

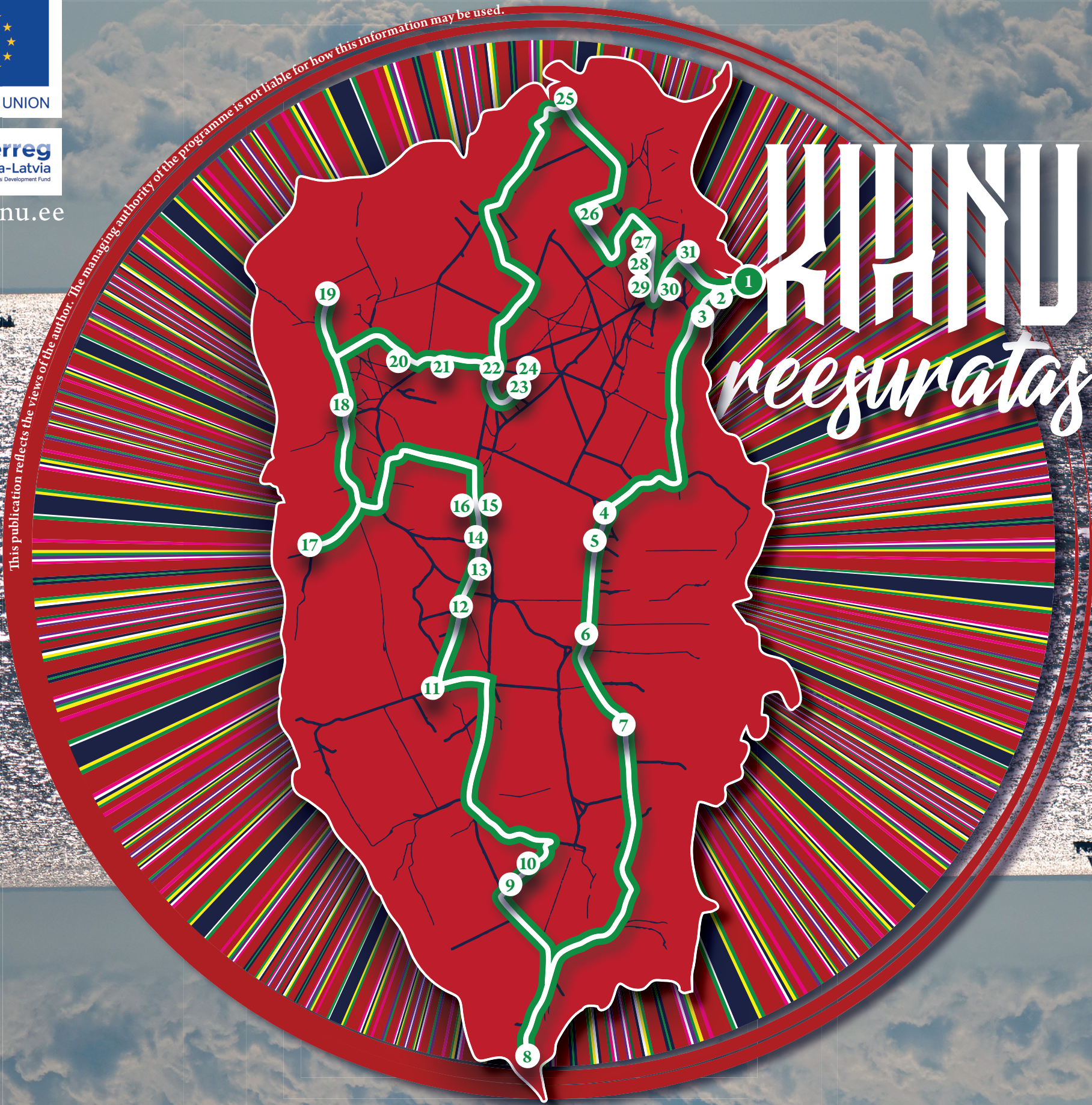


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# KIHNU reesuratas



ROUTE: KIHNU TRAVEL WHEEL

Kihnu Travel Wheel is the perfect round route for discovering the cultural and natural sights on Kihnu island by foot, with a bicycle or even with a nostalgic sidecar. Kihnu Travel Wheel, which is designed by cultural leaders and tourism entrepreneurs of Kihnu introduces the cultural space, landscapes and sea views acknowledged by UNESCO to the visitors. Kihnu Travel Wheel is something through which we, the people of Kihnu, invite you to experience our valuable home island.

