



Route: Helsinki – Tallinn – Riga – Rundale – Siauliai – Vilnius – Trakai – Vilnius – Białowieża – Malbork – Gdańsk – Sopot – Gdańsk – Toruń – Gniezno – Poznań – Wrocław – Częstochowa – Kraków – Wieliczka – Kraków – Oświęcim – Częstochowa – Warsaw



Castle in Trakai

Day 1. Helsinki

Transfer to the hotel for check-in. Dinner at the hotel.

Day 2. Helsinki – Tallinn

After breakfast: departure with a local guide for the sightseeing of Helsinki, including: the Square of Senat, the Market Square, the Uspensky Orthodox Cathedral, the Rock Church. Ferry Helsinki – Tallinn. Transfer to the hotel in Tallinn for check-in. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 3. Tallinn – Riga

After breakfast: departure for the sightseeing of Tallinn. The charming Tallinn as a port city belonged to the Hanseatic League, the remnants of which may still be seen. In Tallinn, you may also feel some Scandinavian flavour that results from the city's neighbourhood with Helsinki. While in this medieval city, we will see the "Kiek-in-de-Kok" tower and Toomkirk as well as Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Church. In the afternoon: drive for Riga. Check-in at the hotel. Dinner.

Day 4. Riga – Rundale – Siauliai – Vilnius

After breakfast: sightseeing of Riga. In Riga, everything is close and compact: next to the medieval Old Town you



Riga

will find the New Town built in the 19th century. Wherever you turn, you'll find a wealth of historic buildings such as the Dome Cathedral with its world-famous organ, St. Peter's Church built back in 1209 with the first clock in the city or the Guild Square with the Large and the Small Guild that represent the former glory of Riga as a Hanseatic City. Departure for Vilnius. En-route visit to Rundale Palace, one of the most outstanding monuments of baroque and rococo art in Latvia. Continue for Siauliai.

Visit to the Hill of Crosses Siauliai, the Lithuanian national pilgrimage centre. Standing upon a small hill are hundreds of thousands of crosses that represent Christian devotion and are a memorial to Lithuanian national identity. Continue for Vilnius. Arrival at the hotel in Vilnius. Dinner at a city restaurant.

Day 5. Vilnius – Trakai – Vilnius

After breakfast: Vilnius city tour, including the Cathedral Square with a visit to the crypts of Vilnius Cathedral built on an ancient pagan site reminiscent of Lithuania's conversion to Christianity, St. Anne's, St. Casimir's churches, the Gates of Dawn with a holy image of Virgin Mary reputed for miraculous powers, an impressive University founded by the Jesuits, a centre of enlightenment for 200 years. The tour will take you to St. Peter & Paul's Church with a fantastic 17th-century interior – a real world of sculpture. The tour also includes the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity.

Departure for Trakai to visit the castle, a great sample of medieval defence architecture, a fortress located on an island. Back to the hotel. Dinner served at a city restaurant.

Day 6. Vilnius – Białowieża

After breakfast: departure for Białowieża in Poland. Meeting with a local guide at the Białowieża National Park. Departure for the strict nature reserve included on the UNESCO list. It is the oldest national park in Poland, established in 1921 on the area of 4,600 ha. We will admire primeval forest with over 3,500 plant species, 44

mammal species and 250 bird species. The forest is inhabited by European bison – the symbol of the park, plus elk, beaver, wolf, lynx, river otter and ermine. The park has its own breeding farm. It keeps European bison, hybrids of bison and cow, wild boars, roe deer, red deer, Polish tarpan horses, elks and wolves. Picnic dinner to be served at a forest meadow in Białowieża. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 7. Białowieża – Malbork – Gdańsk

Morning departure for Malbork. On arrival, a guided visit to the famous largest fortress of the Teutonic Knights Order in Malbork. The magnificent castle is located on the bank of the Nogat River. Protected with drawbridges, moats and mounds, the complex consists of 3 parts: the Lower, Middle and High Castles. Evening arrival and check-in at the hotel in Gdańsk. In the evening: dinner at a local restaurant in the Old Town.

