

GRAND BALTIC SEA ADVENTURE

15 days
14 nights

6
countries

31
objects

travel type
Cultural

This is a real cultural adventure and an expedition to 6 Northern and Eastern European countries – Scandinavia and the lesser known, but still fascinating, Baltic States. The smart itinerary is planned to offer you an optimal mix of exploring and relaxing in the well-known attractions and gems hidden from mass tourism:

- 3 Baltic Capitals – Baroque Vilnius, Art Nouveau Riga and medieval fairytale-like Tallinn, which are all UNESCO World Heritage sites;
- 3 Scandinavian capitals – Copenhagen, Stockholm and Helsinki, each special in its own way, where you will visit only the attractions worth seeing.
- Travel outside the capitals to discover some remarkable places: the ancient Viking capital Sigtuna with numerous rune stones, the Hill of Crosses in Lithuania with more than 100,000 crosses from all over the world, and Malmo – the green and lively Swedish summer capital.

DESCRIPTION

● Day 1, Vilnius

Arrival in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Free time to explore the the biggest Old Town complex in Eastern Europe with outstanding examples of “Lithuanian” Baroque, also called the last vivid flash of Baroque in Europe. Meals: D Overnight: Vilnius

● Day 2, Vilnius – Trakai

Highlights: Vilnius Old Town, Trakai Castle Start the day with a walking tour of Vilnius’ Old town, where you can feel the atmosphere of the city’s history of the 16-19th centuries while walking along its narrow winding streets or visiting the most exiting architectural and historic monuments, including Vilnius University, the Dawn Gate with a miraculous icon of Virgin Mary. Spend you afternoon in Trakai, the former capital of Grand Duchy of Lithuania with it’s beautiful insular castle of the 14th century, situated on an island in the middle of a lake. Trakai’s unique location on the peninsula surrounded by five lakes has it dubbed itself the “town on the water”. Meals: B+L Overnight: Vilnius

● Day 3, Vilnius – Hill of Crosses – Rundale Palace – Riga

Highlights: Hill of Crosses, Rundale Palace This morning you will travel towards the Latvian capital and make two stops to see remarkable sights on the way. The first stop at the famous Hill of Crosses, a mystical and unique pilgrimage site with more than 100 000 crosses from all around the world on it. It is the only place of its kind in the world, included to the Guinness Book of Records. After crossing the border of Latvia, you will visit the Rundale Palace – an outstanding monument of Baroque and Rococo art with authentic 18th century furniture, paintings and china and a beautiful French-style park. Meals: B+L Overnight: Riga

● Day 4, Riga – Jurmala

Highlights: Riga city tour, Jurmala beach In the morning experience a guided tour of Riga Old Town, the liveliest capital among the Baltic States, where you will see old Gothic churches and stunning Art Nouveau buildings living side by side. Afternoon will be spent in Jurmala, the “trademark” resort in the Baltic States. Enjoy a walk amongst pine forests and along sand beaches of Jurmala with healing air and fresh sea breezes and have a look at many fairy-tale like wooden Jugendstil houses here. Meals: B+L Overnight: Riga

● Day 5, Riga – Gauja National Park – Tallinn

Highlights: ruins of Turaida Castle This morning we will travel to the Estonian capital and make one stop at the Gauja National Park on the way. Enjoy beautiful vistas of the Gauja River Valley, visit the 13th century Turaida Castle, now housing a small History Museum, and relax walking in the adjoining Sculpture Park, featuring works of Latvian sculptors. Later stop by a natural sight Gutman Cave. Free evening in Tallinn. Meals: B+L Overnight: Tallinn

● Day 6, Tallinn – Kadriorg Palace

Highlights: Tallinn city tour, Kadriorg palace Join the guided tour to discover the Tallinn Old Town, which is one of the best-preserved and authentic medieval capitals in Europe, filled with churches and merchant houses. The walk through the hilly cobblestone streets will become a memorable ending to your travels. Excursion will continue in a beautiful flower park of the Kadriorg Palace, which was founded by the Russian tsar Peter. Visit the National Art Museum and stroll through the beautiful park. Meals: B+L Overnight: Tallinn

● Day 7, Tallinn – Helsinki

Highlights: Suomenlinna Fortress Today you will travel across the Baltic Sea by ferry to Helsinki. Helsinki is truly located at the crossroads of Western and Eastern culture and it is reflected everywhere in the green and lively Finnish capital. Afternoon visit at Suomenlinna Fortress, built in the 18th century by Sweden on a group of islands located at the entrance of Helsinki’s harbour. This fortress is an especially interesting example of European military architecture of the time. Meals: B+L Overnight: Helsinki

