

Introduction

The bike is a great choice to get to know Latvia – a wonderful, small country located in the north-east of the European coast of the Baltic Sea bordering Estonia, Russia, Belarus and Lithuania. The inhabitants of Latvia speak a unique Latvian language, in the world only Lithuanian language is similar to it. Latvia has a small territory, but a great variety of natural values and riches in cultural heritage.

Cycling is allowed on any road in Latvia, so everyone has the opportunity to create one's own travel route. However, to explore the nature and culture of this country as much as possible, cycle routes have been created, that makes it easier for the traveller to arrange a route. Five Greenways, three EuroVelo routes, two national and six regional routes have been marked out of more than 80 Latvian cycle routes, as well as 13 most interesting local cycle routes have been highlighted.

The best time for cycling in Latvia is from May to October. The four seasons give charm and diverse feelings of travel, sometimes the same route varies when it is flowing in a thriving spring, in the blooming summer, or during the harvest in the autumn. The route is based on an unforgettable natural pleasure – the Baltic Sea coast, green forests, rustling pine groves, deep river valleys, sloping hills, diverse meadows and foodful crop fields. They are complemented by cultural heritage objects such as castles, manor houses, churches, museums and old towns. It is worth visiting both the capital of Riga and entering the cities of Latvia and small towns as the charming medieval city of Cesis, the winds and the Latvian rock music capital Liepāja, the resort town of Jūrmala, the fortress and Mark Rothko's childhood town Daugavpils, the adventure capital of Sigulda, and Kurzeme pearl Kuldīga. A wide and varied range of lodging and catering facilities allows you to restore your strength and go on a long journey. On the routes it is possible both to dine in restaurants and to enjoy the typical Latvian meal in a country house. Driving conditions are diverse and different. In the largest cities there are safe bike paths, but outside of them cyclists have to share the road with other traffic

participants, especially on EuroVelo routes. The bicycle has become a popular means of transportation in Latvia in recent years, so traffic participants are still learning to adapt to each other, but road safety is good and mutual relation culture and respect between drivers and cyclists are increasing.

and natural conditions. If a small road is more difficult to pass and its coverage could be more qualitative, it is offset by diverse and interesting sights, magnificent natural landscapes, green forests, well-kept plowlands, fragrant flower meadows, and refreshing lakes. Most of the routes on this map are marked. When travelling, visit local tourist

gravel roads, the quality of which is variable and depends on road maintenance

information centres with high quality and versatile information. In the Information Centres you will find not only detailed maps and route descriptions but also get useful tips for accommodations and dining options.

Greenways

Greenways are former rail lines whose rails were disassembled, and tracks perfectly suited for cycle and hiking routes, Nordic walking, skiing and dog-sleigh riding. The path for trains was built very smoothly – without any special ups and downs, sharp turns and directional changes. In the long run, there is a long, straight path with no need for navigational skills, and it is impossible to get lost – just straight ahead!



Length 98 km, gravel and unsurfaced roads The train from Riga to Ērgļi has not been operating since 2007. The rails have been dismantled long ago, and the former railway line is comfortable and easy to cycle by bike. In order to arrive at the beginning of the route, you should leave Riga and reach Cekule, where old station building and track embankments will remind you of the Railway. In some stops only benches and station names have survived. At Suntaži it is desirable to turn off the Greenway and pass Mazā Jugla by highway, so that those bored with a straight path could stop and enjoy the offer of the renovated Suntaži manor castle. At Ķeipene historical rails are preserved, the exposition of the Cinema Museum devoted to film director Sergejs Eizenšteins can be seen in the former station building. An unusual charm is given to the route by old pitted bridges over the small rivers. The destination of the route – Ērgļi Station – is a rebirth of the place for creative and nature-friendly events. Riga — Ērgļi is a route where you can listen to sounds of nature, give thought or, conversely, enjoy being together and chatting with friends.



Melturi - Gulbene

Length 100 km, gravel and unsurfaced roads A former railway line begins at Melturi station of Riga – Valga railway line. The green route is very pleasant to cycle: solid, smooth coverage, good quality. Sometimes the embankments of the track rise above the area that allows you to carefully contemplate Latvian marshes, beaver activity areas, and forests. Along the way, it is worth stopping and enjoying the picturesque views of the Vidzeme Midland villages Amata, Dzērbene, Drusti, Jaunpiebalga, Ranka, Lizums, and Tirza. It is possible to explore how trains operate in the newly created educational and interactive centre "Locomotive and Steam" at Gulbene station. The route from the Gulbene station can be extended up to the North Vidzeme pearl – Alūksne (33 km), placing the wheels in narrow gauge railroad train – the only one scheduled cruise (twice a day, per



Lāde – Limbaži – Mazsalaca

schedule) train in the Baltic States.

