



*"Djoser... Organized Adventures for
Independent Minded Travelers"*



Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia -Baltics tour, 8
days





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Itinerary

- Day 1 Vilnius
- Day 2 Vilnius
- Day 3 Vilnius - Hill of Crosses - Rundale Palace - Riga
- Day 4 Riga
- Day 5 Riga
- Day 6 Riga - Silguda - Tallinn
- Day 7 Tallinn
- Day 8 Tallinn



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Day by day

On the Road with Djoser

Djoser's active journeys offer an ideal balance of guidance and freedom. Our guide-assisted adventures cover the globe and feature wildlife, beautiful natural settings, historic sights and authentic cultural experiences. During Djoser travels, the daily schedule is not rigidly set.

The day-to-day descriptions describe the anticipated, or possible daily activities. Our travel days are obviously fixed, but each day the program may deviate depending on the preferences of the group, in consultation with the tour leader. The tour guide offers a program daily, with planned excursions. You are never obligated to participate. Those who desire more freedom may go out exploring or may dine on their own. Your tour leader can offer suggestions for safe explorations and fun restaurants. You will find that Djoser participants will take advantage of this flexibility. We believe a sense of discovery is an integral element of a great trip.

We offer the land program only. Below, you will find the day-to-day description days numbered to correspond with that of the Dutch participants (which includes their transit days from/to Amsterdam). This is so that when you are traveling and refer to this day-to-day description, all travelers will be "on the same page" or the same day number.

*** NOTE TO FACULTY MEMBERS PLANNING A CUSTOM UNIVERSITY STUDY TOUR:** If you are planning a study tour for a private group, use this description as your daily guideline. We can build in scheduled activities that highlight your area of study.

Lithuania

Day 1 Vilnius

Day 2 Vilnius

Day 3 Vilnius - Hill of Crosses - Rundale Palace - Riga

Our Baltics tour begins in Lithuania. In Vilnius (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vilnius>), since 1990 the capital of independent Lithuania, you can stroll in the old streets of the town, with its Baroque Polish character. The city stretches along both banks of the fast flowing Neris, nestled between hills covered with pine forests. The heart of the old town is next to Gedimino Hill. At the base of it is the white cathedral, which in 1990 symbolized the revival of national consciousness for the Catholic Lithuanians. On a walk through the winding streets and charming alleys you come along fresh, pastel-colored houses that give the city a pleasant atmosphere. On the way to Riga, we stop at the remarkable memorial to victims of all persecutions, that lies along the road to the north. Kryziu Kalnas



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(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hill_of_Crosses) is a low hill covered with all kinds of crosses that have been laid there spontaneously. We continue our drive and stop at the Castle of Rundale, the most important baroque palace in Latvia. This grand castle was designed by the same architect as the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

Latvia

Day 4 Riga

Day 5 Riga

Day 6 Riga - Sigulda – Tallinn

In the Latvian capital Riga (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riga>) 's Old Town, called Vecrīga, is largely pedestrianized. The 800 year old town originated as a trading settlement of German knights. In the 17th Century the tower of St. Peter's Church, would have been the world's tallest tower. You have a fantastic view of the city here. In the city are about twenty warehouses from the 17th to 19th centuries that have been preserved. Among the numerous monuments and museums are "the three brothers" houses from the 15th and 16th centuries. On the Alberts iela you will find a wide range of houses in Jugendstil. Numerous shops, cafes and theaters are testament to the renewed vitality after the Soviet domination. Just outside the city you can find on the banks of the Jugla an anthropological museum, which provides an overview of Latvian architecture, folklore and lifestyle in the region over the past centuries. The nearby Jurmala, actually an elongated chain of fishing villages, is traditionally known as a posh seaside resort and spa. Many villas testify to its rich past. From Riga, you can take a local train into the central village Majori. In the Latvian forests many plant and animal species exist that are extinct elsewhere in Europe. We can experience this as we headed to Tallinn make an excursion to the National Park Gauja (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gauja_National_Park) known as Latvian Switzerland. Here you can visit the romantically situated Turaida castle, which is situated in the hills near the historic town of Sigulda.

