

THE COMMONWEALTH GUIDED CYCLING TOUR: LITHUANIA – POLAND (ANOTHER COMMONWEALTH...)

Vilnius – Trakai – Druskininkai Spa Resort – Dzūkija, Wigry & Biebrza National Parks – Suwalki – Augustow – Warsaw

9 days guided small group bike tour from Vilnius to Warsaw (code G6)

	TOUR CODE:	Language *	tour starts (Friday):**	tour ends (Saturday):	Price per person in EUR:
	24/G6-1	EN	July 12	July 20	DBL 1499 SGL 1769
	24/G6-2	EN	August 16	August 24	DBL 1499 SGL 1769
	24/G6-3	EN	September 6	September 14	DBL 1499 SGL 1769
<p><i>* Language of tour guide/-es: EN – English speaker, DE – German speaker</i> <i>** This tour is available on any other dates May-September with min 12 people</i></p>					

Explore a borderland of Lithuania and Poland which is the land of gentle hills, sandy plains, vast primeval forests, crystal clear lakes and deep river valleys. The tour starts in the Lithuanian capital city Vilnius and finishes in the Polish capital city Warsaw, both cities famous for their Old towns designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. The tour program also includes Druskininkai Spa Resort and Dzūkija National Park in Lithuania, cycling around Suwalki Lakeland with Wigry and Biebrza National Parks in Poland. Experience a wide variety of towns, villages and countryside for an excellent introduction to the very distinct characters of these two different countries which had a common history known as the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16-18th C!



Arrival / departure airports: arrive in Vilnius (Lithuania) and depart from Warsaw (Poland)

Cycling grade and conditions: We rate this trip Easy to moderate. Daily biking routes mainly on low traffic roads and cycle paths range from 32 to 57 km (20-36 miles) each day with a possibility to do more kilometres while cycling around Druskininkai Resort (Day 3-4) and Wigry Lake (Day 6). The terrain is dead flat most of the tour except a few stretches on rolling roads with some gradual hills in Lithuania (around Trakai and the route to Druskininkai) and Poland (Suwalki Lakeland and around Wigry Lake).

ITINERARY (cycling ~321 km / 200 miles, by minibus 503 km/314 miles)

Day 1 Friday (Lithuania): VILNIUS

Arrive in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania for more than 600 years. Individual transfer to the hotel (not included) and welcome meeting at the hotel with tour guide. Check-in at the hotel for 2 overnight stays.

OVERNIGHT: Vilnius; HOTEL: **COMFORT HOTEL LT** *** or similar

Day 2 Saturday (Lithuania): VILNIUS & TRAKAI (cycling ~23 km/14 miles, by minibus ~55 km)

After breakfast a guided tour of Vilnius Old Town. Afternoon trip to Trakai, the former capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Start your first cycle ride on gentle hills around Galvė lake. En route we'll stop in Trakai where you may visit the 14thC island castle built on a small island in Lake Galvė.

OVERNIGHT: Vilnius; HOTEL: **COMFORT HOTEL LT** *** or similar

Day 3 Sunday (Lithuania): Along the Nemunas River to DRUSKININKAI Resort (cycling ~32 km/20 miles or 48 km/30 miles, by minibus ~100 km)

Transfer by minibus to Merkinė. Cycle ride to Druskininkai which is one of the best climatic and wellness springs resorts in Europe. Today's cycle route goes via Liškiava famous for its 17-18thC Dominican monastery ensemble on the Nemunas River bank. Arrive in Druskininkai, check into the hotel for 2 overnight stays. Afternoon free in the resort or going for a circular ride in the woods. Dinner at the hotel (included).

OVERNIGHT: Druskininkai; HOTEL: **REGINA** *** or similar

Day 4 Monday (Lithuania): DZŪKIJA NATIONAL PARK by bike (cycling ~52 km/33 miles, by minibus ~55 km)

Morning transfer to Dzūkija National Park, the largest park in Lithuania overgrown with pine forests (90% of the territory) and one of 13 wild PAN parks in Europe. Here begins our cycle route through the woods and ethnographical villages. Afternoon trip to Grūtas Park, which has a unique distinction of being the place where all unwanted statues of Lenin were taken after Lithuania regained its independence from the Soviet Union.

