

LITHUANIA. GET MORE.

There are many reasons to visit any place worth visiting.

There is nothing more precious than time. You cannot bring it back after it is wasted, while things that life destroys can be replaced.

In Lithuania, we offer you something that others cannot.

OTHER OFFER MORE JOY FOR YOUR DOLLAR, WE OFFER SOMETHING ELSE.

Get more space. Get more fun. Get more pictures. Get more. More life for every minute you spend there.

In Lithuania you will get out of a long weekend than other people get out of two weeks on holiday somewhere else. Two weeks in Lithuania will pack your soul and the memory of your camera with more material than you can use in a year.

In Lithuania, we do not waste time on things that do not matter. Few other capital cities in the world (if any) can offer you 15 minutes transfer time from the airport to your downtown hotel. After you check in, you can be having drinks in Town Hall square five minutes later. It will take you another thirty minutes and you are in a lakeside sauna, or watching sunset immersed in a lake surrounded by dense forests.

This is how we do it. The same we are offering to you.



LAND OF
**WIDE
SPACES**

When you look at Lithuania on the map, you see this tiny blot. Many would believe it should be massively cramped and tight. The truth is, over 65,300 square kilometres is home to just under three million people, making it one of the least densely populated countries in the world.

This is what we offer to all our visitors, who quickly come to realize this strange yet pleasing duality: the country is very compact which makes wasting time a thing of the past, and yet when you get where you want to get, you have the place all for yourself.

This is true everywhere: even in the Old Town of our capital, Vilnius, you can find empty streets in the middle of the day if you just walk a few hundred yards off the main tourist track.

Get out of town, and the feeling starts multiplying and expanding, like ripples in a lake.

Lakeside country houses offer the incredible sensation of owning larger space around you than you ever experienced before in your life, real or imaginary. Farm buildings, fields and meadows, little brooks just outside of an old sauna building, and this is all yours.

At night, at many of the remote cottages, on a clear night, step outside and look up.

YOU'LL SWEAR YOU NEVER KNEW THERE CAN BE SO MANY STARS IN THE SKY.





I SEE

AMBER LIGHTS

WHENEVER YOU
WALK BY



In Lithuania, amber is everywhere. In our towns and seaside resorts you will see countless shops, stalls, and just lone sellers peddling anything and everything made of amber in unbelievable quantities.

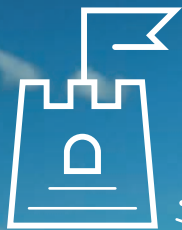
AMBER IS JUST A FOSSILIZED TREE RESIN, MUCH LIKE *CHATEAUX PÉTRUS* IS JUST A FERMENTED GRAPE JUICE.

In fact, it is much like wine because it has to come from a specific appellation (think Baltic Sea in this particular), because it has variable colors – from very light straw, like champagne (there is some milk or cream white, although you do not see this too often; cloudiness is not a fault of amber), to almost ruby red and cherry black, and because it has been processed by nature for a very, very long time. Longer than many of us can imagine.

Amber is not all that cheap, especially larger pieces – unlike wine, they are not making any more of it, so what came from the trees in the age of dinosaurs, is the last and finite supply. You would be advised to be a bit suspicious about especially large chunks: anything larger than a plum is extremely rare.

Looking for amber on the beach is the purest and rarest form of beachcombing, the sport of the kings, and it does wonders to your soul.





**ANCIENT
LAND.
HANDLE WITH CARE**



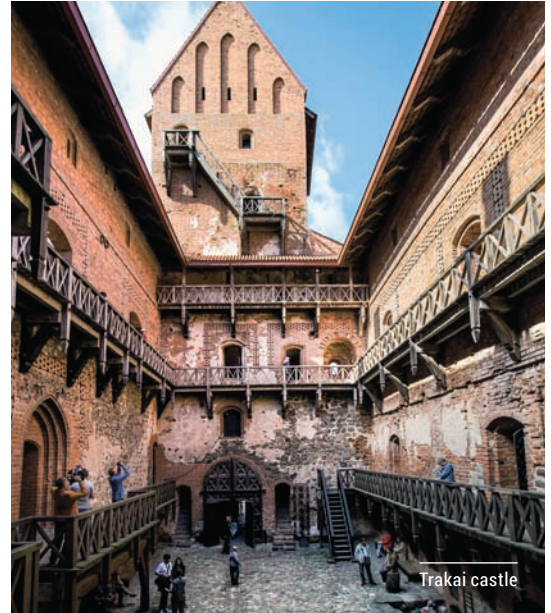
Lithuania is a long-suffering land. Probably no other patch of land in Europe had some many foreign meddlers – and this resulted in fundamental, genetic mistrust of the government that you see when you talk to Lithuanians more intimately.

