

# CYCLING TOUR FROM RIGA TO ST.PETERSBURG: LATVIA – ESTONIA – RUSSIA

(Riga – Saaremaa Island – Tallinn – Lahemaa – Tartu – St. Petersburg)

11 days / 10 nights, self-/half guided supported cycle tour (code SG14ru)

	TOUR CODE:	TOUR STARTS - Friday*	TOUR ENDS - Monday:	Price per person in EUR:
	21/SG14-01	June 25	July 5	DBL 1299 SGL 1779
	21/SG14-02	July 9	July 19	DBL 1299 SGL 1779
	21/SG14-03	July 23	August 2	DBL 1299 SGL 1779
	21/SG14-04	August 6	August 16	DBL 1299 SGL 1779
	21/SG14-05	August 20	August 30	DBL 1299 SGL 1779
* This tour is available on any other dates May-September with minimum 6 people.				

Explore the Baltic coast and the National Parks of Latvia and Estonia on very scenic routes. The tour includes the largest and most beautiful Estonian island of Saaremaa, two capital cities – Riga and Tallinn, and Saint Petersburg, also known as the ‘Cultural Capital of Russia’. Old towns of both capital cities and historical centre of St. Petersburg are designated by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. Start the tour in Riga, travel on to Estonia and further to Russia in the north, experience a wide variety of towns, villages and countryside for an excellent introduction to the very distinct characters of these quite different countries.



The tour begins in Riga where you get your tour maps with detailed program and route description. Next day your rental bicycles will be ready for your first ride to Jurmala Resort. This trip is a half-guided tour ie during the whole trip, except Jurmala and the last 2 days in St. Petersburg, our driver with a minibus and bike trailer is with you and you can take part in walking city tours (Riga, Tallinn & St. Petersburg) lead by professional guides. Our driver will transport your luggage every day to the next hotel. If you have a breakdown, then our driver will take care of everything for you. If you have any problems – contact the driver or our office.

*Please note that since 2019, Leningrad Region of Russia with St. Petersburg as the regional centre is easily accessible by citizens of 53 countries who can apply on-line for free of charge e-Visa (more information and e-Visa application form [here](#)).*

**Cycling Conditions:** We rate this trip as Moderate one. Daily biking routes mainly on low traffic roads and cycle paths with a few stretches on more busy roads like Day 3 (Ragana-Sigulda). Cycling routes range from 20 to 57 km (13-36 miles) each day with a possibility for faster riders to cycle more kilometres on some days like Day 2 (Jurmala Resort), Day 5 (Saaremaa Island), Day 7 (Lahemaa national park) and Day 8 (cycling longer route towards Tartu). The terrain is varied and rolling with a few gradual hills on some riding days (a few steep ups and downs in the Gauja River valley and dead flat most of the tour). The tour covers two Baltic States – Latvia & Estonia, and St. Petersburg in Russia, and therefore it includes a few long minibus transfers between the most interesting cycling destinations, the Baltic capital cities and St. Petersburg. Our walking sightseeing tours in the old towns of the Baltic capital cities, Riga and Tallinn, are along cobbled streets.

**Arrival / departure airports:** Riga (Latvia) / Saint Petersburg (Russia)

## TOUR ITINERARY

(cycling ~297 km/~186 miles, by coach/minibus ~1215 km /759 mi., by boat ~12 km/7 mi.)

### Day 1 Friday (Latvia): Riga

Arrive in Riga. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included) where you get your tour maps with detailed program and route description. Check-in at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Riga; HOTEL: **MONIKA CENTRUM** \*\*\*\* or similar

### Day 2 Saturday (Latvia): RIGA & JURMALA Seaside resort (cycling ~30 km/19 miles, by train ~25 km)

Breakfast followed by a meeting at the hotel with our representative and bicycle collection. Then you may take part in a guided tour of Riga Old Town, a medieval Hanseatic town famous for its Art Nouveau buildings. In the afternoon free time in Riga or cycling on a bicycle path to Jurmala, a renowned Latvian seaside resort well known for its long, white, sand beaches, mineral waters and mud with healing properties. We recommend that you take the opportunity to bath in the sea and try cycling along the beach – its well worth it! In the evening take a local train back to Riga (30 min; not included).

