

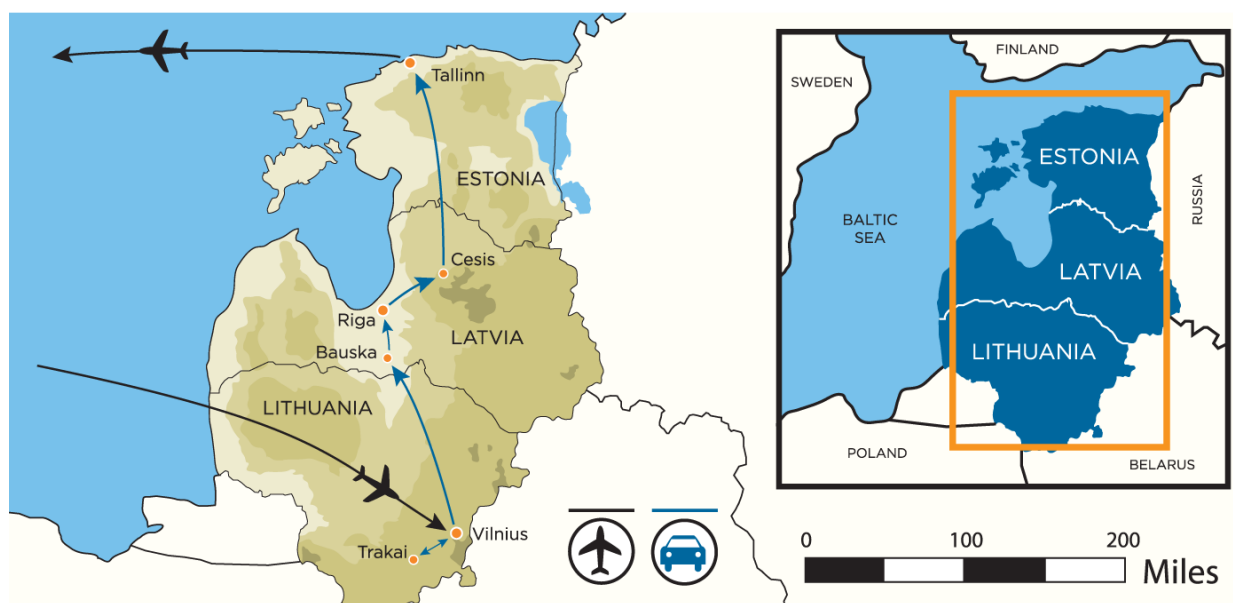
THE BALTICS

Walking Tours, Art, and Architecture

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Explore the vibrant capitals of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, each offering a unique cultural experience and rich history
- ▶ Discover Vilnius and its numerous museums, galleries, and theaters. Immerse yourself in the city's creative atmosphere
- ▶ Visit Riga's Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, famous for its well-preserved medieval and art nouveau architecture
- ▶ Explore Tallinn and its Old Town, renowned for its well-preserved medieval architecture, and cobblestone streets
- ▶ Enjoy the traditional flavors and modern culinary innovations of the Baltics

TRIP ROUTE



THE BALTICS

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QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1 arrive in Vilnius, Lithuania
- Day 2 explore Vilnius, enjoy an afternoon of independent exploration
- Day 3 visit the town of Trakai, enjoy a Karaite cooking class, discover the Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights
- Day 4
- Day 5 explore Riga's historic town center, enjoy a private tour of the Opera House
- Day 6 discover Riga's Art Nouveau scene, its Central Market, visit textile artist Laima Kaugure's Studio Natural
- Day 7 visit the charming town of Cēsis and the Song Festival Grounds
- Day 8 explore Tallinn, Toompea, Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and Dome Church, enjoy an afternoon of independent exploration
- Day 9 visit the Maritime Museum, immerse yourself in a Kalamaja District food tour, discover the vibrant Telliskivi Creative City
- Day 10 depart Tallinn, Estonia

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Moderate

TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$7,995

Optional Single Accommodations: \$950

TRIP DATES

May 4 - 13, 2025

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DAY 1
Sunday
5/4/25

Arrive in Vilnius, Lithuania

Vilnius is the capital and largest city of Lithuania, a country in the Baltic region of Europe. Vilnius has a rich history dating back to the 14th century and has been influenced by various cultures, including Polish, Russian, Jewish, and more. Vilnius is considered a cultural center with numerous museums, galleries, and theaters. It's also known for its vibrant music, arts, and culinary scenes, combining a rich historical heritage with a vibrant contemporary culture.

