirbe-Kolka)**

**Dundaga Administrative District / [dundaga.lv](http://dundaga.lv)**

Late September

**MUSHROOM DAY / Slītere National Park**

[facebook.com/dabaspavalde](https://facebook.com/dabaspavalde)

Early October

**BIRDWATCHING DAYS / Cape Kolka / [putnudienas.lv](http://putnudienas.lv)**

Mid-November

**LIVONIAN FLAG FESTIVAL / Mazirbe, Kolka / [livones.net](http://livones.net)**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**Dundaga Administrative District Tourism Information  
Centre at the Dundaga Castle**

tel +371 29444395, +371 63232293, [tic@dundaga.lv](mailto:tic@dundaga.lv),

Visit Dundaga, [visit.dundaga.lv](http://visit.dundaga.lv)

POLITE GREETINGS AND PHRASES

Good morning - Jõvā ūmõg!

Hello (during the day) - Jõvā pāva!

Good evening - Jõvā õdõg!

Good night - Jõvvõ ãedõ!

Hi - Tērtiņš!

Good bye - Nēmiz Pāl

Be well - Ammõ jõvvõ

Go with God - Jumālõks!

Thank you - Tenū!

Please - Põlaks!

My name is - Min nim um...

What is your name? - Mis um sin nim?

I am a Livonian/Lithuanian - Ma um lĩvli/letli

I speak Livonian/Latvian - Ma Rõkãndõb lĩvõkĩelkõks/  
letkĩelkõks

How are you? - Kui sinnõn lãb?

I am fine - Minnõn lãb jõvĩst.





## FOODS, BEVERAGES, MEALS

Breakfast - Brūokst  
Lunch - Lōinagizt or Pierrōlōinagizt  
Dinner - Ōdōgizt  
Porridge - Sandrok  
Tea – Tēj  
Coffee - Kaffō  
Pancake - Pankok  
Carrot bun - Sūrkak  
Wine - Vīnō  
Beer - Vōl  
Butter - Vōidag  
Cream - Ildžēmda  
Milk - Sēmda  
Cottage cheese Kuppōnsēmda  
Kefir - Kefīr  
Fermented milk - Appōnsēmda  
Cheese - Sōira  
Apple - Umārž  
Blackberry - Muškōž  
Plaice - Liestā  
Herring - Siļk  
Salmon - Laš  
Cod - Tūrska  
Chanterelle - Kiksēn or kikjālga  
Boletus mushroom - Boravīk  
Cep - Pākā  
Bread - Lēba  
Rye bread - Riggilēba  
Salt - Sūol  
Sugar - Tsukkōr

## TRAVEL, TOPONYMS, ETC.

Slītere National Park - Šlītōr rovpark  
Livonian coastline - Līvōd rānda  
Automobile - Outō  
Bicycle - Kōr  
Boat - Lōja  
On foot - Jālgin  
Livonian People's Centre - Līvōd rovkuodā  
Kolka lighthouse - Kūolka bōjk  
Kolka church - Kūolka pivākuodā  
Cape Kolka - Kūolka nanā  
Ēvaži steep shore - Ēvaži kūolta  
Baltic Sea - Sūr mer  
Bay of Rīga - Piški mer  
Mazirbe church - Irē pivākuodā  
Store - Būod  
Restaurant - Restorān  
Café - Kafōkuodā  
Leisure place - Novdōbkūož  
Pharmacy - Aptēk  
Amber - Elm  
Swampland - Vigā  
Hillocks - Kāngar  
Lake - Jōra  
River - Joug  
Bažu swamp - Bažā sūo  
Dune - Kōnka  
Beach - Liedōg  
Deep water - Miersālga  
Pine - Piedāg  
Road - Rēk

## THINGS TO SEE AND DO ALONG THE LIVONIAN COASTLINE

- Taste carrot buns and dried fish!
- Climb the Šlītere lighthouse for a view of the local forests, the Irbe narrows and Saaremaa!
- Visit Cape Kolka during bird migration season!
- Attend the Livonian Festival in Mazirbe and the Slītere Traveller Days!
- Hike or bike through the Livonian fishing village!
- Visit the Mazirbe Lutheran Church and its legendary black plague rock!
- Hike the trails of the Slītere National Park!





## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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- **A portal about Livonian culture:** [livones.net](http://livones.net)
- **A Livonian-Estonian-Latvian dictionary:** [livones.net/lingua/lv](http://livones.net/lingua/lv)
- **Information about Kolka and Livonians:** [kolka.lv](http://kolka.lv)
- **The Slītere National Park:** [slitere.lv](http://slitere.lv)
- **The Environmental Protection Board:** [daba.gov.lv](http://daba.gov.lv)
- **Tourism Guide:** Slītere National Park. 2010  
by Juris Smaļinskis, Country Traveller
- **Tourism in the Dundaga Administrative District:** [visit.dundaga.lv](http://visit.dundaga.lv)
- **Tourism in the Roja Administrative District:** [roja.lv](http://roja.lv)
- **Tourism in the Ventspils Administrative District:** [visitventspils.com](http://visitventspils.com)



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