

Discovering the Three Sisters

It is not often that we can easily offer three countries in one outstanding itinerary but The Baltics, with the ease of local travel time, provide such an experience. The Baltic states have historically been in many different spheres of authority, from Danish over Swedish and Polish–Lithuanian, to German (Hansa and Holy Roman Empire), and before independence, in the Russian sphere of influence. Now three fiercely independent countries rich in history, natural beauty and unique local cuisine, are the focal point of this walking tour of discovery. Come with Walkaway Treks' Joanna Mazur, as a small group explores this fascinating region.

Friday, September 17 Departure flight from Toronto to be arranged. Please see note at the end of the itinerary on air fare.

Saturday, September 18 Tallinn (D)

Arrive in Tallinn capital of Estonia. Meet and greet our local tour manager. Transfer to our hotel for check-in. This evening we will enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in our 4* hotel Ibis Styles Tallinn (2 nights)

Sunday, September 19 Viru Bog Trail - wooden boardwalk through ancient bog, pine forests, and observation tower views (B, L, D)

Morning hiking/walking tour. Lahemaa – the first national park established in the Soviet Union and also Estonia's oldest and largest national park – captivates with its diverse natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage. Here you can enjoy the peace and quiet of nature on a sandy seashore, in an ancient bog, on a juniper-covered alvar, or on a green riverbank. Lahemaa is one of Europe's most important forest conservation areas and belongs to the Natura 2000 European Union nature protection network. The local coast is famous for its abundance of erratic boulders and stone fields. The formation of the landscape has been influenced by the Baltic Klint (escarpment).

Walking Distance ~8-10 km. Flat boardwalk and forest paths, mostly dry, Level: easy.

Light lunch during our walk.

In the afternoon we stroll through Tallinn's historic Old Town: the city wall and defense towers such as Fat Margaret tower, Toompea Castle and Aleksander Nevsky Cathedral, Town Hall, House of the Brotherhood of Blackheads, Oleviste Church, Three Sisters houses.

Walking Distance ~3 km. Level easy.

And finally this evening we enjoy a feast in Old Town Tallinn, one of Europe's best-preserved medieval city centers!

Monday, September 20 Tallinn / Parnu - Floodplain meadows, wetlands, forest boardwalks, and beaver dams (B, L, D)

Nature and culture. Soomaa National Park is a true gem of Estonian nature. The park was created in 1993 to protect the mires (bogs), flood meadows, swamp forests and habitats of endangered species as well as the cultural heritage.

Walking Distance ~8-11 km Soft, occasionally muddy ground; flat terrain. Level: Easy to moderate.

Light lunch during our walk.

Hotel check-in at our hotel near the Baltic.

Later in the afternoon, we visit a family cider house. Learn about apple cider in this organic farm that makes cider from local apple varieties. The cider is well known in Estonia and abroad.

Dinner at cider house. **Near Parnu.** <https://ciderhouse.ee/>

Overnight in Parnu at the Hedon Spa (1 night)

Tuesday, September 21 Parnu / Riga (Latvia) - River valley trails, sandstone cliffs, medieval castles, forested hills (B, L, D)

Breakfast and travel 2+ hours to our next nature stop in Gauja National Park. This is Latvia's oldest and largest park protecting the rich nature of the ancient Gauja River valley and its surrounding areas as well as the vast diversity of plants, birds and insects that can be found here. The origins of the Gauja River valley go back more than 350 million years, but its current ravine-ridden terrain was moulded by the glacier meltwater at the end of the Ice Age. The Gauja, which is the longest river in Latvia (452 km), winds through the park. The river once served as a trading route, and the Livonians, indigenous people of this area, built their settlements on its riverbanks. Strong stone castles, which were enclosed by steep slopes and deep valleys, were built in the 13th century. The cities as well as the social and cultural life grew around these castles.

Walking Distance 11-13 km. Rolling terrain, moderate climbs and descents. In some max 100 m Level: moderate. We will do hiking in Turaida castle and continue to Gutamnis Cave downhill and eliminate the climbs into hills.

Light lunch during our tour.

We then travel to visit Turaida Castle that dominates the Museum Reserve and is visually its most impressive element. When seen from the air, or the opposite bank of the river Gauja in Sigulda, Turaida castle can be seen rising above the treeline.

Check in to our 4* Hotel in Riga – Eurostars Metropole. Dinner tonight at our hotel. (2 nights)

Wednesday, September 22 Riga (B, L)

Today we enjoy Riga – our walking tour will include Riga Castle, defensive wall and Swedish gate, Three brothers houses, Riga Dome Cathedral and Monastery, City Hall, Statue of Liberty. The Art Nouveau architecture in Riga. During this tour we will taste the famous Riga Black balsam beverage.