OVERNIGHT: Riga; HOTEL: **MONIKA CENTRUM** \*\*\*\* or similar

### Day 3 Sunday (Latvia): Riga & GAUJA National Park (cycling ~40 km/25 miles, by minibus ~50 km)

Transfer to Saulkrasti, where you may visit the Latvian bicycle museum. Start your bike ride to Sigulda, the most popular resort in Latvia. Cycling through Gauja National Park, en route enjoy spectacular views of Gauja River valley with Gutmana Cave, Turaida Castle and the oldest Latvian Church, Krimulda, built in 1205. Arrive in Sigulda, check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Sigulda

HOTEL: **SIGULDA** \*\*\* or similar

### Day 4 Monday (Latvia-Estonia): SIGULDA-SAAREMAA (cycling ~38 km/24 miles, by minibus ~330 km, by ferry 6 km)

Morning transfer to the largest Estonian island of Saaremaa which has preserved all that is best about old Estonia. With little traffic and flat roads Saaremaa provides the perfect rural setting for cycling. Travel on picturesque roads along the Baltic Sea Coast to the village of Angla where the iconic windmills are located. Transfer to Mändjala or Kuressaare, check into the hotel for 2 overnight stays at the seaside, optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Mändjala or Kuressaare

HOTEL: **SAAREMAA** \*\*\* or similar

### Day 5 Tuesday (Estonia): SAAREMAA ISLAND (cycling ~46 km/29 miles, by minibus ~40 km)

Enjoy a day ride across Saaremaa Island's wild beauty – Sorve Peninsula famous for its lighthouse. You may finish the day with a visit to Kuressaare, the capital of Saaremaa, a home to one of the finest preserved medieval Episcopal Castles in the Baltics, dating from 13thC. Optional dinner at the hotel or city restaurant in Kuressaare.

OVERNIGHT: Mändjala or Kuressaare

HOTEL: **SAAREMAA\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 6 Wednesday (Estonia): SAAREMAA & TALLINN (cycling ~30 km/19 miles or ~40 km/25 miles, by minibus ~210 km, by ferry 6 km)**

Take a morning ride to the Kaali meteorite crater which is listed on the world's giant craters list and it is the rarest nature wonder in Estonia. En route stop in Kuressaare, the capital of Saaremaa. Transfer by bus to Tallinn. In the afternoon arrive in Tallinn, check-in at the hotel followed by a guided tour of Tallinn Old Town.

OVERNIGHT: Tallinn

HOTEL: **HESTIA ILMARINE\*\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 7 Thursday (Estonia): National Park Lahemaa, Estonia (cycling ~53 km/33 miles, by minibus ~90 km)**

After a short minibus transfer go for a circular bicycle ride through National Park Lahemaa which is one of the last unspoiled regions of the Baltic coast. The National park is a nature lover's paradise. There are dense woods, marshes, lakes and waterfalls to discover. If you prefer wildlife to landscape, you can see moose, wild boars and over 220 bird species. Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Sagadi; HOTEL: **SAGADI\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 8 Friday (Estonia): Along the Russian border & Lake Peipsi to TARTU, Estonia (cycling ~50 km/31 miles, by minibus ~160 km)**

Morning transfer by bus to Mustvee where you'll begin a pleasant bicycle trip along Peipsi Lake shore to Varnja. Peipsi is 4th largest lake in Europe, divided in two by the Russian border. En route, you'll pass many fishing villages. You reach your hotel after a bus transfer to Tartu, a famous, historic university town (the university was founded in 1632). Check-in and optional dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Tartu; HOTEL: **DORPAT\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 9 Saturday (Estonia-Russia): Transfer from Tartu to St. Petersburg (no cycling, by minibus ~335 km)**

