Finland & Baltic Jewels Expedition

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day 1

Arrive in Helsinki

Welcome to Helsinki! On arrival at the airport, meet & greet and transfer to hotel. Finland's green and lively capital is located at the crossroads of western and eastern culture, and its colorful city center boasts a remarkable array of architectural interests, from Art Nouveau and 1920s classicism to Neo-Renaissance and Byzantine-Russian. Overnight at Helsinki hotel.

City: Helsinki

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 2

Tour Helsinki's Cultural Landmarks, Visit Porvoo

Breakfast at hotel. Morning enjoy the heart of Helsinki sightseeing tour. Visit the city's cultural landmarks and historical monuments, including the Olympic Stadium, the Sibelius Monument (dedicated to Finnish composer Jean Sibelius), Esplanade Park, Uspenski Orthodox Cathedral, and Helsinki Cathedral. Head to Senate Square to discover the oldest part of the city, home to the Government Palace and the University of Helsinki, as well as the green-domed 19th-century Lutheran Cathedral. Continuing to the scenic harbour front, the bustling stalls of Old Market Hall, Finland's oldest indoor market. In the afternoon, travel an hour's journey out of the city to reach Porvoo. Dating back over 800 years, this charming city is known for the red-ochre houses and cobbled streets of its Old Town. In the perfectly preserved center, the charming cafés, boutiques, and Porvoo Cathedral, an iconic church that dates back to the turn of the 14th century. Overnight at Helsinki hotel.

City: Helsinki

Meals: None, No Drink

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day 3

Ferry to Tallinn, Walking Tour of Old Town

Breakfast at hotel. Morning transfer to Helsinki's port for a two-hour ferry journey across the Gulf of Finland to Tallinn. The Estonian capital is home to one of the region's best-preserved medieval centres, also a

modern edge that discover in its lively dining and nightlife scenes. Its waterfront promenades and nearby beaches offer great views of the city and coast and are perfect spots for a romantic stroll at any time of year. Upon arrival, transfer to hotel. Afternoon enjoy the walking tour of the city's charming Old Town. In the warmer months, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is abuzz with visitors and locals hitting the streets and taking advantage of the many shops, galleries, souvenir markets, outdoor cafés, and restaurants. Sightseeing tour will start the Walls of Tallinn (defensive fortifications dating to 1265) and into the heart of Old Town, visit many historical gems, including Toompea Castle, a stately Baroque castle now home to Estonia's parliament; the 13th-century Dome Church (St. Mary's Cathedral); the Russian Revival-style Alexander Nevsky Cathedral; and the Great Guild Hall, which was a guild for merchants in the 14th century and is now the Estonian History Museum. In the evening, get into the historic spirit of things by heading to Town Hall Square in Old Town to enjoy a traditional Estonian meal at a restaurant on your own. Overnight at Tallinn hotel.

City: Tallinn

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 4

Day Trip to Lahemaa National Park

After breakfast, a 45-minute drive east takes you to Lahemaa National Park. Located on the country's north coast, Lahemaa sits on 1,877 square miles (725 sq km) and has many hiking trails that will take you through bogs, forests, and up to the largest natural waterfall in Estonia. There's also incredible biodiversity here, and it's home to many species of birds and animals like wolves, red deer, wild boars, and even lynxes. Lahemaa National Park is considered one of the last unspoiled regions of the Baltic coastline. Enjoy private walking tour of the park; visit Käsmu Village, which sits on a scenic bog surrounded by lakes and streams. Stop by some historic fisherman's villages, and spend some time at Palmse Manor, an opulent 16th-century estate. This is one of the country's most impressive examples of Baroque architecture; the grand setting includes expansive grounds featuring a greenhouse, hedgerows, gardens, a park with gazebos, and a bathhouse overlooking a pond. Return to Tallinn for the evening. Overnight at Tallinn hotel.

City: Tallinn

Meals: None, No Drink

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day 5

Transfer to Tartu via Lake Peipus & Old Believer's Tea Ceremony

After breakfast and check-out, pick for today's drive toward Tartu. Along the way, view skirt the shores of Lake Peipus, the fifth-largest lake in Europe, and stop at the lakeside village of Kolkja to discover the area's unique cultural and religious legacy. Home to one of the largest Russian Orthodox Old Believers communities in Europe, these religious refugees are strict adherents to Eastern Christian Orthodoxy as it was practiced before the Russian reforms of the 17th century. Visit to the Kolkja Museum of Old Believers, a

traditional tea ceremony awaits. Exhibits feature traditional clothes, household items, handicrafts, tools, photos, and other items associated with the Old Believers. These displays cover a long period of history, as the Old Believers have been practicing their religious traditions for more than 1,000 years. After visiting the museum and taking a stroll along the lakeshore, you'll hop back in the car and continue inland a short way to Tartu, a small city in southeastern Estonia with a rich historical legacy and lively, bohemian energy. Check into hotel. Later join the Walking tour of the Old Town, Start with a visit to the Supreme Court of Estonia and the Town Hall, which dates to 1782 and is located in the main square. The city's most famous building, however, is the neoclassical University of Tartu, which dates to 1632 and is the national university of Estonia. Also visit the remnants of the Tartu Dome Church and enjoy a walk along the riverfront. Overnight at Tartu hotel.

