

NATURE ROAD: FROM VILNIUS TO HELSINKI THROUGH THE BALTIC STATES

10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS

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DAY 1: Arrival in Vilnius, Lithuania

Vilnius city tour. Vilnius Old Town, Gediminas tower, Presidential Palace, St. Anne's Church, Sts. Peter & Paul's Church, KGB museum, Gates of Dawn, Bernardine Gardens, Castle Hill, Hill of Three Crosses, Gediminas avenue.
Overnight in a hotel in Vilnius.

DAY 2: Vilnius – Trakai Historical National Park – Kaunas DRIVING DISTANCE - 115km. PROGRAMME DURATION: 8h.

The Trakai Island Castle in the Trakai Historical National Park www.trakai-visit.lt/en/trakai.
Karaites' cultural heritage museum (ethnic group of Turkish speaking Crimean Tatars who settled here in 14th -15th century).
Traditional Lithuanian food www.kibinas.lt.
Kaunas city tour. Old Town Kaunas, the Ninth Fort, Laisvesaleja (Liberty Boulevard), the Kaunas castle, Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. The house of Chigune



Sugihara www.sugiharahouse.com, the Japanese consul, who resided in Kaunas in 1939 - 1940 and rescued Jewish people from persecution by granting them visas.
Overnight in a hotel in Kaunas.

DAY 3: Kaunas – Klaipėda – Curonian Spit – Nida DRIVING DISTANCE - 270km. PROGRAMME DURATION 10h. Ferry 15min.

Klaipėda, a harbour city. Ferry to peninsula (15min) to Curonian Spit National Park, a sand-dune spit that separates the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea. This is the only place in the Baltic States where there is such a vast territory of open-air sand dunes which still change the local terrain very actively because of the wind. Sites to visit: ethnographic villages, Nida holiday resort, impressive sand dunes. Near Juodkrantė, bird lovers can observe the colony of grey herons and large cormorants. Juodkrante



also has unique forest sound observation sites "Sound catchers" in an old forest www.nerija.lt/lt/news/show/1260349253.
Overnight at Nida.

DAY 4: Nida – Klaipėda – Lithuania/Latvia border – Pape Nature Park – Liepāja DRIVING DISTANCE - 160km. PROGRAMME DURATION 9h. Ferry 15min.

Vienkiemis www.vienkiemis.lt/recreation complex with a cafe, pub, restaurant offering traditional Lithuanian food. Exposition of historical working tools. The House of Tradition Zvanitaji www.celotajs.lv/lv/e/tradiciju_nams_zvanitaji.



The wooden building was erected in the late 19th century and features a museum demonstrating the way people lived more than 100 years ago. Exhibits include household objects, the Rucava folk costume, socks and decorated mittens. Tasting traditional Latvian food.



The Pape Nature Park www.pdf-pape.lv/en: a coastal lagoon lake and a wet high peat bog with transitional bogs, sand beaches and walking dunes, coastal forests, flood-plain meadows.
Liepāja Craft Centre www.celotajs.lv/en/e/liepajas_amatnieku_nams. Watching

various craftspeople at work: amber jewellers, weavers, etc.
Overnight in a hotel in Liepāja.

DAY 5: Liepāja – Saldus – Ķemeri National Park – Riga DRIVING DISTANCE - 190km. PROGRAMME DURATION with 2 visits: 12h

The timing allows for a combination of maximum 2 farm visits. There are the following options en route to choose from:
1) Farm Pilādži www.celotajs.lv/en/e/zs_piladzi produces crops (500ha for grain, 350ha for rapeseed), breeds livestock and grows flowers and vegetables (20ha for potatoes).
2) Apiary Honey Castle in www.celotajs.lv/lv/e/meduspils. The owner has ca 300 hives of bees.



3) The farm Geidas www.celotajs.lv/lv/e/geidas specialises in dairy farming. Visitors can churn butter and learn about how dairy products are produced.
The Ķemeri National Park. The bog landscape can be enjoyed walking through the bog on wooden trail (2-4km, 1-2h walking).



Overnight in a hotel in Riga.

DAY 6: Riga – Gauja National Park – Cēsis / Valmiera DRIVING DISTANCE - 80 km. WALKING 2-4km (1-2h). A cable car ride (10min one way)

Riga city tour. The Dome Cathedral with one of the world's largest pipe organs, St. Peter's Church with magnificent views

A panoramic tour of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland with highlights of natural monuments and attractions in national parks and nature reserves including a wide variety of landscapes, wildlife sites, birds and wild animals, forests and coastal shorelines. The tour also offers some cultural and historical insights.