Lenath 56 km. improved unsurfaced road

The route begins at the former Lāde train station. From there, a 9 km long reconstructed and cycling-adapted railway line leads to Limbaži. One must definitely stay longer at this city, because Limbaži is important as it is an ancient Hanseatic League city. The old breath is felt in a small town building and in a medieval castle ruins with a viewing tower, and the New Age aesthetics – in the Museum of Living Silver. From Limbaži the route continues along Katvara lake to Aloja. In Puikule this line crosses another old railway line Ainaži – Valmiera. When travelling along this route, it is easy to imagine what kind of landscape train passengers used to watch – from Limbaži to Aloja the way goes through the forests and through an

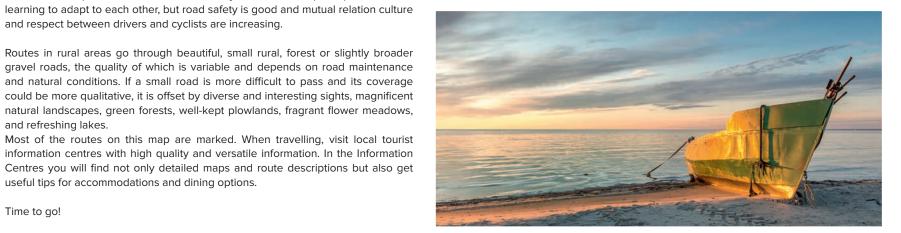
open countryside from Aloja to Mazsalaca. For cyclists to feel comfortable and safe, bridges over rivers, recreation areas and bike-stand have been restored on the route. The route ends in Mazsalaca, a small town on the picturesque Salaca shores. You should definitely visit Skaṇākalna Nature Park and watch the Devonian sandstones spill over into the Salaca waters and Skaṇākalna cliff echoes every single word.



Ainaži – Valmiera

Length 82 km, gravel and unsurfaced roads

The beginning of the railway line is... in the sea! Yes, it is so! In order to make it easier to unload the ship's cargo, a pier with a narrow gauge railway branch was built in the sea. Since the end of the line operation, the mall has become a popular hiking place, from which you can admire the most beautiful sunsets. The former railway line Ainaži – Valmiera is partly adapted to active and adventurous cyclists, not all stages are currently comfortable for cycling. Bridges have been restored on the route, but there are only separate sections for cycling. Points of interest can be found around the former station and in the largest cities and towns - Ainaži, Pāle, Puikule, Dikļi,



Mazirbe - Sīkgrags

Length 7 km, unsurfaced road

The small train route connects two ancient fishing villages on the Kurzeme coast – Mazirbe and Sīkrags. It is more adapted for pedestrians, but the path could also be passed by a bike. The journey along this forest path allows you to enjoy the natural values of the Slītere National Park – natural forest and unique kangars, or an ancient dune, and vigs, or damp interdunal grasping landscape. You can return to the starting point along the seafront or asphalt road. For many years, the closed border area has affected the lives of the villages during the Cold War, and life is buzzing there mainly n summer. For Latvia, this place is significant because of the fact that there used to live a different nation from Latvians with its own culture, traditions and language – the Baltic Finnish nation of Livs. The Livs descendant follow the ancient traditions, which best manifests itself at the annual Livs celebration on the first Saturday of August in



EuroVelo 13 – the Iron Curtain Trail

Lithuanian border – Liepāja – Ventspils – Kolka – Riga – Saulkrasti – Ainaži –

Estonian border

Length 562 km, asphalt and gravel road EuroVelo 13 or Iron Curtain Trail crosses 20 European countries from Norwegian town Kirkenes up to the border of Bulgaria and Turkey at the Black Sea. This trail in total of 10400 km marks the symbolic border between East and West, as Europe was divided for more than half a century during the Cold War. It reminds the times when here was a strictly guarded outer Western border of the USSR where free movement

without permits was not thinkable. The Latvian span of the trail is 562 km long, it leads along the seaside from Estonia

up to Lithuanian border or vice versa. The roads of various surfacing, traffic intensity and ability to ride are interchanging here.