Arrive in Vilnius, Lithuania

Arrive in Vilnius, Lithuania (VNO) after 12:00pm today. A group transfer from the airport to the hotel will be provided when most guests arrive (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase.

Welcome Dinner

Enjoy a lively welcome dinner of traditional favorites at a local restaurant as you get to know our fellow travelers.

Accommodations

Artagonist Hotel

Meals Included

dinner

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DAY 2
Monday
5/5/25

Explore Vilnius, Lithuania

The city's Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is known for its well-preserved medieval architecture, cobblestone streets, and historic buildings. Vilnius has been called the "City of Churches" because of its diverse religious heritage, with various churches and religious sites. The city is also home to several universities, including Vilnius University, one of the oldest in Central and Eastern Europe.

Explore Vilnius

Founded in 1323, Vilnius has survived successive attacks by Crusaders, Crimean Tatars, Russians, Napoleon's armies, Poles and Germans. Nevertheless, structures in Gothic, baroque, Renaissance and neo-classical styles are still standing today.

Vilnius Cathedral

The neo-classical Vilnius Cathedral conceals a long history. In the 1960s, when architects examined cracks in the church foundations, they discovered ancient crypts and foundations of earlier churches and pagan temples. More recently, archaeologists found church jewels that fleeing Russians had hidden in the walls in 1655.

St Anne's Church

St. Anne's church represents the pinnacle of Gothic architecture in Lithuania. Built around 1500, the building displays a remarkable 33 different kinds of brick and an elegant exterior. The interior has been renovated several times. St. Anne's has survived more than five centuries almost unchanged and stands today as the most famous building in Vilnius.

Vilnius University

Established in 1579, Vilnius University developed into an important scientific and cultural center. One of the oldest universities in Eastern Europe, its buildings encompass all the major architectural styles that influenced Vilnius over 400 years. Moscow closed the university from 1832 to 1917, but today over 14,000 students are enrolled.

Lunch and Afternoon

Enjoy a meal of traditional favorites at a local restaurant. After lunch, spend time exploring independently. Dinner will be on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Artagonist Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 3
Tuesday
5/6/25

Explore Trakai, Lithuania

Trakai is a picturesque town in Lithuania, located approximately 28 kilometers (17 miles) west of Vilnius. It is known for its historical significance and beautiful natural surroundings.

Trakai Castle

Drive to the 14th-century town of Trakai, one of Lithuania's first capitals, and its two lakeside castles. The peninsula castle was destroyed in the 17th century, and only ruins remain. The restored island castle was built in a style called Brick Gothic on a little island in Lake Galve.

Karaite Museum in Trakai

The Karaite Museum, established in 1938, tells the story of Lithuania's Crimean Karaites. Brought by Vytautas the Great 600 years ago as warriors, they are of Turkic origin and practice a unique form of Judaism. Today, a small number reside in Lithuania. Their heritage is preserved through the museum, traditional Karaite cuisine in local restaurants, and tourist support. The museum showcases military artifacts, historic photos, books, costumes, textiles, and household items reflecting the community's rich culture.

Karaite Cooking Lesson

Attend a hands-on Karaite cooking class, learning to make kosher kybyn, a delicious Turkish-influenced pastry stuffed with minced meat, vegetables, cheese, or any combination of these ingredients. Afterwards, enjoy the fruits of your labors.

KGB Museum

Visit the KGB Museum (Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights), in the basement of the former District Court Building on Lukiskiu Square. This is where thousands of Lithuanians underwent interrogations before their deportation to Siberia.

Dinner

Head back to your hotel and explore the diverse dining choices available in the area for your independent dinner tonight.