Vilnius - Trakai - Kaunas - Klaipėda - Curonian Spit - Liepāja - Saldus - Ķemeri National Park - Riga - Gauja National Park - Cēsis - Valmiera - Soomaa National Park - Pärnu - Saaremaa - Matsalu National Park - Haapsalu - Tallinn - Helsinki - Nuukso National Park - Siuntio - Helsinki

of the city from its steeple, the old Guild Houses, the Swedish Gate, the architectural ensemble Three Brothers, St. Jacob's Church, the Parliament House, Old Riga Castle, Art Nouveau area. The Historic Centre of Riga is a UNESCO Heritage Site. Namdari Woodworking www.celotajs.lv/en/e/namdara_darbnica - getting to know local trees, joining together with master craftsmen to check out antique instruments and play ancient games.



The Gauja national park features landscapes of the ancient Gauja river valley and historic monuments. A cable car ride over the Gauja river. The crossing is 1060m long, about 40m above the river, and the ride offers an outstanding look at the local landscapes. www.tourism.sigulda.lv/gaisa-trosu-cels-vagonins/.



Overnight in guest house Kārļamuiža www.karlamuiza.lv/en/. Located in the scenic Amata river valley, guests can walk along a nature trail near the guest house (1-2h walking along the boardwalk).

DAY 7: Cēsis – Rūjiena – Soomaa National Park – Pärnu DRIVING DISTANCE - 236km. PROGRAMME DURATION: 12h, 2-3h swamp walking in special swamp shoes.

Cēsis town. Visit a jeweller workshop www.celotajs.lv/en/e/seno_rotu_kalve at the medieval Cēsis Castle. Reproductions of ancient jewellery, watch the craftsman at work. The timing allows for 1 farm visit.

There are the following options en route to choose from:
1) Sheep farm Klimpas breeding more than 150 sheep www.celotajs.lv/en/e/zs_klimpas



2) The Ķorpi windmill at Rūjiena. The windmill has a 19th century system produced by the Latvian machinery factory and used to shred and card wool. The owners use the wool to produce blankets and pillows that are stuffed with sheep's wool (this is handwork). Possibility to taste Latvian food www.celotajs.lv/en/e/konu_dzirnavas.
The Soomaa National Park in Estonia is a land of swamps www.visitsoomaa.com. There are several major swamps in this area, along with rivers, lowland meadows, wetland forests. A walking tour (2-3h) wearing special swamp shoes.



Overnight in Pärnu.

DAY 8: Pärnu – Virtsu – Kuivastu – Muhu island – Saaremaa island DRIVING DISTANCE - 215km. PROGRAMME DURATION: 12h. Ferry 0,5h. Walking 45min.

Ferry to Muhu and Saaremaa islands www.visitestonia.com/en/where-to-go/islands/saaremaa-muhu-islands.
Ethnographic fishermen's village Koguva at Muhu island. Vanatoa farm for traditional food www.vanatoa.ee/en/.
The Panga cliff, ca 22m high dolomite cliff at the coast. Nature reserve, forest trail and observation tower at the seaside Viidumäe (45min walk). Kuressaare Episcopal Castle - the convent building is the only surviving medieval fortification in the Baltic countries which has not been reconstructed. Overnight in a hotel in Kuressaare. The Castle in Kuressaare town.

DAY 9: Saaremaa island – Pädaste – Haapsalu – Matsalu National park – Tallinn DRIVING DISTANCE - 270km. PROGRAMME DURATION: 12h. Ferry 0,5h. Walking 2h.

Lunch and wine tasting at Pädaste manor www.padaste.ee or Luscher & Matiesen Muhu Winehouse www.veinitalu.ee/farm-winery Muhu island.
Ferry Muhu island – Virtsu.
The timing allows for 1 walking tour. There are the following options en route to choose from:

1) A boardwalk trail in Matsalu National park (5km, 2h), bird watching towers.
2) Haapsalu – a charming seaside town, a castle. Sightseeing walking tour 2h.
Overnight in a hotel in Tallinn.

DAY 10: Tallinn – Helsinki – Nuukso National Park – Helsinki – Siuntio DRIVING DISTANCE - 100km. Ferry 2h. Walking 7km (2-3h)

Departure to Helsinki, ferry (2h).
Helsinki city tour. The Helsinki Cathedral and the Senat Square, the Parliament, the Old Market Hall and Market Square, the Esplanade park, the Kamppi Chapel of Silence, the Tempeliahaukio church, the Design District Helsinki, the Suomenlinna Sea fortress.
The Nuukso National Park comprises the westernmost part of the so-called Nuukso lake highlands. Dozens of endangered or near threatened species of animals, plants and fungi are found in the area, for instance, the Siberian Flying Squirrel, the European Nightjar and the Woodlark.



Overnight in spa hotel Cumulus Resort Siuntio: <https://resort.cumulus.fi/en/hotels-and-spas/spa-hotel-rantasipi-siuntio>
Enjoy the peaceful natural surroundings of the spa and take the wild herb tour in Purnus river valley with SE-Action www.seaction.com/en/program-services/outdoor-activities/thaw

DAY 11: Siuntio – Helsinki – departure DRIVING DISTANCE - 60km.

Departure from Helsinki Airport

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This publication reflects the views of the author(s). The Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.