The cultural space of Kihnu is unique, its striking originality lies in the communal lifestyle predominant on the island, various cultural customs, Kihnu language, folk costumes and natural environment.

The shape of the wheel has an important place in the cultural heritage of Kihnu. It symbolizes the traditional circular Kihnu wedding dance, the steering wheel of a ship as well as a bicycle (the most suitable vehicle for travelling on the route) and a sidecar, characteristic of Kihnu. The themed route itself can also be looked at as a wheel, as it is a circular route (circular=>wheel).

There is a lot to discover on the journey, you can find descriptions of all the sights at [visitkihnu.ee](http://visitkihnu.ee)

**START/FINISH:** The "official" starting and finishing point of the route is Kihnu Harbour, however, as it is a circular route, one can start and finish wherever one pleases.

**TRAVEL TIME:** By bicycle: 4-12 hours, depending on your physical abilities as well as goals of the journey and interests. On foot: approx. 2 times longer compared to cycling, i.e. 8-24 hours.

**VILLAGES AND THE LENGTH OF THE ROUTE:** The route passes four Kihnu villages Lemsi, Rootsiküla, Linaküla, Saare village and the length of the route is 23 kilometres. Road conditions: Almost 80% coated, 20% uncoated. The route is passable with all types of bicycles, on foot (preferably) and, if needed be (including for visitors with limited mobility) with a motorcar.

**MARKING:** Most of the route has signposts.

**THE BEST TRAVEL PERIOD:** Kihnu Travel Wheel is passable all year round, but the best time to visit the route is from April to October.

Kihnu harbour is the starting and finishing point of our journey, the welcoming host and dispatcher of our guests. Here is where our exploration and treasure hunt begins.



## 1.SUARU HARBOUR

There was no harbour in Kihnu in the old times. People and goods were transported from ships to the beach on boats and horses. The building of a harbour in Cape Suaru started in 1936, thanks to financial help from the state. Already in August of 1938, Kihnu parish welcomed the finished harbour. It included a stone pier, a wooden jetty, a telecommunication system and had a freshly employed boatswain.

In the times of kolkhozy, the harbour was deepened and bridges lengthened, in order to use bigger trawls for fishing. In the 1980's, the harbour was prepared for vessel traffic that would also enable ferry boats to dock. Nowadays, people and goods travel to and from Kihnu with a ferry boat named Kihnu Virve. In the harbour, vessels as long as up to 60 metres and with a sea gauge of 3.5 metres can dock. There are shower rooms, a sauna and toilets for the visitors in the terminal station. At the harbour, you can find an automatic petrol station which also serves yachts, an outside map and a tourist office, where visitors can find all the necessary information.

## 2.MARKET AND PLAYGROUND

## 3.NORD ROAD

## 4.LOHU HANDICRAFT STORE

## 5.NEST BOX FOR MERGUS

It is a custom that Kihnu men build wooden nest boxes and prepare them for mergansers who arrive from the south in March. The boxes are fastened high on the tree-trunks to wait for the beginning of the nesting season. Mergus are coastal seabirds, who build their nests into all kinds of cavities and man-made nest boxes also find favour with them. In the beginning of May, 10 cream-coloured oval eggs appear in the nest. Sometimes, several female birds lay eggs in the same nest box and thus, there will be so many eggs, that they simply will not fit under the nesting bird – that is, when the maker of the nest box has the right to take some of the eggs to eat. In spring, dishes made with mergus eggs are common in the Kihnu family menu.

## 6.THE OLD FIRE STATION

The old fire station, which is located next to Kaevandu farm, was institutionally built in the 1960's, after the arrival of the first fire engine ZIS-S. Since then, until the change of the century, the Kihnu fire brigade was managed by Jaan Joala from Kaevandu farm. The fire station also found use as an educational base for Kihnu students – a newspaper from that time writes that “students learn theory in class teacher lessons but practical skills are acquired in the fire station”.

