



THE GREAT LOOP ALONG THE SEACOAST AND THROUGH INLAND FORESTS: FOREST TRAIL AND BALTIC COASTAL HIKING IN LATVIA AND LITHUANIA (self-drive + hiking)

14



DAY 1

Arrival in Rīga.

Accommodation: in Rīga.

DAY 2



Rīga - Jūrmala - Ķemeri National Park - Lake Valguma

→ 67 km

Sightseeing and walking in Jūrmala resort town.

Leave the car in Ķemeri.



Ķemeri - Lake Sloka - Bigauņciems

→ 11 km ⌚ 2 - 3 h



Gravel roads, in Ķemeri – asphalt, pavement, park paths, forest trails with natural pavement, wooden footbridges



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road!



The Forest Trail at this section nearby Ķemeri overlaps with the pedestrian and bicycle route “Zaļā kāpa” (The Green Dune), which is marked white-yellow-white paint on the trees.

Private transfer back to the car.

Accommodation: in Valguma.



Itinerary: RĪGA - JŪRMALA - ĶEMERI - BIGAUŅCIEMS - LAKE VALGUMA - KANDAVA - SABILE - KULDĪGA - JŪRKALNE - PĀVILOSTA - LIEPĀJA - PAPE - PALANGA - KLAIPĒDA - CURONIAN SPIT - NIDA - PERVALKA - JUODKRANTĒ - KLAIPĒDA - PAPLATELĒ - PLATELIAI - TELŠIAI - BUOŽĒNAI - KURTUVĒNAI - ŠAUKĒNAI - ŠIAULIAI - RĪGA

Hiking route length: → ~ 825 km driving, ~140 km hiking

Duration: **13 days**

Difficulty level: ●●

🚩 Rīga

🚩 Rīga (or Vilnius)

This tour can be done with your own or rented car and it includes driving, some hiking parts and transfers with the public transport. This grand Forest Trail and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route tour includes some of the best and most beautiful parts of the Forest Trail and Baltic Coastal Hiking Route in Lithuania and the southern part of Latvia. Hikes are combined with trips and excursions in cities, as well as other popular tourist sights in both countries. You will get a detailed impression about the forest diversity, coastal landscape and most popular national and regional nature parks in Latvia and Lithuania.

You will start the tour in Rīga, where you will enjoy the beautiful Old town included in UNESCO and Art Nouveau district. Then you will drive to Ķemeri National Park, where you will have some small hiking along the Forest Trail till the place Bigauņciems, where the Forest Trail meets the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route. After that you will hike along the Forest Trail in the beautiful Abava River valley and see Sabile - the wine and cider town. Then you will reach the most charming Kurzeme town - Kuldīga with its old town streets, the bridge over river Venta, the promenade and waterfall. Afterwards you will drive to the coast and have some hike along the most outstanding bluffs around the Baltic Sea. Then you will also see Liepāja - the windy city and hike in the Pape Nature Park. Further the tour will bring you to Lithuania and its Baltic Coastal Hiking Route part. You will see the resort town Palanga, Klaipėda and hike in the Curonian Spit from Pervalka to Juodkrantė to see the interesting sand dunes. Further you will drive from Klaipėda to Paplatelė and enjoy a 1 day hiking in Žemaitija National Park. Then you will drive to Telšiai and explore the Lake Germantas and landscape reserve along small forest paths and wooden footbridges. At the end of the tour you will go for a 1 day hike in Kurtuvėnai Regional Park which is one of the most forested areas in Central Lithuania with very pronounced glacier-shaped terrain forms spread in the Eastern Žemaitija Upland.



DAY 3



Valgums - Tukums - Kandava

→ 42 km

Private transfer from Kandava to Sabile.

