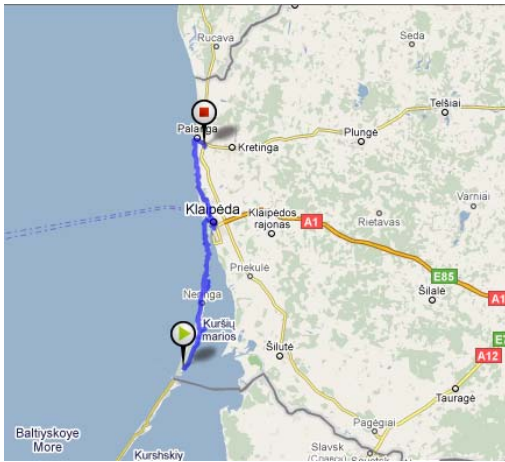


Cycling Safaris

LITHUANIAN SEASIDE 2010



The Baltic Sea coast with Palanga Resort and the Curonian Spit National Park, designated by UNESCO as the World Heritage Site, explored by bicycle on highly scenic routes with a help of experienced local tour guide. Enjoy a real Lithuanian country life when cycling in the Nemunas River Delta region. This tour partly covers the Lithuanian Seaside Cycle Route which is the first and only officially signposted high quality cycle route in Lithuania opened a few years ago.

TOUR ITINERARY

(cycling approximately 190 km)

DAY 1 Sunday ARRIVAL IN KLAIPĖDA

Arrival in Klaipėda. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included). Check-in at the hotel. 7:00 a.m. welcome meeting at the hotel, where you will be greeted by your tour guide, given any information including maps and detailed route descriptions. Over dinner there is a chance to meet up with your fellow cyclists and discuss the week ahead

DAY 2 Monday KLAIPĖDA-VEIVIRŽĖNAI-ŠVĖKŠNA-ŠILUTĖ (cycling app. 40 km, Driving app. 40 km)

You will start the day with a Sightseeing tour around the Old Town followed by a transfer to Veiviržėnai. Here you will collect your rental bicycles and start your cycling ride through Pamarys Meadows to Šilutė. En route stop in Švėkšna and Vilkėnai villages to explore the estates with their beautiful parks and impressive neo-gothic church of St. Jacob the Apostle. Arrival in Šilutė, check-in and dinner at the hotel.

DAY 3 Tuesday: ŠILUTĖ-RUSNĖ ISLAND-ŠILUTĖ (cycling app. 45 km)

Explore Šilutė town named after "Šilokarčema" (a pub in the boscage) and go for a return cycling trip to Rusnė Island, the only such big island in Lithuania, located in the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park. En

route you will explore the ethnographic fisherman's homestead – a museum of Rusnė, the old water pumping station – a polder museum and the 19th century lighthouse in Uostadvaris Harbour. Evening Dinner at your hotel.

DAY 4 Wednesday: ŠILUTĖ-KINTAI-VENTĖ-NIDA (cycling app. 45 km)

Cycling to Ventė Cape where you visit a bird ringing station with a museum of ornithology and the 19th century lighthouse which offers an amazing view of the landscape and a glimpse of the shining sand dunes of the Curonian Spit. En route you will cross 24-km long Klaipėda Canal, also referred to as King Vilhelm Canal, which was dug in the 19th century to link the Minija River with the Curonian Lagoon in Klaipėda. Take a boat for crossing the Curonian Lagoon to Nida. Arrival in Nida followed by a bike ride to the hotel. Check-in and dinner at the hotel.

DAY 5 Thursday: NIDA

Free day in Nida which is an old fishermen's village on the Curonian Spit washed by the Baltic Sea from one side and the Curonian Lagoon from other side. Today Nida is the largest settlement of the town of Neringa and one of the most beautiful resorts in Lithuania. Cycling or walking along impressive sand dunes and visiting the most popular places of interest – the Fisherman's House, the summer house of famous German writer Thomas Mann, and the Amber Gallery. Dinner at the hotel.

DAY 6 Friday: NIDA-JUODKRANTĖ-KLAIPĖDA (cycling app. 55 km)

Cycling on an asphalt bike path of the Lithuanian Seaside Cycle Route which takes you along the Curonian Spit to Klaipėda. En route you will stop at Thomas Mann memorial museum, "Dead" sand dunes and colony of grey herons and cormorants, visit the Hill of Witches which houses a hundred fanciful and folksy wooden sculptures scattered along a forest path, go swimming in the Baltic Sea and take the sun on golden sand beaches. Arrival in Smiltynė where take a ferry to the Old Town of Klaipėda. Check-in and dinner at the hotel.