City: Tartu

Meals: Bed and Breakfast, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 6

Visit the Estonian National Museum

Breakfast at hotel. Today learn about Estonia's history, folk art, and ethnography with a tour of Tartu's Estonian National Museum. Founded in 1909, the museum centres around the heritage of folklorist Jakob Hurt and preserves the history, life, and traditions of Estonia and its populations, including the Finno-Ugric community and religious minorities. The museum is an important generator and developer of cultural dialogue, linking the past and the future. Enjoy perusing historical relics in religion, fashion, homelife, and economics, as well as holiday celebrations and rural peasant life. Afternoon and evening at leisure to explore the city of Tartu. You can visit more museums, such as KGB Cells Museum or the Estonian Literary Museum. Or you can relax at beach. Overnight at Tartu hotel.

City: Tartu

Meals: Bed and Breakfast, No Drink

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day 7

Transfer to C?sis, Tour the Old Town & Castle

Breakfast at hotel. Travel to the destination is the town of C?sis, a medieval gem and the third-oldest town in the country. During a guided walking tour, you'll experience the 800-year-old history visible in its streets and ancient castle complex. Start with a visit to the charming ruins of its historic castle, learn about the area's rich history, and feel the medieval atmosphere by candlelight. Continue to the evocative Old Town to see highlights such as Roze Square, Princess House, and St. John's Church. Afternoon is free to get settled into your hotel, relax, and explore the town at your leisure. Overnight at Cesis hotel.

City: Cesis

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 8

Transfer to Riga via Sigulda, Turaida & Gauja National Park

Breakfast at hotel. Today's journey toward the Latvian capital takes you through the stunning Gauja National Park, Latvia's largest and oldest national park. Along the way, you'll stop to tour the ruins of Sigulda Castle, built by crusaders in the year 1207, and Turaida Castle, commissioned by the Archbishop of Riga in 1214. Nearby also find the grand Sigulda New Palace, constructed in the 19th century. In the afternoon, continue to Riga, the largest city in the Baltics and Latvia's capital. Overnight at Riga hotel.

City: Riga

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 9

Walking Tour of Riga, Meditative Music at the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum

Breakfast at hotel. Explore the many charms of Riga today and head straight to Old Town for a guided walking tour. Medieval landmarks visit include the 14th-century Riga Castle; the Lutheran Dome Cathedral, which was built in 1211; the 15th-century St. Peter's Church; and the Swedish Gate, a fortification built in 1698 as part of defensive city walls. Visit historical buildings include Three Brothers, and the Large and Small Guild House, the Freedom Monument, There's also the Latvian National Opera, a unique architectural masterpiece that dates to 1863. After the opera house, take a tram ride to the Central Market. In the afternoon, enjoy the visit to the Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum, located in a lovely pine forest next to Juglas Lake. Here a meditative musical experience awaits, with a concert of ancient sounds from the Latvian traditional string instrument known as a kokle. Relax and enjoy the show, then return to Riga for the evening. Overnight at Riga hotel.

City: Riga

Meals: None, No Drink

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day 10

Transfer to Vilnius via Rund?le Palace & the Hill of Crosses

Breakfast at hotel. Morning pick up for the four-hour journey south to the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. Before leaving Latvia, stop for a tour of the exquisite Rund?le Palace. This expansive Baroque complex is situated in the plains of southern Latvia and is a little bit of Versaille in the Baltics. Next, cross into Lithuania to visit one of the country's most enduring and iconic sites—the Hill of Crosses. Located just north of the city of Šiauliai. In the afternoon, continue to the hotel in Vilnius. Evening free at leisure. Overnight at Vilnius hotel.

City: Vilnius

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins

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day 11

Vilnius Walking Tour, Visit Trakai Castle, Traditional Lithuanian Cooking Class

Breakfast at hotel. Morning join the guided walking tour of Old Town, the medieval heart of Vilnius and home to Vilnius Cathedral. Consecrated in 1783 and sitting on the expansive Cathedral Square, stops include Gediminas Tower, the Church of St. Peter and Paul, the 15th-century St. Anne's Church, Vilnius University, and the Gate of Dawn, the city's medieval defensive fortification, which was built around a chapel that remains a major Catholic pilgrimage site in Lithuania. In the afternoon, transfer 30 minutes west of Vilnius to Trakai, Lithuania's medieval capital. Situated on a peninsula on Lake Galv?, this village, home to about 5,000 people, is as much a scenic national park as it is a town. Later return to Vilnius. Overnight at Vilnius hotel.

City: Vilnius

Meals: None, No Drink

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day 12

Depart Vilnius

Sunset over the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius. Your Baltic adventure comes to a close today as you transfer to the airport to catch your departing flight.

Meals: None, No Drink
Time: hours mins
