Knock knock, Lithuania

Lithuania

A country in Northern Europe

A small one – only 65,300 km²

Has more than 30,000 streams and rivers

Known for its forests and natural treasures

Has more than 6,000 lakes

Inhabited by more than 340 bird species

5 national parks, 3 wildlife reserves, 30 regional parks, 402 state reserves

Each and every one of us gets more than half a hectare of forest area

Our ground water is pure and untainted

European bison and deer walk our woods, Eurasian lynxes visit as well

We know our mushrooms, pick berries, herbs and gather honey

The Curonian Spit is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Salmon spawn in our capital Vilnius

A. Jūrė, M. Karotės, A. Umbrasaitė

Viktorija Stapone

www.lithuania.travel
Knock knock, Lithuania

Knock knock, Lithuania. You knock and we proudly open the doors to our country. We’re inviting you to travel around our land. We hope it will help you discover real things, lose yourself in memories and, maybe, go back to your childhood. We’ve collected the stories and pictures of those who’ve already visited us. We want to show you their feeling and taste of Lithuania. Their Baltic Sea carpeted in amber, their view from the Great Dune in the Curonian Spit, their discoveries in bogs, forests and woods. Feel the white sand slipping through their fingers, hear their oars touching the waters of a gushing river, feel their feet climbing to the top of our oldest mound, walk barefoot in dew covered grass, and pause to reflect, immersed in the utter silence of the snow. We have four seasons, and we feel each of them in our bones. Let’s travel together where true beauty lies. To real Lithuania. Back to yourself.

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SUMMER

We look forward to summer. We start counting down the days after Christmas. In summer, we go on canoe trips, try to master power kites or hop into a saddle for horseback riding, or count the stars while sitting by a campfire. In summer, we listen to blues on the shores of lakes. At the foot of mounds, we learn to forge iron, hollow wood to build boats and make magic drinks that gave our ancestors the strength to create this great country of Lithuania. Our summers have the smell of childhood, mist rising from the meadows, fresh milk, sand castles and translucent pieces of amber found on the beach early in the morning. They sound like the songs of migrating birds and crickets in wild meadows, and silence. Wrap your arms around it. Get closer to yourself, to the things that are real.
Five amazing things to do in Lithuania in summer

1. Spend a night in a tent underneath the stars.

2. Go horseback riding in Kurtuvėnai.

3. Have a rendezvous with dolphins in Klaipėda Dolphinarium.

4. Watch aquatic warblers in Žuvintas Reserve.

5. Find a common sundew in Aukštumala raised bog.
"It’s like a landscape covered in snow, but with sand instead of snow. And the view is quite astonishing. Bring your camera and take some pictures.

Steffen, Germany"
Breathe in the minerals.

The walls here are made of tree branches. Mineral water flows through them slowly. It smells like damp, wood and health.

Gunn, Norway

“White sand and clear water as far as the eye can see. And water... The water is cold sometimes, but that’s good for your body.

Lotta, Danmark

Dive into the crashing waves.

Algirda 21, Biržonas.

Nida, The Curonian Spit National Park
That night, when the sunset came, at the end of the pier, he asked me if I'd like to cross all bridges and swim through all seas together. I said 'Yes'. This is a place of our love.

Olesia, Ukraine
Try out the roads that helped ancient Lithuanians escape their enemies.

When it seems that the ground is falling away below, and it feels like you’re no longer standing on something solid, and there’s only mud and water around, you suddenly feel something steady under you – a road made of stones underneath the layer of the moving mud. Amazing experience.

"Something changes when you’re in the wind. You’re in the water, standing on a board and soaring ahead. Only ‘here’ and ‘now’ remain, you see, hear and feel everything."

Jordis
Lithuania

“Catch the wind in Svencelé”

Pedro,
Spain
If you mean to count all 200 plant species that can be found here, you must be a botanist. I’m not, but looking around this bog of vast immensity was great.