After the restoration of Estonia's independence, the building was given an extension to accommodate another tank truck.

In 2009, the fire brigade moved into the freshly overhauled rooms of the technical centre. The Kihnu fire brigade, under the leadership of Ago Laos, deals with approximately 12 departures a year. The peculiarity of this job is that firefighters work half-time and are on call at home.

## 7.JÕNNU MEMORIAL

## 8.LIGHTHOUSE

Kihnu lighthouse („puaek“ as it is called by the locals) is located on Pitkänä ninä, the most southern cape of the island.

The lighthouse was brought here from England in 1864 in separate dismantled parts and was put together on the spot. The tower is white with a conical shape and equipped with a lantern and a balcony. The height of the light is 29 metres from sea level and 28 metres from the ground. Kihnu lighthouse is first and foremost perennially operating navigation light No 840 under Maritime Administration.

Since 2013, the tower is open to visitors once again and people are welcome to enjoy the marvellous view from the top.

## 9. HEN HOUSE

After the maintenance crew of the lighthouse had left Kihnu, the contingent, which had been their housing, was altered into a hen house.

Thus, Kihnu kolkhoz “Soviet Partisan”, earned extra income from selling the eggs.

It was common for men to gather around the hen house, so they could eat boiled eggs while drinking.

## 10.METSAMAA TRADITIONAL FARM

## 11. LÜLLE HILL

This is the birthplace of Kihnu hero Lülle Lüll. This strong and wealthy man had the courage to confront the violence with which the manor treated the common folk. Nowadays, the mysterious incomer sometimes shows himself in the form of a light figure to a few chosen ones who dwell on the Lülle hill road in the dark. Several local people, who have walked that same road in the dark, are said to have arrived on an endless road, from where you can only return by turning back.

## 12. OLD COMMUNITY CENTRE GROUND

In 1965, a sports ground and an open-air stage were set up near the old community centre, so that competitions in strength and amateur performances could take place between the two neighbouring islands at the Kihnu-Ruhnu games.

The same place is still used today as a sports ground: there is a tennis and football field; it is used to ascertain the best in competitions and also for relaxing fitness exercises.

The most beautiful party of the year – midsummer party on midsummer's night – always takes place around a campfire on the ground of the old community centre.

## 13.OLD COMMUNITY CENTRE

## 14.COMMUNITY CENTRE

## 15.CHURCH

Lutheranism arrived in Kihnu during the Swedish rule in the 17th century. In 1624, a large wooden church was built in the middle of the island and in 1784, the current stone church building was built in its place.

In the 1840's, Kihnu people turned to Russian Orthodox. Today, people are members of the St. Nicholas Apostolic-Orthodox congregation. The church choir sings during baptisms, weddings, church holidays and funerals.

Even during the complicated times of the 20th century, the church maintained its traditional place in the life of the island.

## 16. MUSEUM

## 17. SUARÕ NINÄ

Suarõ ninä is a historical place name on the western coast of the island. It was the docking place for herring boats of Lina-küla men. It was very good to shake the herrings out of the mesh on the low grass beach and to dry and fix the sea traps. Today, Suarõ ninä is the place where people go to see the sunset. Campfire and ball courts have been set up in between the junipers and a place to party for the guests of Linaküla beach campsite.

## 18.LIIVA-AA BOULDER

The sea and the coast of Kihnu are very stony but still, there are not a lot of boulders. The Liiva-aa boulder in the Linaküla pine forest is the biggest boulder in Kihnu. The boulder is under nature conservation and it has a circumference of 9.78 m and a height of 2.44 m.

According to the legend, the “undergrounds” (mysterious elf-like creatures that live beneath the ground) live under the boulder – people have heard noises from under the boulder. It is also said that Mulgi witches use the boulder to dry themselves during night-time.

## 19. THE LEGACY OF MÕISA-ASEME

The state manor, which was established at the end of the 17th century, was eradicated in 1877. The main building of the manor was demolished and the logs were used to build a school building in the middle of the island in 1892. The house of the manor servants stood until the Soviet era and the round flower beds, where people would go to see the growing tulips and daffodils, even longer. Today, the only reminders of the manor garden are the indigenous lindens. The granary in the vicinity is a legacy of the manor and today, it is used as a living space.