The route is flat, without steep ascents, however the infrastructure of bike traffic is the most developed in the territories of the sea-cost cities – Liepāja, Ventspils, Jūrmala, Riga, Saulkrasti and Salacgrīva. The tracks for cyclists and pedestrians are available in total length of about 100 km. By crossing the sections of Northen Vidzeme biosphere reserves, Ķemeri and Slītere National parks, Engure and Pape country parks and Grīņi eserve, one has to take into account sand and gravel road spans.

The trail is rich in units of military heritage as well as other interesting objects. In Kurzeme do not miss the visitation of USSR army ex-military radio-telescope in Irbene, where now Ventspils Radio astronomy centre is operating, as well as do visit Liepāja Karosta – a unique military and fortification building complex. The trail s easy to continue both in Lithuania and Estonia, because the crossing of borders is unnoticeable and appropriate marking signs are set up.



EuroVelo 10 – Baltic Sea Cycle Route

Lithuanian border - Liepāja - Jūrkalne - Kuldīga - Ventspils - Kolka - Roja -Talsi – Sabile – Tukums – Riga – Carnikava – Saulkrasti – Ragana – Limbaži – Salacgrīva - Ainaži - Estonian border

Lenath 680 km. asphalt, aravel and unsurfaced roads

EuroVelo 10 cycle route across the Baltic Sea crosses nine countries, including Latvia. It introduces travellers to the diversity of the Baltic Sea coast, highlighting the unique cultural heritage of each country, and the special values of nature. Get to know the coastlines of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga, which are different from each other, as well as visit the capital Riga. In Latvia could be found wilderness and a low affected seashore and adjacent coastal areas, the nature is visible, perceptible and audible, crossing not only national parks and other specially protected nature territories, but also outside them. The route includes Baltic and even European-wide cultural objects such as Liepāja Karosta, Kuldīga Old Town, Ventspils Medieval Castle, Irbene Radio Telescope, Abava Valley Cultural and Historical Landscape, Kemeri, Riga Historical Centre and Art Nouveau buildings, Limbaži Old Town.

In Kurzeme, the route passes along the seacoast, stopping at the largest port cities in Liepāja and Ventspils, as well as off the sea, allowing you to explore the historic small towns – Kuldīga, Talsi, Sabile, Kandava, Tukums, their cultural environment and traditional natural landscapes – hills, forests and river valleys. The resort city of Jūrmala and the capital of Latvia Riga are impressive thanks to their architectural heritage. In Vidzeme, the route opens from the coast of Saulkrasti and offers to visit the magnificent castles of Bīriņi and Igate, as well

as the ancient Hanseatic League city of Limbaži. On the route, you should note that it is not marked. In order to ensure a better road surface (asphalt), mainly goes along highways in total traffic with motorists. Cycle routes are in the largest cities – Liepāja, Ventspils, Tukums, Riga, and other places. It is advisable to take the passage from Carnikava to Saulkrasti along the seashore or use rail transport to avoid the VIA Baltica highway.



EuroVelo 11 – Eastern European Cycle Route

Lithuanian border - Daugavpils - Krāslava - Aglona - Dagda - Ludza - Rēzekne -Balvi – Gulbene – Jaunpiebalga – Cēsis – Smiltene – Valka

Length 575 km, asphalt and gravel road EuroVelo 11 crosses Europe from Athens in Greece to Nordkapp in Norway. In Latvia it introduces two cultural and historical regions – Latgale and Vidzeme. Arriving in Latvia from Lithuania, from Zarasai, along the E262 highway, the trip begins with the acquaintance of Latgale. There is a peculiar cultural environment in which the traditions of several nations are united, creating an inimitable cultural heritage. It includes various religious denominations, festive celebrations, national dishes, dances and songs. Latgale is the land of several hundred blue lake mirrors, and the Daugava, the River of Destiny, flows through it. The first large settlement on the route is Daugavpils, where the fortress of Daugavpils, an outstanding 19th century fortification building, home for the Mark Rothko's Art Centre, has to be seen. In the following, the route enables travellers to get acquainted with the most scenic and popular places of interest in Latgale – the Nature Park of the Daugava Circle, the Ethnographic Old Believers' Village in Slutiški, Krāslava, Aglona with its Basilica, the island-rich Ežezers, Ludza Historical Centre, Rāzna National Park, and Mākoņkalns, Rezekne, and Latgale potters. Moving further to Vidzeme, its typical landscape is gradually emerging – the winding roads up and down, the hillsides that cross the lakes, meadows and forests, and scenic Vidzeme farmsteads in the middle. From Āraiši to Cēsis the route introduces the values of the Gauja National Park – the oicturesque Gauja valley, primeval forests, and sandstone outcrops. After it is Rauna, miltene and the border town Valka. The route is suitable for active, brave and experienced cyclists, who see the

adventures in new and unusual acquaintances. The route is not marked in nature

National Cycle Routes

and is passes mainly by low-traffic roads.



