



# CITIES TO VISIT

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# Rīga

Rīga is the capital of Latvia. First founded in 1201, it is located next to the Daugava River, on the shores of the Gulf of Rīga. Rīga has



Map of Rīga

been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its diverse architecture. Rīga is full of beautiful parks, museums, and monuments that are always worth a visit.



Videos streamed on a building in Rīga

value of Rīga as part of the Rīga 2014 program.

Rīga was chosen to take the honor of being the European Capital of Culture in 2014. There were several events and performances that showed the historical

Old Rīga is the heart of Rīga. There are several historical buildings to visit in Old Rīga.

## Three Brothers

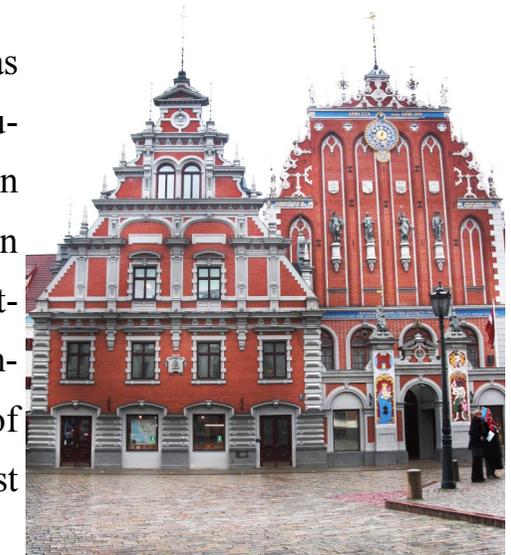


Three Brothers

The Three Brothers is the most famous building in Old Rīga. They were built in the Dutch style in the 15th and 17th centuries. The three buildings together represent different development stages of medieval dwelling houses in the period when the houses were built.

## House of Blackheads

The House of Black heads was originally built in the 14th century as a meeting and celebration place for social organizations in Rīga. This house was reconstructed several times due to war damage. At the time, the House of Blackheads was the richest, most precious building in the city.



House of Blackheads

### Quick Facts on Rīga

- Geographical size: 303.996 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: 695,539 (2013)
- Population density: 2,117 people per km<sup>2</sup>

## St. Peter's Church



St. Peter's Church

St. Peter's Church is the narrowest spire on Old Rīga's skyline. It was first built in 1209 but rebuilt several times after. Currently standing 123m tall, it has a viewing platform at the top of the church for people to see the view of red roofs in Old town and the Daugava river. Beautiful panoramas can be taken from this place.

## National Opera

The National Opera shows the pride of Latvian music and cultural life. It was first built in 1863 as a German Theatre. Many operas and ballets are performed here. The exterior of the National Opera resembles Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre.



National Opera

## Dome Cathedral

The Dome Cathedral is located in Dome Square, the largest square in Old Rīga. It was originally built as Bishop Albert's Cathedral in 1211. There is a tale that the first stone of the cathedral was laid by Bishop Albert, the founder of Rīga. The Dome Cathedral is famous for its mix of late Romanesque, early Gothic, and Baroque style architecture and it has one of world's largest organs.



Dome Cathedral

## Rīga Castle



Rīga Castle

The Rīga Castle was built in the 14th century serving as a Livonian Order fortress. It is currently the residence of the president of Latvia and the National History Museum. This castle was rebuilt several times because of the damages it received over several centuries.

# Jūrmala

Jūrmala is the biggest resort town in the Baltics. It has 150 years of history for being a resort town.



Map of Jūrmala

Jūrmala is best known for its beautiful beaches and resorts. Beaches in Jūrmala are a great place for vacations because of Latvia's mild weather.

Jūrmala is also famous for its wooden architecture since the 19th century. There are more than 4000 historical buildings with various types of architecture.

In 2010 Jūrmala was awarded the coveted European Destination of Excellence Award for Aquatic Sustainable Tourism.

A car permit for entering Jūrmala in the summer, from 1st of April to 30th of September, costs 2 Euros.

## Quick Facts on Jūrmala

- Geographical size: 100 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: 54,088
- Distance from Rīga: 25 km
- Distance from Rīga International Airport: 15 km

Jūrmala has several historical and modern museums, monuments, and buildings.

## Jūrmala City Museum



Jūrmala City Museum

The Jūrmala City Museum has several exhibitions that show the cultural history of the town and resort through various photos, documents and short documentaries. In 2012 a new exhibition on the history of fashion opened in the museum. Several collections of clothes, swimming suits, and accessories can be found here.

Jomas iela, or street is one of the oldest streets of Jūrmala. It is famous for its souvenir shops, cafés, and restaurants. Several events and festivals take place in this street.



Exhibition in Jūrmala City Museum



Jomas street

## Dzintari Concert Hall

The Dzintari Concert Hall is one of the most well known cultural monuments. Several local and foreign artists perform here. Also, every summer ballets and operas are performed here as well.



Dzintari Concert Hall

## Līvu Akvaparks

Līvu Akvaparks is the biggest water park in Eastern Europe with a total area of 11,500 m<sup>2</sup>. It is an indoor water park but during the summer the outdoor park is also open for people.