## 20.HEALTH CENTRE

## 21.KIHNU STORE

## 22.KURASE STORE and SEA BOUTIQUE

## 23.GRAVEYARD

The Kihnu graveyard is surrounded by a fence stacked from ground rocks. The graves are in the West-East direction, under tall pines in the clean light sand. Crosses are usually used as grave markers. The roofed wooden crosses, which used to be in the majority, have almost disappeared by today. One can also find cast iron and ironwork crosses as well as headstones and plaques. The use of a family mark on the grave marker is peculiar. There are a lot of concrete caskets and artificial flowers.

The special value of the graveyard is the fact that it has not been vandalised, ruined by stacking bodies or with redesigning.

## 24.KIHNU JÕNN'S GRAVE

## 25.SIGATSUARU PORT

## 26. AIRFIELD

The first plane landed in Kihnu in 1953 and created great excitement amongst the islanders. The airfield that was first on the eastern coast of the island, in Linaküla, was in 1968 brought to Sääreküla on the northern coast.

At the moment there are two unlit grass-covered runways, the Southwest-Northeast runway has been strengthened with

a punched cover. Both paths are marked with a threshold and end markers, and edge markers. Since April of 2016, there are no more regular flights to Kihnu, only an emergency helicopter lands in exceptional cases.

In the summertime, clubs arrange sky-diving on the Kihnu airfield.

## 27. TRAP WORKSHOP

In the trap workshop in Karduni, people made new sea traps and fixed the old ones. 6–7 women knitted mesh netting using a netting needle, they were making or fixing wooden fishing boats (the ‘kakuam’), herring nets, clubs with long stalks, trawls etc. Broken traps were sent to Kihnu to be fixed from different ends of the big “Pärnu fisherman” kolkhoz. After the end of the kolkhoz order, a cooperative society was created for a short period of time, which made mesh bags as their last product.

## 28. SMOKE PRODUCTION FACILITY

Fishing has been an indigenous livelihood in Kihnu. During the times of kolkhozy, motors came to help men and made the traps more resistant. In addition to the ‘kaukam’, trawl traps and vessels were purchased and the catches increased immensely. In order to increase the value of fish and to create jobs for women, a smoke production facility was built on the island by the end of the 1960's.

The smoke production facility of the fisher kolkhoz “Pärnu fisherman” was mainly used to salt, smoke and package herrings but bigger fish as well, such as cod and Atlantic mackerel. Even the boxes for transportation they made themselves. Children came to fold the herring packaging boxes. The production was mostly sold to Russia.

## 29.NJAPUTÜE PUED

## 30.KIHNU MARINE SOCIETY and THE OLD POWER STATION

Preparations for bringing electricity on the island started in 1954. It was a cold winter – stones for the foundation of the power station were transported on 3 big tipping trucks, which travelled after one another on a 70 cm thick ice road. Homes of Kihnu were supplied with electricity at the end of 1957. Power was switched off from midnight until 6 o'clock in the morning.

Oil fuel for motors was mostly transported by sea with ship. If the oil ran out, it could also be transported by plain, which people used for travelling at the same time.

## 31.FISHERMEN'S PORT

Suaru port is divided into three parts: state, municipality and fishermen's port. The most northern part is full of ‘kakuam’ boats, cad boats, and small boats – this is the fishermen's port. Professional fishermen privatised this part of the port for their shares after the falling of the kolkhoz order.

Spring is especially busy in the fishermen's port: boats and traps are cleaned, and one can smell tar, just like in the old days. One can also see a lot of motorcycles, which are waiting on the shore for the men coming from the sea.

## Explore other ethno-cultural regions in Estonia and Latvia:

**Setomaa:** [visitsetomaa.ee](http://visitsetomaa.ee)

**Suitu:** [suitunovads.lv](http://suitunovads.lv)

**Livonia:** [livones.net](http://livones.net), [visit.dundaga.lv](http://visit.dundaga.lv)