Sights on route:

- **Sabile** - romantic, small town of Kurzeme, which is located in the most beautiful and deepest part of the Abava valley, you can see the Wine Hill, visit the winery and cidery to taste the local made drinks.
- **Kalnmuīža manor.**
- **Kandava** - ancient architecture, cobbled streets, lanterns, mountainous terrain and beautiful nature views as well as the Abava bridge and possibility to taste the coffee made from oak acorns.



Sabile - Plosti - Kandava

→ 21 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Gravel roads and dirt roads, in a short section – trails, in Kandava – asphalt, pavement.



Easy



Be careful when crossing the Fishermen's reinforced concrete bridge and walking along the side of the road!

Accommodation: in Kandava.



DAY 4



Kandava - Kuldīga

→ 60 km

Private transfer to Pelči.

Sights on route:

- **"Mazsālijas" deer garden**, wine cellar and tastings.
- **Pelči** palace and park with the ponds.
- **Peony garden** "Ziedoņi".
- **Sightseeing in Kuldīga.** One of the most attractive towns of Kurzeme with architectural heritage of 17th and 18th century buildings.



Pelči - Kuldīga

→ 11 km



Gravel roads, in Snēpele and Kuldīga – asphalt or pavement, promenade with gravel along the shore.



Easy



Be careful when walking along the side of the road and crossing the Kuldīga bypass! There can be hogweeds on the roadsides!

Alternatives: Can add one extra day in Kuldīga to explore this nice town.

Accommodation: in Kuldīga.





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DAY 5



Kuldīga - Alsunga - Jūrkalne / Labrags

→ 40 km

Leave the car in Jūrkalne or Labrags.

Sights on route:

- **Ēdole castle.**
- **Alsunga village** - the centre of the Suiti historical region, which is a small Catholic community in the Lutheran western part of Latvia. You can try their nice national costumes and taste their traditional carrot bun called "sklandrausis".
- **The steep shore of the Baltic Sea in Jūrkalne** - they are up to 20 m high, washed by the waves and mostly made of sand and narrow bands of pebbles and stones.



Jūrkalne / Labrags - Pāvilosta

→ 16 - 20 km

⌚ 7 - 9 h



Sandy, pebbly beaches (with pebbles of different sizes), beaches covered in small stones. Near Pāvilosta and Jūrkalne: wide sandy beaches.



Hard



The bluffs collapse as the sea washes away the shore and the rain water washes out their slopes. You can come across landslides, landfalls, rockfalls, so the bluffs cannot be used for moving forward. To this end, stairs have been installed in many places. Landfalls mostly occur during storms or after them, as well as after heavy showers, but may also occur at other times.



Public bus or private transfer from Pāvilosta back to the cars.

Jūrkalne / Labrags - Pāvilosta

→ 21 km

Accommodation: in Pāvilosta.

DAY 6



Pāvilosta - Liepāja

→ 53 km

• Morning in **Pāvilosta town.**

• **Sightseeing in Liepāja.** You can visit the Liepāja beach, Rose square, the Great Amber Concert hall and the Karosta former military town.



Liepāja - Karosta - Northern pier

→ 6,5 km in one way

Accommodation: in Liepāja.



DAY 7



Liepāja - Pape - Palanga - Klaipėda

→ 117 km

Sights on route:

• **Pape Nature Park** - possible to see the Pape lighthouse, the Kõni historical fishermen village, museum also the wild horses.



Pape lighthouse - Pape Kõni village - Pape lighthouse

→ 5,5 - 6 km

• **Palanga** sightseeing, it is worth walking along the pedestrian J. Basanavičius Street and see the symbol of Palanga - the pedestrian bridge.

• **Klaipėda** - an important port city in Lithuania.

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.





DAY 8

Ferry: Klaipėda - Smiltynė



Smiltynė - Nida

→ 50 km

Sights on route:

- **Nida**, the most popular resort town in the Curonian Spit, where you can walk along the promenade and see the typical architecture of the Curonian Spit region — one-storey wooden buildings with tile or reed roofs and window shutters painted blue and white.