Accommodations

Artagonist Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 4
Wednesday
5/7/25

Heading to Riga, Latvia via Bauska

Depart from Lithuania today and head towards Riga in Latvia. Along the journey, you'll have the chance to explore Little Manor, where you can view a fascinating exhibition of historically precise costumes showcasing the evolving fashion trends from the 18th to the 19th centuries. Additionally, your itinerary includes a visit to the splendid baroque Rundale Palace, an architectural gem designed in the early 18th century.

Head to Riga, Latvia

Following breakfast, commence your journey to Riga. Stop for lunch at a traditional specialties restaurant.

Mazā Muiža (Little Manor)

Mazā Muiža, or Little Manor, is a collection of historically accurate costumes exhibiting the changing of fashions throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Housed in a historical, charming brick building formerly used as a warehouse, the Little Manor collection provides visitors with a highly interactive, educational, and whimsically entertaining experience. A peek inside the "Magic Wardrobe" may inspire visitors to make some personal selections and don a costume and wig for photo opportunities.

Rundale Palace

The baroque Rundale Palace was designed in the early 18th century by Rastrelli, who also built St. Petersburg's Winter Palace. The palace was the home of the Duke of Courland, Ernst Johann Birland, a favorite of Russia's Empress Anna. When Russia annexed Latvia, the palace was given to Russian Count Zubov and later the Shuvalov family. The family owned the place until 1920, when it was turned over to the Latvian government. It served time as apartments, a primary school and a granary, but in 1972, the palace saw restoration work begun. Today about 40 of the rococo rooms are open for inspection, including the royal kitchens.

Accommodations

Neiburgs Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

Check-in and Dinner

Proceed to Riga and complete your hotel check-in. Take some time to venture around your hotel and discover the diverse dining choices that are available in the area. Enjoy dinner at your own leisure.

Accommodations

Neiburgs Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 5
Thursday
5/8/25

Explore Riga, Latvia

Riga is a city with a rich history dating back over 800 years. Its Old Town, known as Vecrīga, is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is famous for its well-preserved medieval and art nouveau architecture.

Explore Riga on Foot

Riga's Historic Town Center has been on the UNESCO World Heritage List since 1997. Although the town was damaged during both world wars and neglected during its Soviet period, today Riga is Latvia's flourishing and lively center of the arts, architecture, and nightlife. Today's tour highlights: the University of Latvia in Riga, the Dome Cathedral, the spire on Gothic St. Peter's Church, the Great Guild Hall, the Three Brothers oldest stone residential building in town, the Riga Castle (placed on the World Monuments Watch List and partially closed to tourism). Finally, visit the Dome Cathedral, the biggest working church in the Baltics.

Lunch

Enjoy lunch as a group at a traditional restaurant.

Opera House Private Tour

The stately Riga National Opera House, affectionately referred to as the "White House," serves as an important symbol of Latvia's cultured European identity. It was one of the first buildings in Riga to undergo renovation after Latvia regained its independence from the Soviet Union. Completed in 1863, this neo-classical theater was designed by German architect Ludwig Bonstedt. Riga has been a hub of opera since the 18th century, and Richard Wagner conducted an earlier version of the city's opera company from 1837 to 1839. Legend has it that the maestro's inspiration for "The Flying Dutchman" was born from a storm at sea during a hasty departure from Riga. Enjoy a private tour of this Opera House.

Dinner

Return to your hotel and enjoy dinner on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Neiburgs Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 6
Friday
5/9/25

Explore Riga, Latvia

Riga is renowned for its stunning art nouveau architecture, which is among the finest in Europe. The city's skyline is adorned with beautifully decorated buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Art Nouveau Tour After breakfast, continue your exploration of Riga on foot today. A few blocks north of the city center, is Riga's famous Art Nouveau buildings. Many were designed by Mikhail Eisenstein (father of film director Sergei Eisenstein). The imaginative and decorative Art Nouveau style took root in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and resulted in beautifully decorated facades adorned with sculpture, ironwork, and stylized motifs drawn from nature. UNESCO has declared that Riga has the finest collection of Art Nouveau architecture in Europe.