Morning transfer by bus to Saint Petersburg, also known as the "Cultural Capital of Russia". It houses hundreds of museums, including the world's largest museum, the Hermitage, the world's top ballet and the former elegant winter and summer palaces of the Russian Emperors. En route you may stop at Puhtitsa Dormition Convent (Kuremäe Convent) located in the centre of Kuremäe, was established in 1891, and is the only functioning Russian Orthodox nunnery in Estonia. Check-in at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Saint Petersburg; HOTEL: **CATHERINE ART PALACE\*\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 10 Sunday (Russia): SAINT PETERSBURG - the 'Venice of the North'**

Breakfast at the hotel followed by a guided walking city tour to see the famous Nevsky Prospect, the main street of the City, the Kazan Cathedral, the Admiralty with its gilded top, the largest Church in St. Petersburg – the Blood Church and stop by the ensembles of Palace Sq. with Winter Palace (Hermitage) and Alexander Column, Peter and Paul's Fortress, etc. (entrances not included). Afternoon free on your own (it's possible to go visiting the Hermitage museum or go for a boat trip in Neva River and canals or go by speed boat to explore one of St. Petersburg suburbs – Peterhof, where famous summer residence of the Russian tsars is located, etc.)

OVERNIGHT: Saint Petersburg; HOTEL: **CATHERINE ART PALACE\*\*\*\*** or similar

**Day 11 Monday (Russia): Tour ends in SAINT PETERSBURG**

Individual departure after breakfast. You can extend your stay in Russia; please ask for details.

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### THE TOUR INCLUDES:

- 10 nights stay in 3-4\* hotels, including all taxes
- Breakfast daily
- Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned minibus
- Luggage transport as per itinerary
- Guided tours in Riga, Tallinn and Saint Petersburg (any entrance fees are payable individually)
- A return ferry ticket to Saaremaa Island
- Official invitation for Russian visa (since 2019, citizens of 53 countries can apply for eVisa to Leningrad District / St. Petersburg issued within 4 calendar days, including week-ends and bank holidays. The only requirement is to have a travel insurance valid for Russia!)
- Emergency contact numbers for our English or German speaking representatives
- Individual information package (city guides, maps, programme and route description)
- GPS Tracks

### THE TOUR DOESN'T INCLUDE:

- Arrival and departure transfers
- Lunches and dinners
- Bicycle rent
- Entrance fees
- Russian visa
- Tips

### OPTIONAL EXTRAS

#### A. TRANSFERS:

- Arrival or departure transfer by car for a party up to 3 people - 35 EUR per transfer
- Arrival or departure transfer by minibus for a party up to 7 people - 65 EUR per transfer

#### B. RENT (Day 2-8)

- Rental of trekking bicycle (*VDV*) with 24-speed Shimano derailleur gears & free-wheel, all supplied with a waterproof back pannier + handlebar bag with a plastic cover for GPS/smartphone (*Ortlieb*) and tachometer (1 x booking) – 79 EUR per person (Day 2-8)
- Rental of E-bike/Pedelec (*VDV, Kalkhoff*) with Bosch driving system, 8-speed Shimano Nexus hub gears & back-pedal break or free wheel, equipped with waterproof back pannier + handlebar bag with a plastic cover for GPS/smartphone (*Ortlieb*) – 219 EUR per person (Day 2-8)
- Rental of a helmet (please send your head size in centimetres or helmet size: S, M, L, XL) – 10 EUR per person

#### C. MEALS:

- 5 x 3-course dinners package at the hotels excluding Riga, Tallinn & St. Petersburg – 124 EUR per person

#### D. PRE/POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION:

##### Hotel in Riga (Latvia) **MONIKA CENTRUM \*\*\*\* or similar**

SGL 89 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

DBL 99 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

##### Hotel in St. Petersburg (Russia) **CATHERINE ART PALACE\*\*\*\* or similar**

SGL/DBL 165 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

Minimum group size on fixed departure dates – 2 people, any other dates May-September – 6 people.