6 National Route – Tour de LatEst

Sigulda – Līgatne – Cēsis – Valmiera – Valka Valga – route in Estonia – Ape – Alūksne – Gulbene – Cesvaine – Madona – Ērgļi – Ķeipene – Lielvārde – Kegums – Sigulda

ength 587 km, asphalt un gravel road. The diverse route runs through the north-eastern part of Latvia and the south-eastern part of Estonia from the banks of the Daugava River in Lielvārde, all through Vidzeme Võrtsiäry and Peipus lakes in Estonia. The route enables you to get acquainte with the cultural and historical heritage of Latvians and Estonians, the most popular tourist attractions, and the everyday life of local people. The route crosses several protected nature territories of European significance – national and nature parks, landscapes and biosphere reserve. It takes at least two weeks to complete the entire route. Route stages in Latvia: Sigulda – Līgatne – Cēsis, Cēsis – Valmiera, Valmiera – Valka/Valga, Estonian border – Ape – Alūksne, Alūksne – Gulbene, Gulbene – Cesvaine – Madona, Madona – Ērgļi, Ērgļi – Ķeipene – Lielvārde, Lielvārde – Ķegums – Sigulda. Alternative for the stage Cēsis – Valmiera – Valka – Cēsis – Rauna – Smiltene – Valka/Valga.



7 National Rivers Route

Salacgrīva - Limbaži - Ragana - Sigulda - Allažmuiža - Ropaži - Ikšķile - Ogre -Ķegums – Jaunjelgava – Jēkabpils – Dunava – Ilūkste – Daugavpils Length 400 km, asphalt and gravel road

The original river route makes it possible for travellers to contemplate three important rivers – the Salaca, the Gauja, and the Daugava. The route can be started in Salacgrīva, the city where the Salaca enters the sea and whose economic activity is affected by the sea. From Turaida to Sigulda, the route crosses the Gauja River Valley, he deepest river valley in the Baltic States. The Gauja determined the settlement of Sigulda, Turaida and Krimulda – its steep slopes were once suitable for the installation of naturally fortified settlements. Now, the mighty medieval castles tell us an ancient history. The old-fashioned relief is ideal for active recreation – active tourism routes, adventure parks, and ski slopes are installed here, and both sides of the valley are connected by the only airway in the Baltic States.

In Ikšķile the route get closer to the Daugava, and continues along its banks. At the beginning, along the right, but after the Kegums HPP (Hydro Power Plant) along the left. This route is special as it introduces landscapes from Jaunjelgava to Daugavpils – Dviete floodplain, Ilūkste, Dunava,

The route goes along asphalted roads with low traffic intensity. It takes 7–10 days to pass and get to know it.

Regional Routes

12 Ogre river valley – Lejasdaugava

Ērgļi – Taurupe – Meņģele – Lēdmane – Ogresgals – Ogre – Ikšķile – Salaspils –

Length 190 km, asphalt and gravel road The route begins in Ērgļi, first it goes along the former railway line Riga – Ērgļi adapted to cyclists, but further weaves along the valley of the Ogre River, leading to Lielvārde and Ķegums, as well as Ikšķile and Salaspils Districts and ending in Stopiņi. The journey is rich in cultural and historical objects and environmental objects, however, the truly glamorous nature of Latvia stands above all, its values can really be appreciated only being close to them. Having risen to the viewing tower of Mengele, you can look at surrounding area of the beautiful Vidzeme landscape and ask yourself – I am wondering what's beyond the horizon? On Ogre side you can see the Vērēne fire

watchtower, the Ogresgals cableway bridge, Špakovskis Dendrological Park, the Ogre

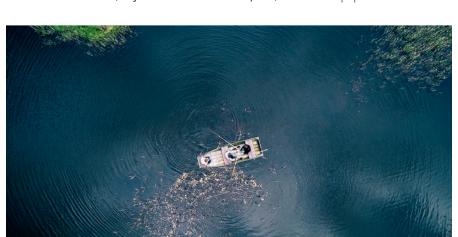
River Promenade and the historic building of Brīvības Street in Ogre. 17 Ainaži – Aloja – Matīši – Burtnieki – Rūjiena – Karksi Nuija (EST)