Walking Distance ~5 km

Light Lunch

Famous Dome Cathedral organ concert at noon. Here we will enjoy the famous organ concerts at Riga Dome Cathedral, home to a giant 6,718-pipe instrument. The cathedral hosts the daily *Concerto Piccolo*, a short 20-minute afternoon recital that lets us experience the massive sound of the organ in world-class acoustics.

Balance of the afternoon and evening are open. Overnight in Riga

Thursday, September 23**Riga / Panevezys (Lithuania) (B, L, D)**

Breakfast and check out is followed by a visit to Rundale Palace - one of the two major baroque palaces built for the Dukes of Courland in Latvia. The Palace ensemble with a garden and forest park is a monument of architecture, culture and history.

Light lunch at Rundale palace café

We then continue to the Hill of Crosses. Unique in the world and featuring thousands of crosses that has become a kind of symbol of Lithuanian cross-crafting.

This afternoon we visit a family rural bakery, to learn about traditional bread baking. Here they bake the bread in traditional old style, and we can experience the background of Lithuanian food. **We will also try traditional Sakotis cake made in the bakery. Black bread baking workshop.** Dinner at the bakery with traditional Lithuanian song and dance.

Depart and travel to Panevezys for Check in 4* Romantic Boutique Hotel. (1 night)

Friday, September 24**Panevezys / Klaipeda - "Land of Hills" - rural trails, small lakes, and scenic countryside (B, L, D)**

History and Nature. Samogitian mounds are ancient hillforts and ceremonial sites in the Samogitia region of Lithuania. These mounds, dating to the 1st and 2nd millennia AD, served both defensive purposes, with some believed to have housed wooden castles, and religious ones, with Šatrija potentially being a major pagan temple before the baptism of Samogitia. They offer historical insights into Lithuanian paganism and defense systems, with some mounds providing stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

Walking Distance 10-12 km, Hilly farmland and forest paths. Level: Moderate - We will have a local guide introduce us to the history of this region. Near Pavandene Telisiai district.

Lunch together with local rural entrepreneurs in their social house catering room, we will learn about development projects in this rural area. **Samogitan panckakes and other local dishes.**

Departure and check in 4* hotel Mercure Klaipeda City (2 nights) – dinner at our hotel

Saturday, September 25**Klaipeda - Coastal dunes, pine forests, and Baltic Sea views (B, L, D)**

Possibly the most enjoyable day of the tour! We start with the ferry to Curonian Spit, or Internationally well known as “Lithuanian Sahara”. This is the UNESCO controlled Nature Reserve with sand dunes, plants and wildlife. Small fisherman villages, Great Cormorants colonies, views of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea from the highest moving dune “Parnidis”. The tour includes short hiking/walking tours in Witch Hill, Dead Dunes, Parnidis and small-town Nida.

Walking Distance ~ 9-11 km, Sandy trails, gentle dunes, forest path. Level: moderate. We will first do Witch hill, and Parnidis dune, from where we go downhill and those who do not want go down the 1.3 km, can go by bus and meet us in Nida.

Lunch and tasting of the famous smoked fish.

Free time to explore Nida, a quaint fishing village, on our own prior to dinner locally and then return by ferry to Klaipeda for the evening.

Sunday, September 26 Klaipeda / Kaunas / Alytus Regions (B, L, D)

Breakfast, checkout and a longer drive to the second largest Lithuania's city, Kaunas, a community that keeps the authentic spirit of the country's national character alive. It is historical centre of economic, academic, and cultural life including the Fluxus movement and its founder George Maciunas (who was born in Kaunas). Old Town, Kaunas Castle, The Perkūnas (Thunder) House and multiple Churches.

Lunch today with traditional Lithuanian dishes

Check in hotel at horse resort. <https://rhr.lt/en/horses> - here there are saunas (use included in the stay) and the possibility to ride a horse (payable locally). The history of the Horse Resort in Lithuania is rooted in its owner famous businessman Mr. Tautvydas Barštys, and his passion for horses and sports, leading to the resort's creation with innovative architecture and a focus on a luxury equestrian experience. The resort is described as a fifth-generation ancestral ranch and is in the Galintėnai area, designed to blend luxury with nature.

Overnight and dinner at the resort's restaurant. Royal Horse Resort (1 night)

Monday, September 27 Alytus Regions / Vilnius - Wooden boardwalk through bog. Wildlife observation and forest edges (B, L, D)

Buffet breakfast at our hotel restaurant and check out. Travel first to Dzūkija National Park and then to Čepkeliai Reserve - we travel by bus between the two destinations with a short stop in Zervynos Village.