● Day 8, Helsinki – Turku

Highlights: Helsinki city tour Morning Helsinki sightseeing tour takes us around the harbours, up central Mannerheim Street and by the Parliament Building, the Finlandia Hall, market square, and the Sibelius Monument and for a visit at the famous Church-in-the-Rock. In the afternoon departure to Turku. Free time to enjoy Turku city life. In the summer Turku overflows with events and festivals like tango, middle age, music, theatre, art, design and much more. Meals: B + L Overnight: Turku

● Day 9, Turku – Stockholm

Highlights: Turku city tour, cruise to Stockholm Morning city tour of Turku. Turku city tour provides overall picture of the city’s history and sights. During the tour you will walk the cobblestone streets around the Old Town and visit the Cathedral of Turku, the medieval Castle – largest in Finland, the Market square and Hall, the magnificent Main Library. In the afternoon you take a cruise to Stockholm by ferry (315km, 11 h.). Meals: B Overnight: ferry Turku-Stockholm

● Day 10, Stockholm

Highlights: Stockholm city tour, Vasa museum During the morning Stockholm City tour you will visit two squares on Riddarholmen and Söder island, walk through the Old Town, where you will

pass narrow streets and alleys of the medieval part of the city. The excursion continues through the central parts of the modern Stockholm – City Hall. Acquaintance of the Stockholm continues with visit to Vasa Museum, the Scandinavia's most visited attraction. In the large ship hall stands the warship Vasa – the only remaining, intact 17th century ship in the world. The lower rig of it has been rebuilt, complete with masts, stays and shrouds. Meals: B+L Overnight: Stockholm

● Day 11, Stockholm – Uppsala – Sigtuna – Skokloster Castle – Stockholm

Highlights: Uppsala city tour, Sigtuna city tour, Skokloster Castle Morning departure to Uppsala and a sightseeing tour of the town to see the grand Gothic Uppsala Cathedral, Scandinavia's largest and tallest cathedral from 1270. During the tour you will pass by the Uppsala University, Sweden's oldest university, visit the university library to see the famous Silver Bible, the Botanical Garden with the grand Linneanum and end at Uppsala Castle. Further drive to Sigtuna, Sweden's oldest town, founded in the 10th century. Today it is a cozy town of narrow streets, colorful wooden houses, plenty of restaurants and hotels, classy souvenir shops and galleries. During the sightseeing tour of the Sigtuna you will see the Gothic St. Mary's church, Old Town Hall, which is Europe's smallest city hall and runes tones that are scattered through the town. Visit at nearby located Skokloster Castle, a one of the main attractions in the region. The castle interior from the mid 17th century has been kept completely intact. Meals: B+L Overnight: Stockholm

● Day 12, Stockholm – Kalmar

Highlights: museum of Astrid Lindgren, Kalmar Castle Morning departure to Kalmar (440km, approx. 5 h). Stop en route at Näs, the birthplace of Astrid Lindgren. Visit Astrid Lindgren's childhood home, the permanent exhibition that presents her life and works and walk in the gardens – “a fairy tale without end”. Afternoon arrival in Kalmar, a cozy and beautiful port town, one of the oldest Swedish cities. Visit at Kalmar's biggest attraction, the Kalmar Slott, the castle that withstood many over the course of a century. Meals: B+L Overnight: Kalmar

● Day 13, Kalmar – Malmo – Copenhagen

Highlights: boat tour in Malmo, crossing the Øresund Bridge In the morning we head to Copenhagen and make a stop to take a canal tour in the Swedish summer capital – Malmo. Cruise on a boat through the canals and under the bridges and see the city how it looks from different side. The guide onboard will provide a good insight into Swedish history, important persons, and buildings. Free time to explore the old town of Malmö at your own. Do not miss Stora Torget and Lilla Torget, the city's main squares where you'll find lots of good shops and coffee-bars. Further drive to Copenhagen across the Øresund Bridge, an approximately 16 km long road and rail link between Sweden and Denmark. Meals: B+L Overnight: Copenhagen

● Day 14, Copenhagen

Highlights: Copenhagen city tour, Kronborg Castle Morning Copenhagen city tour is an excellent way to see main highlights of the city including Christiansborg Palace, home to the Danish Parliament, the Old Stock Exchange, Royal Theatre, Tivoli Gardens, the colorful harbor district of Nyhavn and Amalienborg Palace – Winter residence of the Royal Family to see the changing of the Guard and followed by a stop by world-famous Little Mermaid, inspired by H. C. Andersen's fairytale. In the afternoon we leave Copenhagen and head north to see “the Danish Riviera”, We drive along the coastline of Sweden, through the magnificent Danish countryside and pass the coastline to Helsingør and Kronborg Castle. It is quite easy to understand why William Shakespeare chose Kronborg Castle as the setting for his famous play ‘Hamlet’. Enjoy the beautiful surroundings and feel the atmosphere taken through the Chapel and the Knights’

Hall (the longest room in Northern Europe). Meals: B+L Overnight: Copenhagen

● Day 15, Copenhagen

Breakfast at hotel. Transfer to the airport. Departure.