Length 127 km, asphalt and gravel road

The cycle route from Ainaži, through an asphalted, smooth section of the road, passes through Salaca Valley Nature Park, following the weaving flow of the Salaca to Staicele. The road from Aloja to Burtnieki is smooth, the main route with asphalt



avement, it is easy to ride. When leaving from Aloja, across the bridge cross the former railway line Riga – Limbaži – Rūjiena. The cycle route along Burtnieks Lake is very scenic with the farmsteads and horse pastures that are specific to Northern Vidzeme. Asphalt sections along the lake give way to sandy ground road. In the vicinity of Rūjiena, after prior arrangement, it is possible to visit different farms where you can get acquainted with different trades and enjoy the benefits of the countryside. The most important sights on this route are Ainaži North bulwark. Red Cliffs at the Salaca, Staicele, Livs Museum Pivalind, Burtnieks Lake, masters of cannabis goods in the Adzelvieši farm, Rūjiena with its ice-cream plant, and mills in Ķoņi.



Īdeņa - Nagļi - Kalngals sluices - Gomelis - Kvapāni ponds - Īdeņa

Length 57 km, asphalt, gravel and unsurfaced roads On the route, it is possible to get acquainted with the significant European-wide wetlands and the largest lake in Latvia – Lubāns with its adjacent bogs, meadows and ponds. 20th century In 30s and 50s-70s in order to prevent the spring floods, the lake shore and surrounding transformation work was carried out here, with the construction of dam systems, sluices, and polders. Lubāns wetland is an important place for bird rest and migration, so there is a huge diversity of birds and rare species. Bird watching towers have been created on the shore. The second lake's wealth is fish, which, after prior arrangement, can be purchased, for example, in order to make a fish soup on a bonfire. It is recommended to combine the route with the walk along the Teirumnīku bog trail, which is 800 m long boardwalk trail and enters directly into the bog. Although there is no hike in the route and it runs flat, however, depending on the weather, its passing may require patience and



34 Rypoj vasals!

Kārsava - Viļaka - Balvi - Rugāji - Tilža - Kārsava

permitting them to stay in the border zone.

Length 169 km, asphalt and gravel road The bike route goes to the very east of Latvia, which surprises travellers with hospitality, warmth and beautiful natural sceneries. Each place visited has its own history and a special aura – whether it be a church, manor or farmhouse. The bike route is marked in both directions and mostly runs along asphalt roads, only in some places you have to live with dust on a gravel pavement. From Vilnius to Kārsava, it is necessary to travel close to the Latvian–Russian border, which is also the external eastern border of the European Union. Therefore, cyclists must therefore carry a passport and a pass issued by the State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia

35 Daugava Circle

Krāslava – Tartaks – Naujene – Daugavpils – Elerne – Jaunborne – Veckaplava –

Length 128 km, asphalt, gravel and unsurfaced roads The cycle route being interesting thanks to it beautiful landscapes, nature and cultural heritage links two important cities of Latgale – Daugavpils and Krāslava. The Daugava Circle Nature Park, which covers the upper stream of the Daugava from Naujene to Krāslava, is one of the most beautiful sections of the river. They are eight 4-6 km long bends, where the river has retained its natural flow and has not disappeared into the Hydro Power Plants' reservoir basin. The fact that it is included in the national list of UNESCO of Latvia is indicator of the excellent landscape of this territory. During the tour, you can visit the Daugaypils fortress. the Dinaburga castle ruins, Old Believers' Village in Slutiški, the old hillfort in Naujene and Markov, the Count Platters' Castle in Krāslava, climb up three riewing towers and visit museums. On both banks of the Daugava river there are offers for horseback riding and boat and raft trips along the Daugava River.



36 Borderline Cycle Route

Kārsava – Ludza – Dagda – Zilupe – Kārsava Length 247 km, asphalt and gravel road

The cycle route has been created for those who are tempted to restrict access, because the road Ezernieki – Zilupe – Kārsava runs directly along the Latvian– Russian border. The traveller will be amazed by the untouched Latgalian nature's richness, the great collection of culture, history, traditions, and languages, and the Latgalian culinary heritage, which is best to get to know at the Andrupene Rural Farm and Malnava Bakery Dzīles. In the oldest city of Ludza you can observe onestorey and two-story wooden and brick houses of the 19th century with closed courtyards, visit craftsmen of Ludza, and climb the castle mound. There are many churches on the route, you will be impressed by the size of Church of Pasiene, which is nowadays a sparsely populated village. Architecturally peculiar Orthodox Church of the Holy Princess Euphrosyne of Polotsk, in Kārsava. The route also leads to the Friendship Kurgans – the border of three countries, to which the tree alley leads from each country. Since it is necessary to travel close to the Latvian-Russian border, which is also the external border of the European Union at the same time, cyclists must therefore carry a passport and a pass issued by the State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia permitting them to stay in the border zone.