Estonia

Day 7 Tallinn

Day 8 Tallinn (land ends)

The old Hanseatic city of Tallinn in Gulf of Finland flourished from the 13th to the 16th century when it was an important port in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea. The old center with its Gothic churches, inside the high walls, has been preserved virtually intact. Walking through the streets paved with cobblestones you can easily feel the atmosphere from that bygone time. Very special is the newly reopened alley Katariina Kaik, which now houses all kinds of workshops in the medieval walls. The old town consists of an upper and lower section. In the upper town on the same hill is the Toompea Castle, seat of the Estonian Parliament. From the original castle there are only three of the four towers surviving; "long Herman", adorned with the national flag is a clear landmark. Opposite the parliament is the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Nevsky_Cathedral,_Tallinn) with its famous onion domes and mosaics. There has been much debate about the demolition of this symbol of tsarist imperialism. The downtown, around the town hall square, is a lively part of the old town, with many shops and



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restaurants. Opposite the station, you can enjoy a drink in Wagon Lits Café, sitting on the uncomfortable benches of austere Soviet trains. A little over a mile outside the old walled city in the Kadriorg Park, is the summer palace of Peter the Great (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_the_Great), and now the residence of the Estonian president. A little further into the park you will find the half dome of the where thousands of choirs have performed in a national contest. The Estonians are known as excellent singers. West of the city you will find the open-air museum, Rocca al Mare, where many fine examples of wooden architecture from the 18th and 19th century can be seen.



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Practical information

Accommodations & Meals

Accommodations - During our Baltics tour we stay in hotels where the rooms are always equipped with private shower and toilet. The hotels have recently been rebuilt or renovated and they are located within walking distance of the city centers.

Some examples of our usual hotels (subject to change)

Vilnius	Ecotel (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274951-d299014-Reviews-Ecotel_Vilnius-Vilnius-Lithuania)
Riga	Hotel TIA (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274967-d284872-Reviews-Hotel_TIA-Riga-Latvia)
Tallinn City	Hotel Portus (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274958-d506729-Reviews-City_Hotel_Portus-Tallinn-Estonia)

Single room - Djoser is single friendly! If you are traveling solo, we will match you with a same-sex roommate. If we cannot match you, there will be no additional room charge. For a reasonable charge, you may request single accommodations, subject to availability. Just indicate this preference on your booking form. You will find pricing for single accommodations on "Dates & Prices" page.

Hotel extensions - It is always great to be well-rested when you begin a journey such as this. If you would like to book an extension hotel night upon arrival in the city where the land program begins, let us know on your booking form. You will find the prices for extension nights listed on the "Dates & Prices" page.

Meals - On our Baltics tour, breakfast is included. Breakfast in most hotels includes an extensive buffet. You can choose for yourself where you would like to have lunch and dinner. In most places we stay there is a wide choice of restaurants, from inexpensive to luxury. In the big hotels and restaurants, typical European dishes are served: soup, meat / fish with rice or potatoes, as well as local favorites like Lithuanian 'zeppelins', Estonian and Russian warthog stuffed pancakes. Yogurt and salads are available in abundance.

Flights & Transportation

Booking your international flight - We provide the land package and transportation within the program as described. We do not arrange international flights from or to the United States or Canada. The land program will begin approximately two hours after the arrival of the Netherlands (NL) participants who will arrive from Amsterdam. The land program will end about 4 hours prior to their scheduled departure time, which allows for time to get to the airport. The proposed flights for the Dutch participants and the land beginning and end times are listed in this section. They are subject to change.



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based on flight delays or changes. We will keep you posted of any flight changes that we are aware of prior to the trip. When scheduling your flights, keep the following times in mind.

Dutch participants' proposed flights: (subject to change)

Airline: AirBaltik

NL participants arrive: Vilnius 5:20 PM

NL participants depart: Johannesburg 2:35 PM

Before you book your flight - To avoid flight change or cancellation costs get email confirmation from our office that the trip has enough participants to be a "GO".

Verify the spelling of your name-within 24 hours - When you book your flights, double check your flight records to confirm that your name is spelled on your ticket exactly as it appears on your passport. Some companies (for example, ORBITZ) will only allow a 24 hour window to correct any errors without penalty. You may incur heavy fees for changes, forfeiture of your flight ticket, or even worse, you could be denied entry to a border upon arrival.

Send us a copy of your flight itinerary - We will forward to the tour leader so they will know when to expect you at the hotel and when you will be departing.

Keep in mind hotel extensions - If the Dutch travelers arrive early in the morning, we recommend that you arrange to fly in the day or night before so you will be meet the group. Some trips involve an immediate transfer from airport to the next town so make sure you will arrive before the others so you don't miss the first meeting or transfer to the next location. We can arrange an extension hotel night for you. Prices for hotel extensions can be found in the "Dates & Prices" section

If the Dutch participants arrive in the late evening - Should they arrive very late in the evening, the group will have their first meeting in the morning in the hotel lobby. You can check in earlier and relax or explore on your own.

Airport transfer to/from hotel (not Included) - If you will be arriving and or departing on the same flight as the Dutch travelers let us know. Then you can join them on the bus for the group transfer at no additional charge. Notify us in advance so we can alert the tour leader. If you schedule your flight at the same time as theirs, or later, you can join them on the group transfer to the airport at no additional charge. Otherwise, you can take an authorized taxi to the first hotel on the list we have provided for you. Private airport transfers can be very costly . If your flight is delayed, they are difficult to reschedule or cancel. With a taxi, you are not charged for waiting time or cancellations.