Riga Central Market

At Riga's Central Market, 3,000+ vendors occupy five massive pavilions that were originally built in the 1920s to be zeppelin (a large German dirigible airship of the early 20th century) hangars. These were then converted into this 770,000-square-foot market bazaar – the largest in Europe. It's singled out as a highlight in UNESCO's World Heritage designation for Riga's Old Town. Join some 100,000 daily visitors, discover 20 restaurants and two bars offering locally sourced meals, from burgers, pizzas, and dumplings to sushi, soups, and other Asian fare.

Laima Kaugure and Studio Natural

Known for her distinctive creative vision and unparalleled technical skill, acclaimed textile artist Laima Kaugure brings linen to life by combining traditional artisanal techniques and contemporary fabric and design development. This results in luxurious and unique creations. Studio Natural is Laima's life's work. Studio Natural hand-crafted luxury linen is woven in Latvia on traditional wooden looms in limited quantities, endowing their textiles with superior quality and almost ethereal 3D-like fabric combinations.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner as a group tonight.

Accommodations

Neiburgs Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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DAY 7
Saturday
5/10/25

Heading to Tallinn, Estonia via Cēsis

Cēsis is a charming town located in Latvia, in the northern part of the country. It is one of Latvia's oldest towns with a history dating back to the 13th century. It played a crucial role in the medieval Livonian Confederation and was a center of commerce and culture.

Discover Cēsis, Latvia

Following breakfast, drive from Latvia to Estonia, stopping at the lesser-visited charming town of Cēsis. This 13th-century town is one of Latvia's oldest towns (it celebrated its 800th anniversary in 2006). The town's medieval castle, founded by the Knights of the Sword, is the area's best-known sight. The Old Town hosts one of Latvia's oldest breweries.

Cēsis Castle

Cēsis Castle is the undisputed gem of this charming town. Immerse yourself in history as you explore this remarkably well-preserved fortress, built in 1214 as the stronghold of the Knights of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword. Enjoy the surrounding workshops and gardens.

Explore the Cobblestone Lanes of the Old Town

Leisurely stroll through the winding, cobblestone lanes of Cēsis Old Town. You'll encounter a tapestry of impeccably preserved, vibrant buildings. Although many medieval structures have vanished, the city's layout remains intact. Be sure to admire the architectural wonders of the City Hall, the Merchant House, and the Princess House, each a testament to Cēsis' enduring allure.

Next, enjoy lunch as a group at a local restaurant.

Song Festival Grounds

Visit the Song Festival Grounds where Estonians defied the Soviet Union in 1988, and where every five years an enormous international festival is held. Estonia's cultural identity is closely linked to music. The oldest Estonian song type, the runic chant, dates to the first millennium BC. The Song Festivals of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were inscribed onto the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008.

Accommodations

My City Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

Check In and Dinner

Arrive at your hotel in Tallinn and enjoy dinner on your own tonight.

Accommodations

My City Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 8
Sunday
5/11/25

Explore Tallinn, Estonia

Tallinn is the capital and largest city of Estonia. Tallinn's Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is renowned for its well-preserved medieval architecture, cobblestone streets, and historic buildings. Toompea Castle is an iconic structure in the heart of Tallinn and serves as the seat of the Estonian Parliament.

Explore Tallinn on Foot After breakfast, enjoy a walking tour of Tallinn. Its Old Town is the best-preserved medieval town center in Eastern Europe, in spite of various invasions. Its winding cobbled streets, red roofs, and remaining turreted fortress wall are on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Toompea Toompea, the limestone hill in the center of Tallinn, is nearly 90 feet higher than the rest of the city. Toompea Castle sits at the highest point, rebuilt by Catherine the Great over the remains of the 13th-century castle of the Knights of the Sword.

Alexander Nevsky Cathedral Alexander Nevsky Cathedral on Toompea was designed in the Russian Revival style and completed in 1900 and commissioned by Czar Alexander III. Although some Estonians wanted to demolish it after independence, the government ended by restoring it instead.

Dome Church Estonia's oldest church, the Lutheran Cathedral of St. Mary the Virgin, or the Dome Church, was built in 1223. A Catholic church until 1561, the church was later used as a burial place for German and Swedish nobility. The appearance of the church today dates from the 17th century when it was rebuilt after a fire.

Lunch and Free Afternoon Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and spend some time exploring independently this afternoon. Dinner will be on your own tonight.