Nature and culture heritage. 8 to 13 km walk depending on our option. The largest area of untouched nature in Lithuania, the Čepkeliai Nature Reserve offers a unique opportunity to get closer to fragile ecosystems of rare flora and fauna. It is one of the largest marshlands in Europe and home to over 4,000 species of animals and plants, including lady's slipper orchids, black grouses, wolves and lynx. The 1.5 km visitor path across this secluded pocket of wild nature is a mesmerising hike. Winding through continental sand dunes and pine forests, it leads to an observational tower where we can admire the mysterious landscape of the marsh and its small forested islands. As this is one of the most protected nature spots in Lithuania, visiting the trail is only possible with a licensed specialist. Visit local villages and learn about history.

Walking Distance 8-10 km flat boardwalk and peatland paths. Level: easy to moderate.

Light lunch during our tour.

Later we travel on to Vilnius – check in 4* Courtyard by Marriott Hotel (3 nights) and then enjoy dinner in a local restaurant in Old Town.

Tuesday, September 28 Vilnius / Trakai (B, L)

Following breakfast our day begins with our visit to the old town of Trakai, extremely popular with the residents of Lithuania and foreign guests and situated west of Vilnius between the hills, forests and lakes. This town, famous for its picturesque landscape and the legendary Trakai Castle, was a cradle of Lithuanian statehood, an important military and political centre, headquarters of the Lithuanian Grand Dukes, and the capital of Lithuania. Here we will also visit Trakai Island Castle, 14th century castle, famous for its gothic architecture and its special location – it stands on an island on

Lake Galve, one of the deepest lakes in Lithuania. The view of the historic structure is straight out of a fairy tale. We reach the castle by crossing the long wooden bridge.

Light lunch with tasting traditional Karaim minority dishes: Kibinai-broth-Gira.

Returning to Vilnius, we visit the Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights (KGB former prison) and the Cathedral Basilica of Sts Stanislaus and Vladislaus, the main symbol and spiritual centre of the Lithuanian capital as well as a monument to the Baptism of Lithuania, Old Town, the Jewish ghetto, churches, and City Hall.

Overnight and an open evening.

Wednesday, September 29 Vilnius – Belmontas Park (B, L, D)

Walk in Belmontas Park a great place for nature lovers and those seeking a break from the hustle and bustle of the city. Pūčkoriai Exposure, protected as a natural monument, the impressive geological exposure is a great start to a hike along the cognitive trail with the sundial, the ruins of a cannon foundry and Belmontas Park along the way. To experience the 19th century romantic atmosphere walking down to the waterfalls, old mill building and ponds are a must. We will see, from the outside, the President house.

Walking Distance 4 – 6 km. TERRAIN: Level: easy

Lunch at the Belmontas Park resort www.belmontas.lt.

Balance of the afternoon is open to visit and explore on your own more of Vilnius, prior to Farewell Dinner in our hotel's restaurant.

Thursday, September 30 Vilnius / home (B)

Breakfast (or breakfast boxes – depends on final flight departure) – transfer to the airport where we say goodbye to our driver and local tour manager.

Note: schedule of program is approximate and could change according to sites working hours, hotels availability and etc. If changes or adjustments become necessary, every effort will be made to maintain or exceed the quality and educational value of this program.

Land only tour cost: Per person twin / double accommodation Canadian \$6,520

Single supplement: Canadian \$ 720

Our tour includes:

All private transfers

Tour Leader, Joanna Mazur of [Walkaway Treks](#)

Local Tour Manager-Guide and local guides in various areas

Excellent hotels

Almost all meals as detailed in the program

Entrance fees, visits, tastings, ferry tickets

Gratuities

Not Included:

International air (Please refer to the information listed)

Costs for passports and all items of a personal nature

Deposit Requirement:	\$750 Canadian per person
Final payment due:	July 5, 2027
Land cancellation penalties:	
From date of booking to July 4	\$250 per person
From final payment date to departure	100% non-refundable

SPECIAL NOTE:

Should we be able to find a replacement from the waitlists for a cancelled passenger or other requests received for the land tour between date of booking and 31-days prior to date of departure, a flat \$50.00 & HST p.p. administration charge will be accessed.

NOTE ON AIR FARE:

A group fare will be available from / to Toronto. We are presently too far in advance to arrange for a group booking. That will be possible approximately 320 days prior to the last day of the tour. An estimate ONLY of the return fare would be approximately CDN \$1,450 per person.

WEB SITE: <https://worldwide.on.ca/3sisters2027>

Exclusive reservations through:

Frederick Travel Waterloo

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