Useful Links for booking your flights

Orbitz.com (<http://www.orbitz.com/>)

Expedia.com (<http://www.expedia.com/>)

Kayak.com (<http://www.kayak.com/>)



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Local transportation - During the tour we use our own buses. On the way there is often much to see and we stop to stretch our legs or to take a photo in a nice spot. The roads in the Baltic States have improved in recent years, making the travel time reasonable.

Money Matters

A summary of all trip costs can be found on our "Dates & Prices" page. Prices may fluctuate throughout the year depending on currency exchange, gas costs, etc.

Included in price of our Baltics tour package

- Land package (begins & ends at hotel)
- Tour guide (speaks Dutch & English)
- Private bus at our disposal
- Hotel Accommodation with breakfast
- Visit to UNESCO monuments including the center of Riga, Vilnius and Tallinn
- Visit Hill of Crosses
- Visit Gauja National Park

When you book a trip

- \$500 deposit is due upon booking to hold your place
- Payments by charge card or check are accepted
- Balance is due 60 days prior to departure date

While you are traveling

Local currency:	Euros
ATM machines:	Widely available
Credit Cards	Accepted most places
Types of cash accepted:	Euros

Tipping - It is customary to tip for services rendered. The tour leader will organize a tip jar at the beginning of the trip, from which tips to drivers, guides, hotel staff are paid. Depending on the size of the group, each participant will be asked to contribute \$40 to \$50. This does not include a tip for your tour leader. Tipping the tour leader is appreciated and the amount up to your discretion.

** You will find a list of all trip costs in the 'Dates & Prices' section, including your estimated out of pocket costs.



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Excursions

Freedom and choice are important elements of a Djoser trip. In addition to scheduled group activities, wherever possible, you may decide which attractions you wish to visit, and with whom. Unless otherwise indicated, entrance fees are not included in the price, so you have the freedom to make your own choices. One person may prefer to stroll through the market in search of bargains, while someone else may want to relax by the pool, go to a museum, or take a bike ride. Join the guide or break off with others in the group to explore on foot or with the local transport. Some attractions should not be missed, or they are not easily accessible, or are en route to our next overnight location and are therefore built into the program. In the "Dates & Prices" section you will find the estimated out-of-pocket, weekly expenses that have calculated in typical entry fees in addition to meals and other costs.

During our Baltics group tour, the following excursions are included in the program:

- Day 3; Visit to the Hill of Crosses in Lithuania. This hill is in anyone's possession, allowing anyone crosses places. The result is a chaotic series of many different types of crosses. Catholic pilgrims still places crosses, the exact number is not known
- Day 3; Rundale Castle, one of the most photographed castle in the Baltics
- Day 7: Visit to the Turaida castle in the Gaujas National Park. In the 17th century lightning struck the gun powder room, and the castle was partially destroyed

More excursions are possible and can be offered locally by the tour guide, such as an opera visit in Riga or city tours to Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn.

Travel Documents

When you book a trip we will provide you with more details about necessary documents. Passports should be current and valid for at least 6 months beyond your departure date. If a visa is required, you may need extra pages in your passport for your stamps. Check all visa requirements carefully and leave yourself plenty of time to send and receive documents before your trip.

Travel documents needed

Lithuania tourist visa needed - NO Consulate link (<http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/>)

Estonia tourist visa needed -NO Consulate link (<http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/>)

Latvia tourist visa needed - NO Consulate link (<http://www.consulate-los-angeles.com/latvia.html>)

Visa & Passport Expeditor – For an extra fee, you can hire an expediting service to process your visa application. They will look over your paperwork and they can offer a faster return of your visa or passport. We recommend TRAVISA (<http://www.travisa.com/>) .



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Health Issues & Insurance

Health - Check for the Center for Disease Control – Travelers information (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>) for recommendations. Keep in mind that they may recommend an inoculation or medication such as malaria pills, which may be necessary for one specific part of a country but not another, or for a particular season. Shots are expensive. Make sure to get only what is needed. We recommend asking your doctor for a prescription to combat a more serious intestinal disorder.

When you book a trip we will provide you with information regarding the usual recommendations for the region we will visit. You will be responsible to check with your travel clinic or physician to review your plans and to find out the most up-to-date recommendations and needs for your particular situation. Plan to get your inoculations four to six weeks in advance of your trip. Some offices may need to preorder the medicines so call in advance. It is wise to pay careful attention to what you eat. Also, we recommend you bring medicines such as pain-killer and for remedy for intestinal disorders (such as IMMODIUM) Bring a small first aid kit. Tweezers, band-aids, antiseptic cream, insect repellent, salt rehydration tablets. The tour leader will have a first aid kit.