Accommodations

My City Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 9
Monday
5/12/25

Explore Tallinn, Estonia

Tallinn is situated on the Baltic Sea, providing opportunities for maritime activities and coastal relaxation. Tallinn is also known for the range of dining options it offers, from traditional Estonian dishes to international cuisine. The city's food scene is diverse and evolving.

Lennusadam Maritime Museum

Drive to the largest maritime museum in the Baltics located in a 1916 concrete seaplane hangar where Charles Lindbergh once made a stop. Among the exhibits that you can see and touch are a British-built submarine from the 1930s and a full-size replica of the WWI Short 184 seaplane.

Food Tour of Kalamaja District

The Kalamaja District is the oldest district in Tallinn. A local expert in Estonian cuisine will lead the way, stopping in the open-air market to explain and sample the offerings. The tour concludes with a tasting of local fruit liquors in the so-called Telliskivi Creative Hub, a 19th-century industrial complex that now functions as a creative space for workshops, exhibitions, galleries, and restaurants.

Telliskivi Creative City

Located in a former Soviet-era railway factory complex, Telliskivi Creative City is a vibrant shopping, cultural, and entertainment hub with a hipster/bohemian feel. With more than 200 fringe-artist studios, it's an excellent place to purchase locally made souvenirs and gifts. Restaurants, cafés, bars specializing in craft beers, and food trucks abound.

Independent Exploration

In the afternoon, enjoy time to explore independently.

Farewell Dinner

Enjoy a farewell dinner with your group and toast to the end of an amazing Baltics adventure!

Accommodations

My City Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch, dinner

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DAY 10
Tuesday
5/13/25

Depart Tallinn, Estonia

Enjoy one last morning in Estonia before heading home.

Airport Transfer

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the Tallinn airport (TLL). The transfer to the airport will be provided when most guests depart (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase.

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

Meals Included
breakfast

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Accommodation Details

Artagonist Hotel Located within a 500-year-old historic building in Vilnius' Old Town, this unique hotel, known as Artagonist, is adorned with handmade artworks created by Lithuanian artists. The hotel's lobby, bar, and European cuisine restaurant feature a captivating array of contemporary murals, paintings, art installations, and sculptures. The rooms are designed with neutral tones, providing a perfect backdrop for individual art installations. The hotel's central location allows for easy access to key attractions such as Vilnius University, Cathedral Square, St. Anne's Church, and the Amber Museum, all just a short walk away.

Amenities: flat-screen TV with satellite channels, tea/coffee maker, mini-bar, in-room safe, slippers, hairdryer, complimentary toiletries, free WiFi, air-conditioning

Neiburgs Hotel Situated in an authentic Art Nouveau building, the Neiburgs Hotel offers refurbished rooms equipped with contemporary amenities within a magnificent Old World European setting. Each room provides a view of Riga's Old Town and is conveniently located near many of the city's primary attractions. The hotel's on-site restaurant serves a blend of modern Latvian and international cuisine. Additionally, there is a spa facility within the hotel for guests to enjoy.

Amenities: flat-screen TV, mini-bar, slippers, complimentary toiletries, free WiFi, air-conditioning

My City Hotel Located in the heart of Tallinn and the medieval Old Town, My City offers a pleasant restaurant serving international cuisine, as well as a sauna and Jacuzzi.

Amenities: cable TV, mini-bar, safe, hairdryer, complimentary toiletries, free WiFi, air-conditioning

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Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ One group transfer on arrival and departure
- ▶ Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ Entrance fees
- ▶ English-speaking guide(s) throughout the trip
- ▶ Bottled water
- ▶ One non alcoholic or one alcoholic drink (local beer/wine) or at the welcome and farewell dinners
- ▶ Gratuities for local guides and porters

Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare to Lithuania and from Estonia
- ▶ Optional activities
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities for the main guide and drivers

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Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

- For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.
- For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase **trip cancellation insurance** to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen trips.

Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

Adventure Travel Today

We define “adventure travel” as travel in which one actively participates, as opposed to a “tour,” in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes trips all over the world for women who want an active, out of the ordinary experience, and meet new friends. **Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!** In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure trips, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. Being on time is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!