



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



Baltics tour - Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia &
St. Petersburg, 14 days





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Itinerary

- Day 1 Vilnius
- Day 2 Vilnius
- Day 3 Vilnius - Trakai - Kaunas - Nida
- Day 4 Nida
- Day 5 Nida - Riga
- Day 6 Riga
- Day 7 Riga, excursion Gaujas N. P. - Saaremaa
- Day 8 Saaremaa
- Day 9 Saaremaa - Tallinn
- Day 10 Tallinn
- Day 11 Tallinn - St Petersburg
- Day 12 St Petersburg
- Day 13 St Petersburg
- Day 14 St Petersburg



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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 (land begins)

Day 2 Vilnius

Day 3 Vilnius - Trakai - Kaunas - boat to Neringa (Nida)

Day 4 Nida

Day 5 Nida - Riga

The Baltics tour begins in Vilnius, the capital of independent Lithuania since 1990. You can stroll in the old streets of the town, which has a 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 for the Catholic Lithuanians symbolized the revival of national consciousness. In a city tour you can continue past the university complex and several churches. In Vilnius you can visit a KGB Museum. On the way to the coast we drive to Trakai, which is 18 miles southwest of Vilnius. In the village with its wooden houses



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is a magnificent moated castle from the 14th century, which where the first kind of Lithuania was crowned in 1253. We drive to the university city of Kaunas, which in the twenties and thirties was still the nation's capital. In the center of the old town you can find houses from the 15th and 16th centuries.

From Klaipeda we sail for a few minutes by ferry to the Curonian Spit, a unique bird rich area with high white sand dunes. Here you have views of the water on both sides of the headland, which is only three miles wide. You can take beautiful walks or bike rides. In the town of Nida, located on the banks of the Curonian Lagoon, the German writer Thomas Mann had his summer residence, now on display. We cross by ferry to the tip of the headland over to Klaipeda, in the past the playground of German knights, Sweden, Nazi and Soviet troops. The port city, formerly known by its German name Memel, has an old center.

The Baltic countries are known for their deposits of amber or amber, fossilized resin that has imprisoned millions of years old insects. This feature has ensured that the name amber (via the Greek electron) was given to electricity. It is now found in lignite layers. On the market of Klaipeda you can find a wide range of amber.

We continue our drive to a remarkable memorial to victims of all persecutions, that lies along the road to the north. Kryziu Kalnas is a low hill covered with all a multitude of crosses that have been placed there spontaneously.

Latvia

Day 6 Riga

Day 7 Riga excursion Gaujas National Park - Saaremaa

In the Latvian capital Riga, the old town, Vecriga, is largely pedestrianized. The 800-year-old town originated as a trading settlement of German knights. You have a great view from the tower of St. Peter's Church, which in the 17th century would have been the world's tallest tower. Among the numerous monuments and museums are "the three brothers" houses from the 15th and 16th centuries. At Alberta iela you will find a wide range of houses in Jugendstil or Art Nouveau style. Numerous shops, cafes and theaters is testament to the renewed vitality of the area after the Soviet domination. Just outside the city on the shore of the lake Juglas, you can find the anthropological museum, which provides an overview of Latvian architecture, folklore and lifestyle in the region over the centuries. The nearby Jurmala, actually an elongated chain of fishing villages, has traditionally been known as a posh seaside resort and spa. Many villas testify to its rich past. From Riga you can take a local train to the central village Majori.

In the Latvian forests many plant and animal species exist that are extinct elsewhere in Europe. We can see this as we set off for an excursion to the Saaremaa Gaujas National Park, known as the "Latvian Switzerland". Here you can visit the romantically situated Turaida castle.

Estonia



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Day 8 Saaremaa

Day 9 Saaremaa - Tallinn

Day 10 Tallinn

In Estonia we take a ferry from Virtsu for our first stay on the idyllic island of Saaremaa. The capital, Kuressaare is a small quiet town with a castle of the Teutonic Order in the 13th century. Wooden houses give the town a rustic appearance. Cycling is a great way to relax and explore the flat island. The population here has retained its own traditions, songs and costumes. There are heaths and meadows, wooden farmhouses and windmills. Along the way, it is possible to visit a group of nine meteorite craters in Kaali.

The old Hanseatic city of Tallinn in the Gulf of Finland flourished from the 13th to the 16th century when this was a thriving port location in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea. The old center has been well preserved with its Gothic churches protected by high walls. Walking through the streets paved with cobblestones you can easily feel the atmosphere from that bygone time. The newly reopened alley Katariina Kaik, is very special. Now it 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, the seat of the Estonian Parliament. From the original castle only three of the four towers survived; "long Herman", adorned with the national flag, is a clear landmark. Opposite the parliament is the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral with its famous onion domes and mosaics. There has been much debate about the demolition of this symbol of tsarist imperialism.

In downtown, around the town hall square, is the lively part of the old town, with many shops and restaurants. Opposite the station, you can enjoy a drink in Wagon Lits Café, sitting on the uncomfortable benches of austere Soviet trains. Kadriorg Park is located a little over a mile outside the old walled city, a summer palace of Peter the Great, and now the residence of the Estonian president. A little further into the park you will find the half dome where the national singing contest is held and thousands of choirs perform at festivals. Estonians are known as excellent singers. West of the city you can find Rocca al Mare Open Air Museum, where many fine examples can be seen from wooden architecture from the 18th and 19th centuries. On one of the days in Tallinn you can take the ferry to Helsinki. Here you will see how countries bordering the Baltic Sea are linked.