Climate and altitude changes can sometimes cause illness. Be sure to drink plenty of water. Bottled water is readily available. Excessive alcohol intake contributes to dehydration and makes you more vulnerable to illness. Make sure that you get plenty of rest and enough food and drink during the trip.

No vaccinations are recommended for this trip.

South Africa is a modern country with excellent medical amenities. The tap water is drinkable everywhere and restaurants are good and clean. However, it is still advisable to drink bottled water. It is wise to somewhat watch what you eat. We also recommend that you bring a small medical kit include aspirin and anti-intestinal disorders.

Insurance - For peace of mind, we recommend that you procure travel insurance. In the event of an illness or injury, an emergency evacuation can be incredibly expensive and you would want access to the best possible facility. Also, lost baggage or missed flights can mean added expenses. Even events at home may prevent you from taking a trip, such as a lost job or ailing family member. It is important to get travel insurance immediately after booking. Most companies have a brief window (within 10 days of booking) for coverage for a preexisting condition. You will be asked to provide us with travel insurance contact information before your departure.

You are free to choose your own provider. Over the years, we have recommended TRAVELEX. They offer a variety of plans and most importantly, they are responsive. Should you choose to go with TRAVELEX, you will contact them directly and the cost of your coverage will depend on the plan you choose. The cost will be based over the total cost of your trip and flights, and the amount is also subject to your age. Ask about the TRAVEL PLUS plan and the more economical TRAVEL LITE plan.

* Arrange for insurance immediately after booking your trip so that you are covered for any pre-existing



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situation. TRAVELEX (<http://www.travelexinsurance.com>) 1-800-228-9792

Group Composition

Djoser travelers are active, enthusiastic travelers of all ages. Join an international group with travelers from the Netherlands, Belgium and North America, who will be the minority group on these trips. Most of our trips range from a minimum of eight participants to a maximum of 20 or 22. You will find couple and singles on our trips. Feel free to call us if you wish to know the demographic make-up of a particular trips (number of singles and age range).

Minimum group size: 8

Maximum group size: 22

What to expect when traveling with an international group - Djoser, Inc. (the United States office) has been a Baltics tour operator for over 15 years. Djoser, B.V. (the Netherlands office) has been a Baltics tour operator for over 25 years. So together we bring vast experience. Most of our trips are arranged in cooperation with Djoser, B.V. in the Netherlands. Because they cater to the voracious travel appetites of the Dutch, we can offer a vast number of programs around the world with hard-to-find itineraries, with numerous departure dates.

On our Baltics group tour, you will travel with an international group, with most participants from Holland and Belgium. The international make-up of our groups is the attraction for many regular Djoser travelers and adds another cultural element to the trip. Typically, there are only one to five North Americans per group. You will find that almost all of your fellow travelers have an excellent command of English and most are very willing to socialize. It's a great idea to extend an invitation to a few travel mates for coffee or a drink early in the trip. They will appreciate your effort and this is a great way to break the ice. It will be easier for them to test out their English skills in a quiet, one-on-one setting. Group members tend to warm up to one another in a day or two. As with every tour group, compatibility has most to do with individual personalities.

The Dutch are experienced and hearty travelers. We attract travelers of all ages and we enjoy the mix! You will find our participants welcome opportunities for independent explorations in addition to group activities. No matter their age, Djoser travelers expect, and are up to lots of walking, hiking, biking, or whatever comes our way. The Dutch and Belgian travelers will fly as a group from Amsterdam. You will meet the group and tour leader at the hotel where you will begin the land program with the group.

Tour Leaders & Support Staff

Our trips will be guided by an experienced Dutch guide who speaks Dutch and English. He or she will be responsible for the organizational and technical aspects of the trip. He/she coordinates with the



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driver , hotels, and other vendors along the way. The tour leader has extensive travel experience and expertise as well as a comprehensive training.

Our experienced land representatives are situated in the destination country you will visit. We work closely with them and they function as the liaison between our office, the guide, drivers and hotels. They are also available in the case of an emergency and their number will be provided on your emergency contact list.

Climate & Geography

The climate in North-East Europe is one with cold winters and hot summers. The trips take place in the period of April through October. In spring and fall you want to prepare for cool days and cold nights. In summertime temperatures are usually pleasant. Daytime temperatures are in the high sixties and seventies Fahrenheit. Our trips are organized with weather conditions in mind. On our website, we will provide you with a weather summary of the region: Check temperature and rainfall for specific cities on your trip, during your month of travel at [worldweather.org](http://www.worldweather.org) (<http://www.worldweather.org>)