LITHUANIA'S TROUBLED HISTORY BROUGHT A NUMBER OF POSITIVE EFFECTS.

The country learned to be extremely, outstandingly, extraordinarily tolerant in the days when no-one ever heard of political correctness. People of different faiths were allowed to practice their religion and observe their customs with such methodical consistency that today's Scandinavian levels of tolerance and respect simply look to us as reinvented habits that Lithuanians practiced centuries ago.

The 20th century and the World War II made a painful exception, wiping out almost the entire Jewish population, but the tradition of tolerance and a diverse society lives on.

You will find that, much like the sense of humour for the English, the sense of the past for Lithuanians is never a thing with its delineated territory but very much a continuing thread of our everyday lives. The best part is we show it all willingly to you.





HEAVY DUTY:
THE LAND WHERE
**WE EAT
WELL**



The traditional idea of Lithuanian food is associated with humble imagery and a low profile. We do not dazzle or stupefy. And yet we have things to offer.

There are two things that Lithuanians like to show off.

The first one is a bizarre-looking cold pink soup made of beetroots. Lithuanians are one of the nations that claim the title and the honour of the original borsch soup, but this is different. In summer, there is little more refreshing than a cold bowl of this product.

The second dish is called *cepelinai*. These are huge potato dumplings – more like fist-sized torpedoes, really – made in the form of early XX century airships, *Zeppelins*, and just as deadly. The potato dough is stuffed with a pork meatball the size of a golf ball, and then they are boiled and served with cold soured cream and a garnish of cubed fried bacon.

These are not a type of light food in anyone's book. In fact, this is some of the heaviest food on Earth, and yet it can be wdevilishly addictive.

A good choice of something peculiarly local and yet not terribly

filling would be forest mushrooms. We are incredibly serious about our mushrooms: an average Lithuanian would know not one, not two but at least ten various kinds of forest mushrooms.

THIS IS SOME OF THE HEAVIEST FOOD ON EARTH, AND YET IT CAN BE DEVILISHLY ADDICTIVE.





LAND OF
CERTIFIED
HERITAGE

For a country of modest size, Lithuania is packed with heritage that the world believes is rare and noteworthy. To put it more simply, when anyone asks us – “is there anything to see in Lithuania that would make the trip worthwhile”, we have to say yes.

The historic centre of Vilnius was the first to be included on the list two decades ago (seems like it was yesterday) and everyone was like, oh, why only now? The place of mystic narrow and not-so-narrow streets, dark courtyards and ancient churches, with unexpected vistas opening one after another, is yet to find its first disappointed visitor.

Not very far is Kernavė archeological site, which was designated as UNESCO World Heritage in 2004 – this is large group of impressive hills, clustered next to each other, which were used as hill forts and where human activity went on for over 10,000 years by the bank of River Neris.

Cross Lithuania some two hundred miles to the West, and you find the awesome sand dunes of the Curonian Spit. A narrow strip of land in the Baltic Sea is under constant threat from wind that moves the dunes.

About 140 miles northwest from Vilnius there is one of the most impressive sights that you can ever hope to see: the Hill of Crosses, near Šiauliai, have been around for about two centuries. No-one knows for sure how this pilgrimage site came to be.

LITHUANIA IS PACKED WITH HERITAGE.





FOLK TALES

AND BRIGHT
PATTERNS



Lithuanians are proud of their folk heritage, and are serious about it.

Lucky visitors who manage to make it to Lithuania at the time of the Song Festival cannot believe their eyes when they see thousands of people of all ages who come to Vilnius for several days for the largest imaginable show of folk music and dance. Unlike in some other countries, where folk music and dance is mostly reserved for the people who are gently described as socially maladjusted. In Lithuania, it is for everyone.