Day 8. Gdańsk – Sopot – Gdańsk

After breakfast, we start our tour from the Gdańsk Upland Gate – a fragment of the city's fortifications and one of its



Tallinn



Poznań – Market Square

main gates. Just behind, we pass by a Prison Tower and the Torture House, the Golden Gate to the Long Market – a magnificent street, with patrician mansions decorated with late renaissance and baroque facades. Next, you will see the Main Town Hall, the Artus Court – a building used for Hanseatic League meetings. Just behind rises the tower of St. Mary's Basilica, a part of the most precious and largest red-brick Gothic church. On your way back, you will pass by the Mariacka Street, with its gabled terraced houses and expensive boutiques, leading to the Long Wharf on the Motława River. The tour continues with a stop in front of the Gdańsk Shipyard and the Solidarity Trade Union Monument.

We will also visit the Oliwa Cathedral for a short concert of church organ music and the Sopot sea pier. Dinner.

Day 9. Gdańsk – Toruń – Gniezno – Poznań

Morning departure to Toruń, one of the most magnificent historic cities in Poland and the birthplace of Nicolaus Copernicus, a great Polish astronomer. Toruń's Old Town has been included in the UNESCO list because of the most impressive 13th-century Town Hall, superb churches and streets that prove Toruń's past glory.

Drive for Gniezno, the first capital of Poland, seated on seven hills and surrounded by lakes. The main purpose of the visit to Gniezno is to see the cathedral built before 977 by Mieszko I, with a famous Romanesque Door with panels presenting scenes from the life of St. Adalbert.

Continue for Poznań. Check-in at the hotel.

Day 10. Poznań – Wrocław

After breakfast, we start Poznań sightseeing. The first settlement here can be traced back to as early as the 9th century. The most interesting part of the city is the Old Town with its famous renaissance Town Hall, now housing the Historic Museum. In the middle of the attic, above the clock, you can see two metal goats butting their horns 12 times everyday at noon.

Departure towards Wrocław. Check-in at the hotel. Dinner at a local restaurant in the Old Town.

Day 11. Wrocław – Częstochowa – Krakow

After breakfast: sightseeing of Wrocław, the major industrial, commercial, educational and cultural centre for the whole of south-western Poland. There's a score of old churches, some of which are worth special attention, and a

dozen museums. See the Gothic Town Hall, one of the most beautiful old town halls in Poland, with some elements of early renaissance style. Walk along the Market Square with its fine burgher's houses. Next stop is the Ostrów Tumski island, where the first Wrocław church was built and which has retained its role as the seat of the church authorities. Departure for Krakow. Check-in at the hotel. Dinner.



Toruń

Day 12. Krakow – Wieliczka – Krakow

For the Polish people, Krakow is a special city: the capital

of kings, the place where kings were crowned and laid to rest. Come and see the Old Town area within the Planty greenbelt – an excellently preserved medieval city. The vast Old Town Market Square is considered to be one of the largest town squares in Europe. The surroundings of the square have remained unchanged for almost 700 years and feature buildings of historic value such as St. Mary's Church with the famous wooden altar, the Town Hall Tower, the Cloth Hall, the famous Wawel Cathedral and Castle Courtyard. Every hour, you can hear the bugle call to the four corners of the world from the tower of St. Mary's Church.

Afternoon: visit to Wieliczka Salt Mine, one of the UNESCO sites in Poland, to see the underground world of the oldest salt mine in Europe. See the gorgeous underground world of salt lakes, galleries and chapels created by many generations of Polish miners.

Diner with a Jewish folklore show at a restaurant located in Kazimierz district, the former Jewish quarter of Krakow.

Day 13. Krakow – Oświęcim – Częstochowa – Warsaw

In the morning: drive to Oświęcim to visit the former Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau which has been the biggest factory of death in the history of humanity and a silent witness of human tragedy. Included in the UNESCO list.

En route: a guided visit of the Jasna Góra Monastery. One of the most important places of religious worship in the Christian world, with tradition of pilgrimages that reaches back to the 14th century. Continue for Warsaw. Afternoon arrival in Warsaw and check-in. Dinner with an optional Polish folk show.

Day 14. Warsaw

After breakfast: enjoy this great opportunity to get acquainted with the history of Poland's capital. See the Old Town, intricately reconstructed after World War II. Take pleasure in a drive along the Royal Route with its beautiful palaces, aristocratic residences, famous statues and historic churches. See the historical sights of Warsaw – the Ghetto Memorial, the Monument of the Warsaw Uprising, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Chopin's Monument, and the Belvedere Palace. Optional Chopin concert. Dinner. Overnight.

Day 15. Warsaw

After breakfast: end of the tour.