Selected Local Cycle Routes

109 The route of castles and manor houses

Limbaži - Skulte- Saulkrasti - Bīriņi - Igate - Limbaži Length 93 km, asphalt and gravel road The route begins at the Hanseatic League city of Limbaži and runs along the Vidzeme coast of the Baltic Sea to Saulkrasti, where the cyclist will be surprised by the charm



private collection in the Baltic States, dedicated to cycling history and cycling sport. Next, the route calls for an appreciation of the scope of ex-landlords in the castles of Bīriņi and Igate renovated with great care, with an excellent gastronomic offer, where hungry cyclists will always be pampered by restaurant chefs. Since the route is circular, it is convenient to start in Saulkrasti or any other place. The route runs along a flat area, mostly asphalted roads, except for the 5 km long gravel road section on Limbaži – Saulkrasti route.



113 Salaspils pearls

National Botanical Garden – Salaspils Memorial – Dole Island

Length 30 km, asphalt and gravel road Cycle route in the urban environment. When cycling, you will enjoy the full range of contemporary urban environments. It is convenient to start the route in the heart of the old Salaspils with a view of the Botanical Garden. Be careful in the area of Riga Street, carefully follow the directions, the marking is made, given that the cyclist moves along pavements and cycle routes. The route runs along beautiful, wide cycle paths and asphalted streets, along with forest paths. One of the most impressive sights is the Salaspils Memorial, a witness to the painful history of the Second World War, which makes it possible to understand the fate of this land and people. In contrast, the development of private houses in Dārzini is characteristic of Pieriga district. The route follows the impressive Riga HPP dam, which takes you to the well-equipped city beach and the ruins of the George's Church of the 14th century – a memorial site. The route can be complemented by a peaceful Dole Island cycle route, looking at pine forests, meadows, fields, dolomite outcrops, and visit the Daugava Museum.

401 Castles of Bauska surroundings

Bauska – Mežotne – Pilsrundāle – Bauska

Lenath 30 km, asphalt and unsurfaced road The cycle route connecting the right and left bank of the Lielupe starts in Bauska and offers to visit three outstanding castles in the vicinity of Bauska: Bauska, Mežotne and Rundāle. The Bauska Castle is characterized by military architecture of the 15th–17th centuries, the Mežotne Palace represents a monumental classicism architecture of the 18th century, while the Rundāle Castle is one of the most outstanding architectural and art monuments of Baroque and Rococo in Latvia, which was created by the architect of the Russian court, F. B. Rastrelli, for the Duke of Courland (Kurzeme), Ernst Johann Biron. On the route at the Mežotne Castle you have to cross the Lielupe over pontoon bridge, which is only applied during the summer season. The Mežotne castle mound, which used to be one of the largest fortifications of ancient Zemgalian in the 9th-13th centuries, is located on the other river side.



403 Daugava Valley Cycle Route

Skrīveri – Klidziņa – Daugava valley – LLU Institute of Agriculture – Aizkraukle castle mound – Aizkraukle – Bilstini – Koknese – Liktendārzs

Length 40 km, asphalt and gravel road The route introduces the Daugava Valley Nature Park and three cities on the Daugava – Skrīveri, Aizkraukle, and Koknese. All the cities are connected by a railway line, therefore, the railway traffic is convenient for route planning. From the Skrīveri to Aizkraukle you will see the natural scenery of the Daugava valley. The route can be shortened by taking the ferry across the Perse from Bilstini to the Koknese Castle ruins. The route ends with Liktendārzs, a monumental ensemble of landscape architecture on the Daugava island of Koknese. A natural scenic nature trail with wooden bridges leads to Liktendarzs. The most important tourist sights are the production unit "Skrīveru Saldumi" (Sweets of Skrīveri), the Aizkraukle castle mound, Plaviņas HES, the Koknese Castle Ruins, and, of course, Likteņdārzs.