The selection of handicraft in Lithuania is enormous, and the true scale of how much of this stuff we produce can be seen at one of the countless fairs.

We cannot possibly endorse one pattern over another and force your hand but here is a clue: traditional Lithuanian colors are quite understated and close to moss, straw, wood and pale blue summer sky.

YOU WILL CHOOSE WISELY IF YOU SIMPLY CHOOSE WHAT IS EASY ON THE EYE.

A word of caution: you will see a lot of Russian stack-me dolls, *matryoshkas*, being offered to tourists who happily imagine they are part of local tradition. They are not: they are just a Russian import that tourists love.



A family of four is exploring sand dunes. A woman in a tan shirt and straw hat is kneeling on the left, holding a camera. A man in a tan jacket and white bucket hat is kneeling on the right, looking through a magnifying glass at a large mushroom. A young boy in a blue and white striped shirt is kneeling next to him, also looking at the mushroom. Another young boy in a blue t-shirt and camouflage hat is standing in the background, holding a net. The scene is set on a sandy dune under a clear blue sky. The text 'LAND OF LAST FRONTIERS' is overlaid on the left side of the image, with decorative icons of a cloud, a stylized plant, and wavy lines.

LAND OF
LAST
FRONTIERS

Lithuania is small but has as many as five national parks. They are all different.

Trakai Historical National Park is the smallest and perhaps the most frequently visited. Handsome lakes and a castle built on a lake island: this was once the capital of Lithuania and the concentration of its medieval might.

Žemaitija National Park, in the northwest, is Lithuania's answer to Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District combined: the hilly landscape is dotted with over two dozen lakes and huge rocks. This area is a reminder of the Ice Age.

Dzūkija National Park is in the southwest of the country and this is where you find the densest woods. If you dream of renting a log cabin in the woods, enjoying a sauna and swim in a cold stream, this is your place.

Aukštaitija National Park is the place of lakes and clean nature. This is where the best off people from Vilnius have their summerhouses.

Curonian Spit National Park is arguably the most special and the most memorable of them all, and the most jealously guarded. Magic

sand dunes towering on a narrow strip of land, and the pine tree forests, separating the Baltic Sea from the Curonian Lagoon, have long been the places where artists and other restless souls looking for inspiration come.



Land's End, Lithuanian style. Ventė

LITHUANIA IN A NUTSHELL

Official name: The Republic of Lithuania.

Area: 65 300 km².

Population: 2,922 million (in 2015).

Population density: 45,1 people/km² (cf. 72,5 people/km² in Europe).

Political system: parliamentary democracy. Head of State – President, Executive Power – Government, Legislative Power – The Seimas.

The current president: Dalia Grybauskaitė.

The Republic of Lithuania is a member of the EU and NATO. Joined the Schengen area in 2007.

Time zone: GMT + 2 hours.

Capital: Vilnius. Population: 526 356 (in 2013).

Major cities: Kaunas (population: 306 888), Klaipėda (population: 158 541), Šiauliai (population: 106 470), Panevėžys (population: 97 343) (in 2013).

Official language: Lithuanian (the Baltic languages group). The majority of citizens also speak Russian, English.

Coat of arms: white Vytis (a knight) on a red background.

The national flag is composed of three equal horizontal stripes: top – yellow, middle – green, bottom – red collors.

Currency: Euro.

Neighbouring states: Latvia, Belarus, Poland, Russia (Kaliningrad).

Cell phone code: +370...

GSM service providers: "Omnitel", "Bitė", "Tele2", "Eurocom".

Internet: 75,2% of population use the Internet. High-speed wireless Internet connection is available at most supermarkets, cafes, main streets and hotels of larger cities (usually free of charge).

Information number: +370 700 55 118.

Emergency number: 112.

Ethnic groups (in 2012): 86,3% Lithuanian, 5,6% Polish, 5% Russian, 1,4% Belarusian, 1,7% other (Ukrainian, Hebrew, Latvian, Tartar etc.).

Religion: 78% Roman Catholics. Other: Orthodox, Christians, Evangelical Lutherans, Evangelical Reformers, Old Believers, Judaists, Muslims etc.

Climate: maritime/continental. Average temperature in July is – +19,7°C, January – -2,9°C.