Accommodation: in Nida.

DAY 9



Nida - Juodkrantė

→ 30 km



Juodkrantė - Pervalka



Pervalka - Juodkrantė

→ 18 km ⌚ 5 - 6 h



Sandy beaches, single-track forest trails, paved pedestrian/cyclist lanes. Pavement and cobblestones in populated areas.



Easy



Visitors must stay exclusively on the established trails in the Nagliai Nature Reserve.



Juodkrantė - Klaipėda

→ 20 km

Accommodation: in Klaipėda.

DAY 10



Klaipėda - Plateliai

→ 70 km



Bus or private transfer Plateliai - Paplatelė.



Paplatelė - Plateliai in Žemaitija National Park

→ 20 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Forest roads and trails, asphalt pedestrian / bicycle paths and sidewalks, gravel roads.



Easy

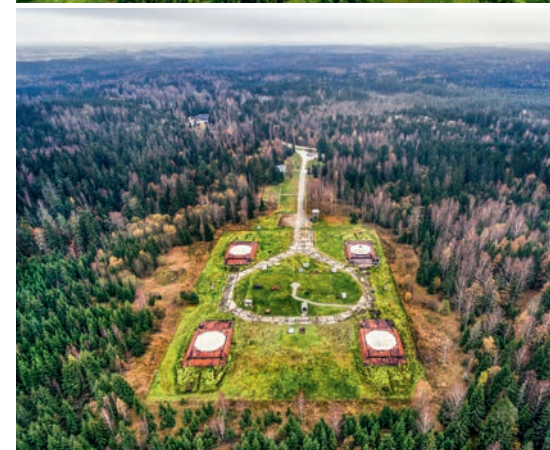


During the summer season, there are many holidaymakers around Lake Plateliai.

Sights on route:

- **Plokštinė cognitive trail.**
- **Cold War exposition** - located in the former Soviet Union underground ballistic missile launch complex.
- **Siberija Observation Tower** - 15 m high with a panorama view to the surroundings of Plateliai.
- **Plateliai** - beautiful town in Žemaitija National Park with a famous past.

Accommodation: in Plateliai.





DAY 11



Plateliai - Telšiai

→ 35 km

Leave the car in Telšiai, at the place.



Telšiai - Buožėnai

→ 18 km ⌚ 5 - 7 h



Mostly gravel roads, asphalt, forest paths, in a swampy place - wooden paths, in Telšiai and surroundings - asphalted pedestrian and bicycle paths.



Easy



Be careful when walking on the side of the road and crossing the A 11 highway!

Sights on route:

- **Germantas and Ilgio lake cognitive trails** which are part of the Forest Trail. The Ilgio lake trail is ~ 1,2 km long around the lake, but the total length of the trails are ~12,4 km.
- **Telšiai** - the city on the seven hills by the Lake Mastis. It is worth taking a walk around the city of Telšiai, exploring the most important sights or admiring the view of Lake Mastis while walking along its shore.



Bus back to Telšiai.

Accommodation: in Telšiai.



DAY 12



Telšiai - Kurtuvėnai

→ 57 km



Kurtuvėnai - Šaukėnai

→ 16 km ⌚ 4 - 6 h



Small forest trails and small forest roads, wooden foot-bridges in wet places, asphalt in Šaukėnai.



Easy



In this section, the Forest Trail intersects with other hiking routes. The markers should be followed carefully and it is advisable to use GPX files.

Sights on route:

- **Kurtuvėnai** manor barn and Kurtuvėnai Regional Park Visitors centre.
- **Kurtuvėnai Live Horse Museum.**
- **Juodlė** lake cognitive trail.



Bus back to cars in Kurtuvėnai.



Kurtuvėnai - Šiauliai

→ 27 km

Accommodation: in Šiauliai.

DAY 13



Šiauliai - Rīga

→ 132 km

Alternative: can also drive to Vilnius and end the tour there.