Līvu Akvaparks

## Majori Beach

Majori Beach is the beach that is the most visited in Jūrmala. The beach has beautiful white sand and “The Blue Flag” which means that it is a high quality, safe, and well equipped beach. During the summer there are beach volleyball nets for people to use. It is an excellent place for family vacations.



Majori beach



Jūrmala beach

# Bauska

Bauska is located in the southern region of Latvia. Centuries ago, it was the residence of the Duchy of Courland. Today, Bauska is a popular tourism place where many tourists come and visit beautiful castles built by famous architects.



Map of Bauska



Bauska Castle

## Bauska Castle

The Bauska Castle was built in the 15th century and it is the only castle in Latvia that shows the

Mannerism style architecture. It is located between two rivers, the Mūsa River and the Mēmele River. Currently the castle hosts a museum.

## Rundāle Palace

Rundāle is a small town located near Bauska. Rundāle is famous for the Rundāle Palace and its rose garden which was inspired by the gardens at Versailles. The Rundāle Palace was built from 1736



Garden of Rundāle Palace

to 1740 by a famous architect Francesco Rastrelli. The palace was originally built for Johann Biron the Duke of Courland at the time. Currently there is a museum open to visitors

but only a third of the 138 rooms of the palace is open for visitors.



Rundāle Palace

# Valmiera

Valmiera is one of the oldest towns in Latvia. The Gauja River, one of the most beautiful rivers in Latvia, splits Valmiera into almost two equal parts. Valmiera is located about 120km from Rīga and 50km from the border of Estonia. Valmiera first appeared in 1283 when the construction of the St. Simon's Church began. There are several historical places to visit in Valmiera.



Map of Valmiera

## Valmiermuiža Brewery

The Valmiermuiža Brewery is located in Valmiermuiža, a small area near Valmiera. Beer is made with 100% natural ingredients in this brewery. There is a tour available in this brewery which takes about 1.5 hours. The history of this place dates back to 1624.



Valmiermuiža Brewery

## Castle Ruins of the Livonian Order

The Castle Ruins of the Livonian Order was built in the 13th century. It is near the Gauja River and it is currently the only remaining defense system in the city. The castle was burnt down in



Castle Ruins of the Livonian Order

1702 during the Nordic War. The walls of this castle are made out of huge boulders and the gaps are filled with small pebbles and granite.

## St. Simon's Church

St. Simon's Church was first built in 1283 as the start of Valmiera. The pipe organs in the church were built in 1886 by Friedrich Ladegast. The St. Simon's Church shows Romanesque and Gothic style architecture.



St. Simon's Church

# Liepāja

Liepāja is an ancient city on the coast of the Baltic Sea. The city



Map of Liepāja

is located between the sea and the Liepāja lake. For over 750 years, people have been living here. Liepāja is a city of music and culture.

In Liepāja, there is a special route with small music notes that can be found on the streets. These notes



St. Anne's Church

lead to the most famous sightseeing in Liepāja.

## St. Anne's Church

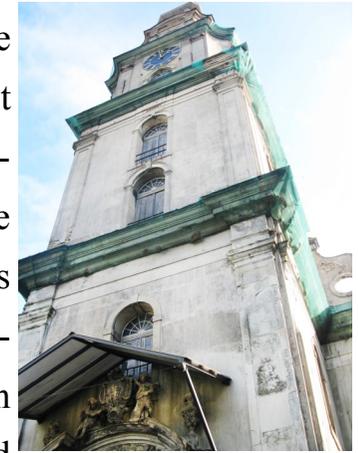
St. Anne's Church is the oldest church in Liepāja. It was first built in 1508, 9.7m high and 5.8m wide. The architecture shows the Baroque style of Eastern Europe.



Music notes on the streets

## Holy Trinity Cathedral

The Holy Trinity Cathedral is one of the most famous must-see places. It was built in 1742 and it contains the largest mechanical organ in the world. The organs have more than 7000 pipes built by the famous organ builder, H.A. Contius. The pipe organs are played in the International Organ Music Festival which is annually celebrated in September.



Holy Trinity Cathedral



Liepāja Museum

## Liepāja Museum

The Liepāja Museum is the largest museum in the Kurzeme region. The Museum has several exhibitions of the history of Liepāja and Southern Kurzeme.

## Liepāja Beach

The Liepāja beach is located at the coast of the Baltic Sea. With its white fine sand, it attracts tourists from all over the world.



Liepāja beach

# Jelgava

Jelgava was one of the most beautiful cities in Latvia, it used to



Map of Jelgava

be the capital of the Duchy of Courland and many famous figures visited and stayed here. But Jelgava was bombed during the world wars so several

monuments and castles broke down.

## Quick Facts on Jelgava

- Geographical size: 60 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: 66,000
- Distance from Rīga: 40 km
- Jelgava is also called Mītava or Mitau

## **Jelgava Palace**

The Jelgava Palace is the largest Baroque style palace in the Baltic States. Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli, a famous architect who designed the Rundāle Palace and the

Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, was ordered to build this palace in 1737. Today, The Latvia University of Agriculture is situated here with about 10,000 students.



Jelgava Palace