Sten, Sweden
Find the magical fern flower at night

According to the old belief, heavy dew foretells successful harvest. Dew was also said to possess healing powers, which could restore youth. Very mysterious.

Krystyne, Poland
The road is famous for its castles and manors that can be visited en route. These buildings were used as opulent residences rather than defensive structures.

Follow the Nemunas River to the sea

Hoist your sails

Sun, warm water, a brisk wind fills your sail, and you fly away together with the waves... With the wind. The speed takes over your mind. It’s so serene. You must feel it to truly understand it.

Lior, Israel
For some, they’re just flowers growing in the meadows. For those who know them, they’re herbs that strengthen your health and protect you from trouble.

Eleonora, Italy

“Get yourself a bouquet of herbs”

“Grab an oar and go for it”

“When they told us we'll have plenty to do in this river, we didn't believe them. But then the night came, and when we were sitting around a campfire, amid a bonfire in the woods, we understood what they’d meant. Tired, but happy.”

Suzan & Peter, Germany
Fresh honey from a tree hollow with pollen, with the smell of summer, with thin and frail beeswax that you can eat as well – what can be better?

Ruth, Netherlands

Lithuanian Summer Treasures

Our summers are filled with smells and tastes. Our green fields are full of ripening wild strawberries, juicy red raspberries and sweet bundles of blueberries. Bees dance in blooming flowers, feast on the taste of summer and then infuse it into their honey. We spread it on a slice of bread or cheese exploding with the smells of meadows. The greenery holds the magical secrets of Saint John’s Day. After drying our herbs and flowers, we drink summer tea. Wouldn’t you like to bring back home a drop of Lithuanian summer?
The ancient Lithuanians thought bees were sacred, understood human speech and were able to change their lives. And the word “bičiulis’ (friend)” originates from the word “bities’ (bees).

Valerie, France

Maybe, a bit strange at first but, actually, unusually smooth, and even better when dried – lasts longer and can survive the longest of trips.

Liucia, Spain

Health preserved in a jar of honey

Summer-scented curd cheese
AUTUMN

Autumn comes with the drop of the first apple. It’s a sign for us to take our wooden baskets, go to our gardens and forests, and fill our homes with the smells of apple pies and dried boletes. Our autumn brims over with colours. It’s an autumn from Claude Monet’s paintings – a little bit sleepy and constantly wrapped in a translucent, iridescent cloak of mist. It weaves intricate spiderwebs, whispers from beneath the fallen leaves, waves the wings of the departing storks and cranes, and dances around the rain-kissed cranberries in bogs. In autumn, we remember our friends, light candles and gaze into each other’s eyes. Long autumn evenings only hide the things that are genuine. Like us.
Five remarkable things to do in Lithuania in autumn

1. Go for a narrow-gauge train ride in Anykščiai.

2. Pick apples in the gardens of the eastern Lithuania.

3. Try out a therapeutic mud bath in Birštonas.


5. Take part in the Autumn Equinox Celebration at Amber Bay in Juodkrante.
Go round the Plateliai Lake by bike

“...It’s quite a challenge - the lake is huge and the bike path around it goes for 24 kilometres. But the views are incredible, especially from the viewpoints."  
Urs, Switzerland
We don’t have mushroom festivals in America, I don’t think there are any in Europe as well. The amount of wild mushrooms in Lithuanian forests is astonishing!

Robert, USA

Grab a wooden basket, and off we go!

A very good place for Lithuanian seasonal fish experience. The island people know what to do with it. They always have fresh fish.

Jorg, Germany

Cook fish soup that real fishermen eat
Wave at the birds flying by

Ventė Cape is the biggest bird catching and ringing base in Europe. A perfect spot for those of you who like to spend time calmly in fresh air, also excellent for bird watchers.

Kathryn, Sweden

They stand as loyal sentries waiting for the sailors to come back. Can there be a more romantic place for a date at the seaside?