OVERNIGHT: Druskininkai; HOTEL: **REGINA** *** or similar

Day 5 Tuesday (Lithuania-Poland): SUWALKI LAKELAND & TOWN (cycling ~55 km/34 miles, by coach ~85 km)

Morning bus transfer to Poland. After crossing the border we start cycling on rolling hills with picturesque views to beautiful lakes and Polish countryside. Wigry National park is our destination. En route we visit Suwałki, the largest town and the capital of the historical Suwałki region. Check into the hotel for 2 overnight stays. Dinner at the hotel (included). OVERNIGHT: Wigry National Park; HOTEL: **Nad Wigrami** *** or similar

Day 6 Wednesday (Poland): WIGRY NATIONAL PARK (cycling ~47 km/29 miles)

Circular bike tour on marked trails around Wigry Lake which is the largest with 15 islands, one of the deepest (73 m) and most beautiful lakes in Podlasie region. En route explore a former monastery, built by the death-obsessed Camaldolese monks in 17thC. The whole complex, complete with a church and 17 hermitages, is spectacularly located on a peninsula in the lake. OVERNIGHT: Wigry National Park; HOTEL: **Nad Wigrami** *** or similar

Day 7 Thursday (Poland): AUGUSTOW & BIEBRZA NATIONAL PARK (cycling ~57 km/36 miles, by coach ~28 km)

Short transfer to Augustow, a small but appealing town, the gateway to the Suwałki region at the Netta River. Today we cycle along the GreenVelo route to Biebrza National Park which protects vast and relatively untouched fenlands with a unique variety of plants, rare wetland birds and mammals such as Elk and Beaver. Arrive in Goniadz, check-in and dinner at the hotel (included).

OVERNIGHT: Goniadz; HOTEL: **BARTLOWZINA** *** or similar

Day 8 Friday (Poland) GONIADZ – WARSAW (cycling ~39 km/24 miles, by coach ~180 km)

Morning is dedicated for the final cycling ride along the Royal Route (Polish: Trakt Królewski) through Biebrza National Park and then transfer by bus to Warsaw, capital of Poland. Check-in at the hotel followed by a guided tour of Warsaw Old Town. Dinner in local restaurant (included).

OVERNIGHT: Warsaw; HOTEL: **METROPOL** *** or similar

Day 9 Saturday (Poland): Warsaw

Breakfast at the hotel. End of the tour.

THE TOUR INCLUDES:

- 8 nights stay in hotels, including all taxes
- Breakfast daily
- 4 x dinners (3 courses; 1x Druskininkai, 1x Wigry, 1x Goniadz, 1x Warsaw)
- Welcome meeting with a glass of beer or wine
- Mineral water at your disposal on cycling days
- English speaking guide escort on days 2-8
- Rent of trekking bicycle with waterproof pannier (+ helmet on request)
- Transfers as per itinerary by air-conditioned mini/-bus
- Luggage transport as per itinerary
- Excursions as shown in itinerary
- Entrance to Grūtas Park of Soviet Sculptures, Wigry Monastery
- Individual information package (city guides, maps and program)

THE TOUR DOESN'T INCLUDE:

- Arrival and departure transfers
- Lunches and 4 dinners
- Tips

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

A. TRANSFERS FROM/TO AIRPORT:

- Arrival transfer from Vilnius Airport by car for 1-3 people - 39 EUR per transfer
- Arrival transfer from Vilnius Airport by minibus for 4-7 people - 65 EUR per transfer
- Departure transfer to Warsaw Chopin Airport by car for 1-3 people - 49 EUR per transfer
- Departure transfer to Warsaw Chopin Airport by minibus for 4-7 people - 65 EUR per transfer
- Departure transfer to Warsaw Modlin Airport by car for 1-3 people - 115 EUR per transfer
- Departure transfer to Warsaw Modlin Airport by minibus for 4-7 people - 149 EUR per transfer

B. RENT

- supplement for an E-bike/Pedelec (Bosch driving system) with a waterproof pannier – 155 EUR per person

C. PRE/POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel in Vilnius COMFORT HOTEL LT * or similar**

SGL 85 EUR per room per night, including breakfast and city tax

DBL 95 EUR per room per night, including breakfast and city tax

Hotel in Warsaw METROPOL* or similar**

SGL 99 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

DBL 110 EUR per room per night, including breakfast

NOTES

- Discount for extra bed in double/twin room – 15 %
- Minimum group size:
 - 6 people (3 x fixed departures)
 - 12 people (any other date May-September on request)
- Maximum group size – 15 people with one guide, 21 people with two guides!
- Language of cycling tour guide/-s (for a group from 8 people) or driver/guide (group up to 7 people):
 - DE** - German speaker tour guide or driver/guide,
 - EN** - English speaker tour guide or driver/guide,