

THE BALTIC STATES

8 Days / 7 Nights



DAY 1: DEPARTURE BY THE FERRY FROM HELSINKI TO TALLINN

Upon arrival you will be met by your guide. Visit to Seaplane Harbor, incl. main building (hangar) and ships in the harbor Duration - 2,5 hrs. (If you are not interested we can take it out and replace by short city walk accompanied by French speaking guide, which you can finish by a pleasant Lunch) The most exciting sea museum in Northern Europe Buildings that are rare all over the world were built to be part of Peter the Great sea-fortress in 1916-1917. Stories come alive - submarine Lembit, ice breaker Suur Toll, seaplane Short 184 and many other showpieces are waiting to be discovered. Exiting exhibition offers the possibility to take part and challenge yourself in sea related activities. In this unique sea museum, there are fascinating discoveries in three levels: under the sea, on sea level and above the sea.



DAY 2: CITY TOUR IN TALLINN

Walking in the Old town (Upper Town and Lower Town), and visit to Dome Church, as well driving in the city center and nearby to Pirita direction Duration – 3 hrs. the tour starts in Upper Town - Toompea (Castle Hill). First to be seen is the Toompea castle (built in 1773), where the Parliament is seated. At Toompea there is also the tallest tower, Pikk Hermann - the symbol of political power of Estonia; the flag at its top has always belonged to the government in force. A stop at the view

point enables one to enjoy a magnificent view of the Old Town. The towers, the town wall, tiled roofs, chimneys - the outstanding view is just there in front of you. The tour continues from the Upper Town to the Lower Town. The most outstanding sights include a 14th-15th century Gothic Town Hall, the only one surviving in the Nordic Countries, where important receptions are held, as well as award presentations and chamber music and baroque concerts; St. Nicholas church, now housing a museum of medieval art; an old chemist's shop (founded in 1422); numerous authentic Hanseatic merchants' houses, etc.

Tour to Rocca al Mare open air museum Duration – 2 hrs. The Estonian Open-Air Museum (founded in 1957) is situated at an 8 km distance from the centre of Tallinn on a wooded coastal headland in a beautiful place called Rocca al Mare. The Open-Air Museum presents a unique collection of old Estonian buildings on a 79-hectare expanse of seaside land. Farm buildings, windmills and water mills from various periods and regions have been brought together here. Folk holidays are celebrated in traditional style at the museum.



◆ **DAY 3: TOUR TO KADRIORG PALACE & KUMU ART MUSEUM (2 hours)**

Breakfast in the hotel. These are two of the most important art museums in Estonia. Foreign art is presented in Kadriorg Palace and in KUMU our own Estonian art. The Kadriorg palace, constructed in 1720's as a gift by Peter the Great to his wife Catherine I to use as their summer palace, is an excellent example of Baroque architecture. The Foreign Art Museum of the Kadriorg Palace displays paintings, sculptures, graphic art and applied art of Western Europe and the Russia from the 16 - 20 century. KUMU (KUNstiMUusem - Art Museum) is a new type of modern multifunctional art building that contains exhibition halls, a lecture hall offering diverse facilities, and an educational centre for young visitors and for art lovers. Kumu is meant for different people – for those who are already well-versed in art and for those who simply wish to spend their time in a congenial environment.



◆ **DAY 4: TRANSFER FROM TALLINN TO RIGA WITH STOP FOR SIGULDA/TURIDA TOUR (6 – 7 hours)**

Breakfast in the hotel. The Turaida Museum Reserve is the historical centre of Turaida and comprises archaeological, historical and art monuments that tell us about the events that have taken place since the 11th century. Turaida church, one of the oldest wooden

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churches built by the local rural craftsmen, is situated here. A graveyard was established here for the first baptized Liivs. Under an old linden tree is the legendary tomb of Roze that commemorates a girl who sacrificed herself in the name of love. The "Folk Song Garden", containing 25 sculptures by Indulis Ranka, is situated on the site of a former ancient Liiv village. It is dedicated to Latvian folk songs and to the lifelong work of their collector Krisjanis Barons. Sigulda is located about 50 km from Riga in the Gauja River valley. It is known as one of the most popular tourist destinations in Latvia and is characterized by picturesque scenery, and countless natural and cultural monuments. Visit ruins of Sigulda Medieval castle which nowadays hosts open-air stage, continue to Sigulda New castle built in 1881 to Duke Kropotkin, founder of Sigulda as recreation and tourism city, first bobsled track, aero-moto club, ski slopes. By car you will travel down into the river valley, enjoy the landscape and the walk to the biggest grotto in the Baltic's - Gutmanis located on the ancient river bank. Upon arrival to Riga you will be transferred to the hotel.