407 Manors and landscapes of Zemgale

Jelgava – Svēte – Zaļenieki – Tērvete – Svēte – Jelgava Length 80 km, asphalt and gravel road

The landscape of the extensive and cultivated fields of Zemgale has long formed a mosaic of ornaments with mysterious parks and gardens that surround the living and working places of ex-aristocrats – larger and smaller castles and manors. The route begins in Jelgava, where the Latvian University of Agriculture is located in the largest castle of Latvia. Along flat asphalt road, the route leads to the manors of Svēte, Zalenieki, and Vilce. It is worth turning from the marked route and visiting the creativity residence in the Abgunste manor. Tervete Nature Park cherished by Latvian State Forests is waiting for travellers in Tervete that can be criss-crossed along local cycle route of 13 km.

554 Talsi Hills Cycle Route

Talsi - Mundigciems - Plēsums - Sukturi - Stūrīši - Zvirgzdi - Talsi Length 25 km, asphalt and gravel road

The route begins in Talsi, the city of nine hills, in the foothills of an ancient inhabited Livs and Curonian (or Kurs) hill. It will continue along an open-air stage on the Talsi hill, opening the view of the contemporary Kurzeme farmstead landscape. The Kamparkalns viewing tower is erected at the highest point of the hill, while on the way up, sweeping views of the powerful Latvian forests open to you. The journey takes you through small rural roads, allowing you to experience hilly landscape being specific to Kurzeme. Recreation can be found while enjoying the cuisine of Kurzeme at Talsi cafés and visiting craftsmen's workshops.

558 Livs villages and nature trail of Mazbānītis

Kolka – Vaide – Saunags – Pitrags – Košrags – Mazirbe – Sīkrags Length 27 km, asphalt, gravel road, unsurfaced road and trails This route starts with a trip to the Slītere National Park. Once the northern Kurzeme of the former summer resort, the Sunset Trail and the bicycle museum – the largest



inhabited a people different from Latvians with their own culture, traditions and language - Livs. Their estates can be found on the way to Livs fishing villages - Kolka, Vaide, Saunags, Košrags, Pitrags, Mazirbe, and Sīkrags. Although these sites have a village status, they are more like the cedar houses built in the beautiful pinewood near the sea. This is a place to enjoy peace, watching the indigenous people unhurriedly living in harmony with nature. A stage from Mazirbe to Sīkrags leads through the former narrow gauge railway embankment, now the established nature trail of Mazbānītis. The main magnet of the route is Kolkasrags (Cape Kolka) – the place where the Dižūra (the Baltic Sea) meets Mazjūra (the Gulf of Riga).

560 Around Būšnieki Lake

Ventspils – Pārventa – Būšnieki – Staldzene – Ventspils

Length 30 km, asphalt and forest road The circular cycle route invites you to get acquainted with Ventspils and its surroundings – steep coastlines of Būšnieki and Staldzene Lakes. It starts in Ventspils and leads to the lake along cycle paths. A cycle and pedestrian walkway, a boardwalk and a bird watching platform were built around Būšnieki Lake. There are billboards with information about the nature reserve and its flora and fauna. Steep coastlines of Staldzene is a protected geological and geomorphological natural monument, with marine sediments of different periods of the Baltic Sea exposed on it. The very city of Ventspils is easily acquainted by cycle routes connecting the most popular tourist sights – the Seaside Open-Air Museum, the Promenade, the Old Town, the Livonian Order Castle, and the Adventure Park. In the urban environment of Ventspils there are 27 cows – sculpture of different sizes and colours, created by Latvian and foreign



574 Tukums Castle Circle

Tukums – Vecmokas – Jaunmokas – Durbe – Šlokenbeka manor

Length 29 km, asphalt and gravel road In the vicinity of Tukums, number of castles and manors are located at a short distance Šlokenbeka manor is an old fortification type manor house, where the Road Museum is located. The Durbe Castle displays the life of the Baltic German gentlemen in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Forest Museum is located in the Jaunmokas Castle, but Tukums Castle Tower used to be a part of the Livonian Order Castle, now it houses the City History Museum. The trip starts in a lovely small town of Tukums, which was granted the rights of the city by the Russian empress Catherine II. In honour of this fact, the image of modern Tukums Catherine is reproduced in a colourful bronze in the centre of Tukums – on the Catherine Square. The stage between Vecmokas and Jaunmokas is goes along small rural roads and allows you to enjoy the landscape of the hills that are specific to Kurzeme, there are bicycle paths in Tukums, along the other route there is asphalted road.