Saint Petersburg

Day 11 Tallinn - St. Petersburg

Day 12 Saint Petersburg

Day 13 Saint Petersburg

Day 14 Saint Petersburg (land ends)

After two nights in Tallinn we drive by bus to St. Petersburg which celebrated its 300th anniversary in 2003. Sankt Peterburg, (the official Russian name), was founded in 1703 on the initiative of Peter the



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Great, who needed a fortress against the Swedes. The homogeneous architecture of many urban palaces with their pastel shades makes it one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, especially after many restorations efforts.

The elegant mixture of Italian baroque and Russian styles are reflected in many palaces. At the broad boulevard, Nevsky Prospekt, you will find wonderful shops and cafes where you can witness the chaos of a metropolis city. This part of the city is intersected with a canal and bordered by splendid palaces where the old aristocracy lived.

On the Neva is the Winter Palace, former residence of the imperial family. Now, together with the outbuildings, it houses one of the most interesting and important art collections in the world's largest museum in the world, the Hermitage. On the other side of the mighty Neva you see the Peter and Paul Fortress, the cradle of the city in 1703. In the church are the 18th and 19th century tsars, in a separate chapel are Nikolai II and his family, buried in 1998. The fort was used as a prison in the tsarist period. From St. Petersburg we say goodbye, as our journey comes to an end.



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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 are newly built or renovated and located within walking distance of the inner cities.

Examples of our usual hotels (subject to change)

Vilnius	Ecotel (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274951-d299014-Reviews-Ecotel_Vilnius-V)
Riga	Hotel TIA (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274967-d284872-Reviews-Hotel_TIA-Ri)
Saaremaa	Hotel Staadioni (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g664641-d2024163-Reviews-Hotel)
Tallinn	City Hotel Portus (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g274958-d506729-Reviews-City_I)
St. Petersburg	Palantin Hotel (http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g298507-d1012236-Reviews-Palanti)

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 is in most hotels from an extensive buffet. You can make your choice for lunch and dinner yourself. In most places we stay there is a wide choice of restaurants, from cheap to luxury. In the big hotels and restaurants including the ordinary European dishes are prepared: 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 be arrive from Amsterdam. The land program will end about 4 hours prior to their scheduled



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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 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 will fly with Lufthansa (2016) – Below is their usual flight schedule (subject to change).

Amsterdam - Frankfurt 08:00 - 09:10
Frankfurt - Vilnius 10:35 - 13:35

St. Petersburg - Frankfurt 16:15 - 18:00
Frankfurt - Amsterdam 20:00 - 21:30

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



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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/>)

Local transportation - During the tour we have our own buses. For each country we use a different bus. On the way we will take opportunities to take a photo or to stretch our legs, or visit a market. The travel day from Tallinn to St. Petersburg is the longest travel day when we cross Russian border. Between Nida and Saaremaa we take the local ferry.

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)
- Guide assistance (guide speaks Dutch & English)
- Local guide
- Transport
- Hotel Accommodation with breakfast
- Visit Sumela Monastery
- Visit Nemrut Dagi

Visit Pamukkale and Ephesus (optional Miletus and Didyma)

When you book a trip

- \$25% of total trip costs (or minimum of \$500 per person) 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



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Latvia, Lithuania & Estonia

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

Russia

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

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.

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:



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- Day 3; Water Castle Trakai, one of the most photographed castles in the Baltics
- Day 5; Visit to the Hill of Crosses in Lithuania. This hill belongs to everyone and anyone can place a cross here. The result is a chaotic series of many every type of crosses
- Day 7; Visit to the Turaida castle in the Gaujas National Park
- Day 8; bus tour to the island of Saaremaa

On the way of our Baltics group tour, our bus stops at a number of places where you will need to pay entry fees:

- Day 9; Visit one of the largest accessible meteorite impact sites in Europe, Saaremaa.

Other excursions can be offered by the local tour guide, for example to attend an opera visit in Riga or St. Petersburg, or biking on the island of Saaremaa, the largest island of Estonia.

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

Latvia - NO Visa needed. Consulate link
(<https://www.passportsandvisas.com/embassy-consulate/latvia>)

Lithuania tourist visa needed - NO [Consulate link \(http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/\)](http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/)

[Estonia tourist visa needed -NO Consulate link \(http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/\)](http://usa.mfa.lt/usa/en/)

[Russia tourist visa needed - YES Consulate link](http://www.russianembassy.org/page/general-visa-information)

[\(http://www.russianembassy.org/page/general-visa-information\)](http://www.russianembassy.org/page/general-visa-information) [Online form \(http://visa.kdmid.ru\)](http://visa.kdmid.ru)

[An invitation letter is required to submit with your RUSSIA visa application. We will procure this for you. The cost will be billed on your invoice. \\$35 subject to change.](#)

[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 TRAVISIA \(http://www.travisa.com/\).](#)

[Health Issues & Insurance](#)

[Health - Check for the Center for Disease Control – Travelers information](#)



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



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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 couples and singles on our trips. Feel free to call us if you wish to know the demographic make-up of a particular trip (number of singles and age range).

Minimum group size: 8

Maximum group size: 20

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



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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

Climate & Geography

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](http://www.worldweather.org))

In North Europe temperate climate prevails. The tours take place in the period from April to October. In spring and autumn you should take into account cool days and cold nights. in the summer the temperature is usually pleasant. The daytime temperature then varies between 68 ° and 77° F.