Torben, Norway

Meet up with your date at the lighthouse
Go on a boat ride down the river, which is also a street.

Local people call this village “Venice”. There are no streets here, and neighbours go to visit each other by boat.

George, USA
The water of the lake was smooth as glass. When our legs stopped shaking, we could enjoy the magnificent views all around.

Michail, Russia

Lithuanian Autumn Treasures

When autumn starts painting the roadside forests, we look for its gifts – pumpkins scattered around our fields, mushrooms lost in the woods and apples prancing around the branches of apple-trees. Having harvested our crops, we grind flour and extract oil from flax and hemp. And suddenly our long autumn evenings start smelling like pies and summer memories. Here, take a bite.
And then I decided I want it on my wedding table. I mean, if the guests at Prince William’s wedding had it... It was delicious and very interesting.

Miriam, UK

So very fresh and almost alive, with a very special taste. It is said that Lithuanians have used hemp oil since the beginning of time. In the bottle, which I’ve brought home with me, you sort of see tradition and modernity mixed in one.

Marie, Japan
WINTER

Lithuanian winters are cold. Bring your eiderdown jacket. Don’t forget a hat and a scarf as well. Warm, waterproof boots are also a good idea. You can get some gloves or mittens here, if you like. Woolen ones, decorated with colourful handmade ornaments. Sometimes there’s so much snow here around Christmas time that children have to go to Santa Claus on their sledges and pick up the gifts themselves. In winter, you can go skating, ride sleights pulled by horses with bells jingling, go ice fishing or roll around the snow naked after a boiling wood-scented sauna. When nights become longer than days, we go into the countryside to spend some time in the frost-sparkled peace and quiet, dance all night in clubs filled with music and heat, admire art in galleries and do a lot of sports. Because winter is still winter here.
Five great things to do in Lithuania in winter

1. Remember your childhood – build a snowman.

2. Go ice fishing on the Curonian Lagoon.

3. Decorate a Christmas tree with fruit and vegetables for wildlife.

4. Drive a go-kart at full speed on an icy lake.

5. Dive into an ice-hole in a lake after a hot sauna.
See a snow-covered forest from up above

The Treetop Walking Path
Dvaronis village 5
Anykščiai

You’ve never seen before trees at that level. And in the end – the observation tower – amazing views.
Užgavénės begins on the night before Ash Wednesday, when Morė, an effigy of winter, is burnt. Devils, witches, goats and other joyful and frightening characters appear in costume during the celebrations.

Thomas, Ireland

You can forget all problems, concentrating only on the feelings of this special time you spent there. I can’t explain it, you have to try it!

Johannes, Germany

Scrub yourself clean with a birch-branch whisk in a sauna

Banish winter from Lithuania in Rumšiškės
Take a walk through juniper treetops

“The air is so fresh here that it takes your breath away. But, maybe, it’s the junipers giving off their therapeutic and disinfecting “fragrance”?

Simon, Italy
Cold. Freezing cold. White, clean space all around you and you – soaring underneath the sail. Your thoughts soar together with you, and there’s nothing that could stop you now!

Rudolf, Austria

Raise your sails in pure white solitude
The dogs give you an immense feeling of happiness and joy. Riding in a bundle of warm blankets – it doesn’t get better than this. And I’ve simply fallen in love with the dogs.

Ksena, UK

Lithuanian Winter Treasures

In winter, we usually eat the goods we collected in summer. We strengthen our health with various herbal teas, we share amongst ourselves the wonderful gifts of forests and we indulge in eating the amazing vitamin-rich goods that our fields and gardens have produced. On Christmas Eve, our tables bear the treasures provided by nature. We’ve packed something for you, too – take home the things we’re so proud of.
The apples were cut, then boiled for a really long time, then stirred for an even longer time, finally pressed and kept like that for a month. And then this apple cheese went straight into my bag.