DAY 7 Saturday: KLAIPĖDA-PALANGA-ŠVENTOJI-KLAIPĖDA (cycling app. 40 km, by minibus app. 40 km)

Cycle to Palanga resort along the Seaside Cycle Route leading through Giruliai Forest and the Seaside Regional Park. En route explore the Dutchman's Cap – a 24-meter-high coastal cliff and Plazė Lake. In Palanga visit the Botanical Park and Amber Museum, cycle along J.Basanavičius car-free street featuring plenty of cafes, restaurants and a pier heading 470 meters into the Baltic Sea. Finish cycling at Žemaičių Alkos, the ancient place of Samogitians with a paleo-astronomical observatory, in Šventoji. Then get a transfer back to Klaipėda. Optional dinner at the hotel.

DAY 8 Departures

Breakfast at hotel. End of tour

GROUP TOUR DATES

June 20

July 18 **

August 15 **

**Peak

GROUP TOUR COSTS

Off peak

€805 per person sharing

€985 per single room

Peak Price

€835 per person sharing

€1025 per single room

TRANSFER COSTS

Single Person Arrival or departure transfer - €40 net per person (Palanga Airport) or €26 net per person (Klaipeda ferry terminal)

Arrival or departure transfer for a party of two persons - €20 net per person (Palanga Airport) or €13 net per person (Klaipeda Ferry Terminal)

EXTRA ACCOMMODATION

Hotel in Klaipeda Old Mill Hotel or similar

SGL €60 per room per night, inc. Breakfast

DBL €72 per room per night, inc. Breakfast

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

THE TOUR INCLUDES:

- 7 nights stay at the hotels
- Breakfast daily
- Half Board (7 Dinners)
- Welcome meeting
- Bike rental
- Guide escort on days 2-4 & 6-7
- Transfers by minibus on days 2 & 7
- Ferry ticket from the Curonian Spit to Klaipeda
- Luggage transport on day 2 (Klaipeda-Šilutė), day 4 (Šilutė-harbour-Nida) and day 6 (Nida-Klaipeda)
- Boat trip across the Curonian Lagoon to Nida
- Entrances to: Ornithological station in Ventė, Thomas Mann's House in Nida and Amber Museum in Palanga.
- Individual information package (city guide, maps, program and route description)

WHAT TO BRING

Cycling gloves; cycling shorts; long pants; waterproof jacket; sunglasses; sun cream; sunhat; stiff-soled shoes suitable for cycling; water bottles. Although it is not compulsory to wear a helmet in the Baltic States, we strongly recommend that you wear one (*please bring your own as these are not provided*).

BIKE AND FITNESS

Here is an example of the type of touring bike used:



- Aluminium frame
- 21 speed
- Choice of a front or rear pannier bag (please note that the pannier is smaller than the one you see on the bike)
- Water bottle carrier
- Back carrier
- Bicycle lock
- Pump
- Repair kit (carried by tour guide)
- Map support

Helmets are not included.

Cycling terrain is generally flat to gently undulating so the riding is not very demanding physically. The majority of the trip is on tarmac; there are a few stretches on unsurfaced tracks, but no technical riding experience is required for this.

GROUPE, GUIDE AND BACKUP SERVICE

Group size will vary between 2 and 15, and will be accompanied by a local Lithuanian tour leader and driver almost all the time when travelling from Vilnius to Riga, and local city guide for sightseeing tour in Vilnius.

Please note there will be no support vehicle when cycling distances from Nida to Klaipeda (60 kms) and from Klaipeda to Palanga (30 kms).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Weather

This itinerary takes place at the same latitude as Scotland, and the area has a continental climate – long cold winters, short hot summers, and it can rain a lot. Daytime temperatures should vary from 20C degrees to 33C degrees, cooler in bad weather. Nights will be cool to warm, never being cold – perhaps chilly in bad weather. There is generally a good amount of sunshine during summer months and the days are very long in June and July.

Passport and Visas

Lithuania and Latvia were among the ten accession countries that joined the EU in May 2004. Most nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay, (the exception being a list of nationalities from EU countries who are only required to produce a personal identification card). It is your responsibility to have the correct documents and to obtain your own visa, if required. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise and any subsequent effects.

Currency

In Lithuania, the unit of currency is the Litas (LTL), (1 EUR = 3.45 LTL approx.)

In Latvia, the unit of currency is the Lat (LVL), (1 EUR = 0.645 LVL approx.)

Foreign currencies and local currencies (Litas and Lat) can be exchanged at all banks. The Euro and US Dollar are the most popular foreign currencies accepted everywhere in banks. You can use only local currencies for paying in shops and for services, but Euros and US Dollars are accepted by people selling handicrafts in markets. You should bring a mixture of cash and traveller's cheques. Cash machines are available in many places in the two capital cities, larger towns and resorts.

Additional expenses and spending money

All lunches are at your expense. You may order picnic meals for extra charge payable in cash to your tour leader. Your tour leader and driver will prepare the picnic meals.

You should allow \$20-30 per person per day for meals in Vilnius and Riga. The amount you spend will depend on the standard of restaurant chosen.

Local Time

Local time conforms to Eastern European Time which is 2 hours ahead of GMT.