—◆ DAY 5: RIGA CITY TOUR WITH ART NOUVEAU DISTRICT (4 hours)

Breakfast in the hotel. During the walking part of the tour you will enjoy the beauty of the ancient Hanseatic city, while strolling through the cobble-stone, picturesque streets of the Old Town. In Old Riga you will see the Dome Cathedral which boasts one of the world's largest pipe organs, St. Peter's Church with magnificent views 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, and view the many wonderfully restored buildings, now housing cozy restaurants, cafes, bars and souvenir shops. Continue to Art Nouveau area, once home to many of Latvia's most famous artists, writers, and scholars. You will see why Riga came to be known as one of Europe's leading exponents of the late 19th and early 20th century architectural style of Art Nouveau. Riga boasts greatest concentration of Art Nouveau buildings in Europe, which are among the finest and best-preserved in the world.



Tour to Jurmala Duration – 4 hrs. Jurmala is the place to enjoy sea breeze, sun, nature, architecture and cultural life. It has 150-year-old resort traditions and has become the largest resort area in the Baltic's. The look of Jurmala since 19th century has been

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characterized by its wooden architecture, cottage-style buildings and resort centers. Romantic streets and wooden cottages surrounded by pine trees also nowadays create the vision of the olden days. Stroll along Jomas Street - the most popular pedestrian walkway with its many little restaurants and diverse entertainment. Visit city's white-sand beach area, which is still largest draw to Jurmala.



◆ **DAY 6: TRANSFER FROM RIGA TO VILNIUS WITH STOP FOR RUNDALE TOUR (6 hours)**

Breakfast in the hotel. Rundale Palace, the most magnificent masterpiece of baroque architecture in the Baltic States, lies at a distance of 70 km from Riga. It was built as a summer residence of the Duke of Courland Ernst Johann Biron in the first part of the 18th century by the Italian architect F. B. Rastrelli, the baroque genius from Italy who created many of St. Petersburg's finest buildings including the Winter Palace. The professionally renovated palace interiors are decorated with authentic 18th century furniture, paintings and china. The most impressive are the Golden Hall, the White Hall, and the bedroom of the Duke. The palace boasts a beautiful French-style park surrounded by a canal. Upon arrival to Vilnius, transfer to the hotel.



◆ **DAY 7: VILNIUS CITY TOUR (3 hours)**

Breakfast in the hotel. Vilnius is the capital of Lithuania. In 1323 the Grand Duke Gediminas invited artisans from different European countries to Vilnius to develop local building and handicrafts. This year is considered to be the year of Vilnius foundation. Vilnius' Old Town is among the most extensive in the Eastern Europe, occupying total 359 hectares. It contains about 1500 buildings. UNESCO included Vilnius Old Town on the World Culture Heritage List because of its unique mixture of the different architecture styles represented. Such churches as St. Anne's, St. Peter's-and-Paul's, the Cathedral are real masterpieces of architecture. Be sure to visit the courtyards of the oldest University in Eastern Europe, founded in 1579, Gediminas Castle which offers a spectacular view of the entire city, the Gates of Dawn, the Amber Gallery etc.

In the afternoon - tour to Open Air Museum of the center of Europe Duration of the tour -1,5 - 2 hrs. maximum The Open-Air Museum of the Centre of Europe seeks to

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present the most interesting examples of Lithuanian and world contemporary sculpture. Though still young the museum features many famous contemporary artists. The collection includes large scale works by Magdalena Abakanowicz, Sol LeWitt, Dennis Oppenheim among others.



DAY 8: VISIT TO TRAKAI CASTLE (3 hours)

Breakfast in the hotel. We can start it at 11:00 or maximum 12.00 and end in the airport Trakai, the ancient capital of Lithuania, is situated 30 km from Vilnius. Trakai region features unique relief: the combination of numerous unbelievably pure lakes and moraine hills create a breathtaking sight. The "town on the water", as Trakai usually called, is particularly rich in architectural and cultural monuments; there are more than 300 of them. The main landmark of the town is the famous insular Trakai castle, situated on the island in the Galve Lake. Nowadays it is the only extant insular castle in Eastern Europe. The town was constructed in the second half of the 14th century and in the 15-16th centuries it served as the residence of the Grand Duke and his family. In this period both the town and the castle prospered. The noblemen and ambassadors came to Trakai from all over Europe, luxurious feasts were held regularly, legendary treasures were kept in the castle's cellar. By the end of 16th century the town had gradually lost its former political importance. It was outgrown by Vilnius. By the beginning of the 19th century the castle had been practically ruined. Nowadays you can visit the famous insular castle and plunge into the fascinating medieval atmosphere that has been carefully preserved here.

END OF SERVICE

PRICE UPON REQUEST