Hang Yo, China

You must put the mushrooms in cold water and leave them there for several hours, after that they’re ready – put them in a beetroot soup, on some herring or cook the most delicious dumplings with dried mushrooms in the world.

Dorota, Poland
SPRING

Spring slinks into Lithuania across the sleeping fields. It is as if the earth breathes in and softly whispers: “No more snow”. Grass sprouts up and trees come into leaf. Then, in the midst of enchanted nights, trees burst into blossom. Have you ever tried walking on a carpet of white petals soaked in the lingering aroma of apple trees? The blooming is a reminder that night always changes into day, and youth always wins. You can find this inscribed in the history of our young, independent country as well. The things we do in spring? We decorate Easter eggs, pack our backpacks for the first hiking trips, and go to forests, gardens or city parks with friends. We also travel to Pamarys to watch the spring flood and feel incredibly proud of its people. Because life is real here. Just as Lithuania is.
Five awesome things to do in Lithuania in spring

1. Decorate some Easter eggs.

2. Gather a bouquet of liverleafs in Neris Regional Park.

3. Go for an off-road ride in Labanoras Wood.

4. See the spring flood in Rusné.

5. Fly over Trakai Castle and admire 44 lakes.
Kernavė offers exceptional testimony to the evolution of human settlements in the Baltic region in Europe over some 10 millennia, with evidence of contact between pagan and Christian funeral traditions.

Romualdo, Italy

Climb a mound to meet ancestral spirits
A dreadful road leading to a spectacular geological formation. It’s magical!

Lyu, China
"What I saw there reminded me of the old movies about majestic creatures wandering the woods. European bison have been included in the international Red List of endangered species, let’s hope these beautiful animals won’t disappear off the face of the earth entirely.

Hisashi, Japan

Meet the king of the woods in Pašiliai
Go to Birštonas by boat

The views of the banks of the Nemunas River were passing by, we bathed in the greenness of spring and the pure aroma of water. Such a romantic trip.

Delfina, Scotland

Admire the sea from the Dutchman’s Cap

They say this sand dune reminded sailors of a Dutch hat. Peace and quiet. Wild beaches. A remarkable place to let your thoughts loose.

Przemyslaw, Poland
A picture-perfect sea of colourful tulips in a strikingly beautiful manor. Every spring, the park hosts the Tulip Festival. And this is such an amazing chance to bring some colour into your life.

Anita, Norway

Maybe it’s because there’s quite a bit of rain in Lithuania, but there are some villages here where people walk rivers instead of streets. It’s really amusing!

Daniel, Spain
This observation tower reminded my girlfriend of a boat, and to me it looked like the moon. You can observe the lakes nearby from a height of 32 metres. People say they turn pink in summer. It means we have to come back.

Jovanie, Italy

Reach the moon
Co hiking along the Neris River

Druskininkai smells like tulips in spring. A resort of health, quiet and genuine rest. We can’t imagine our vacation without it.

Alonu, Israel

It was a challenge: difficult roads, forests and narrow paths around mounds. What an unbelievable day!

Vincent, France
Lithuanian Spring Treasures

In spring, we like to go on a diet. We sometimes stop eating meat and can’t wait for crunchy radishes to poke their pink noses from the soil, for lettuce leaves to spread out their green beauty, for the first mushrooms to sprout up in forests, and for the first catches of fish in rivers and lakes. A slice of rye bread or a piece of smoke-scented Skilandis (a kind of Lithuanian sausage made with meat, fat, salt, pepper and garlic) brings us back to our childhood. To the place we’ve come from. Try some, it might work for you, too.
My husband eats it like it’s his last meal and would sleep with it under his pillow at night if he could.

Stacey, USA

"Skilandis"

Take a very thin slice of “Skilandis”, a normal slice of dark rye bread and a fresh cucumber. That’s all. It is especially good when you are camping in the wild, especially if it’s cold.

Rack, UK