Other marked cycle routes

Lenath 12 km. asphalt and forest road The route allows you to get acquainted with the unique city-planning monument in the northern part of Liepāja – Liepāja Karosta. It was built at the end of the 19th century as the base of the military fleet for the needs of the Russian Empire. You can observe not only Karosta unique building with wide corridors of streets, but also the Northern Forts (the part of the Liepāja fortress built at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries) and the Karosta prison – the only military prison opened to tourists in Europe. The route is easily reachable from the centre of Liepāja along city cycle paths



Sigulda – Līgatne

Sigulda - Līgatne - Ratnieki - Sigulda

Length 46 km, asphalt, gravel and forest roads The route connects two favourite destinations for holiday activities - Sigulda and Līgatne – and is located in the Gauja National Park. The route runs along a marked trail along the banks of the Gauja itself, revealing sandstone outcrops along the route – Elpes, Launaga, Katrīna's rock formations and Gūdu cliff. When you arrive in Līgatne you will feel oneself as in the 19th century – the Līgatne paper mill village is a unique monument of urban construction, where the characteristic building has remained. Unique are also Līgatne basement caves – in sandstone cliffs excavated basements with cool and constant air temperatures being maintained throughout a year. In Līgatne, across the Gauja River, runs a ferry boat operated by the power of the river only, being the only one in the Baltic States. And that's not all – craftsmen and wine makers of Līgatne invites you, passing by nature trails you can get to know wildlife of Latvia, but the only Rope Course Park in the Baltic States gives you an unprecedented feeling. After such an adventure return to Sigulda along gravel and asphalted roads.

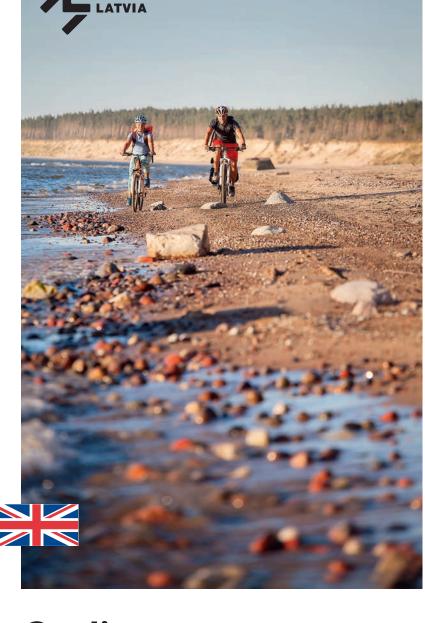


Cēsis – Valmiera

bike race in Latvia.

Valmiera - Sietiniezis - Jānrāmis - Cēsis Length 42 km, asphalt, gravel, forest and rural roads, trails

One of the first marketed cycle routes established in Latvia. It is marked with orangemarked trees and orange wood indicators. The route connects two historic centres -Cēsis and Valmiera. This is a very beautiful recreational route, recommended for cyclist, suitable for cycling along gravel and sandy forest roads. The largest part of the cycle route weaves along deep in peace forest paths and trails on the Gauja River's right bank. It can be started both in Valmiera and in Cesis, before visiting the cities themselves. A wellappointed resting place is set up at Sietiniezis, and wooden stairs and boardwalks are built for viewing rock formations. Every spring, this route is part of the popular mountain



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There are no marked cycle routes in Riga, but there are several cycle routes that take you to the best-loved places of Riga inhabitants at the outskirts of the city. Cycle route Riga – Jūrmala (part of EuroVelo 13) connects the capital with the resort town of Jūrmala, and it was built in the 20th century, in 80s the journey from Old Riga to Jūrmala is about 20 km long.

Cycle route **Centre – Mežaparks – Vecmīlgrāvis – Vecāķi** (part of EuroVelo 13)

allows cyclists to get from the city centre to the Vecāķi beach and to reach the city's favourite sunset and storm observation place – Mangalsala bulwark. On the way, it crosses Mežaparks, which is actively used for family vacations. Children can also safely ride a bike in Mežaparks, there is also the Riga Zoo. The journey from the centre is about 20 km long.

Cycle route **Centre – Dārziņi** is built along the right bank of the Daugava. It is about 15 km long, begins from the Vanšu Bridge, continues along the new Spīķeri Promenade, then goes along Krasta Street, Ķengarags to the former Mazjumprava manor. There is a beach on the Daugava coast near Dole.