

ENG

Discover! Explore! Experience!

CRAFT SKILLS AND TRADITIONS



Latvia | Lithuania | Belarus





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Discover, explore and experience craft skills and traditions in Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus!

The tourism route provides the opportunity to visit craft tourism destinations in Zemgale Region, Nereta Municipality (LV), Vilnius and Rokiškis District (LT), as well as Polotsk and its surroundings (BLR), where visitors are also encouraged to participate.



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Everyone will be able to learn traditional Latvian and Lithuanian craft skills in weaving, leather processing, pottery, ceramics, felting, woodcarving, candle casting, straw weaving, bread baking and wine making. At some sites, visitors will be able to enjoy the culinary heritage of different nations, for example, to taste traditional Tatar dumplings, learn about Lithuanian palm weaving traditions and make a toy of their own. Belarusians, in turn, will share their skills in cutting paper, making carpets, belts and amulet dolls.

When visiting this tourism route, one will not only be able to get an idea of the various Latvian, Lithuanian and Belarusian traditional craft skills and knowledge accumulated over generations, but also feel like a craftsman and make small but unique souvenirs with one's own hands.

Discover places and people who cherish, strengthen and carry on the ancient crafts and traditions!

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Symbols

-  Prior registration required for visiting all sightseeing destinations!
-  Tourist Information Centre/Point/Provider nearest to each object.

CITY AND DISTRICT OF POLOTSK



Welcome to Belarus' oldest city! Standing on the River Dvina, Polotsk has been known as a major Eastern European centre of crafts and trade since 862. The city upholds its centuries-old original traditions of crafts and offers master classes that introduce its visitors to the art of making a woven belt, a doll to serve as a protective charm, a painted carpet and much more.



Polotsk Tourist Information Centre

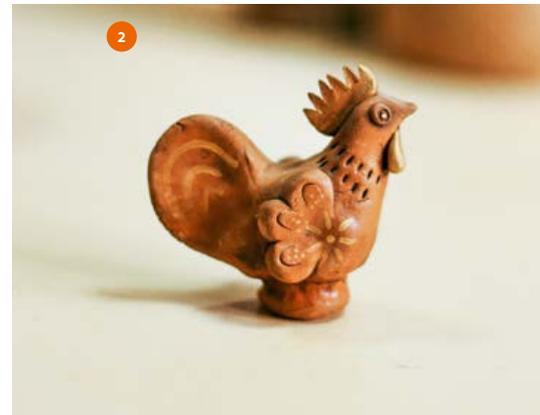
A lot of traditional crafts are still practised nowadays. Visitors can get a good idea of some of them at special master classes. Traditional Belarusian culture perceives a belt as a powerful charm that guards against misfortune and evil spirits.



It is with good reason that this item plays an important role in Belarusian family and calendar rituals. The master class will teach visitors the basic principles of weaving a belt on pieces of wood. Those who attend will weave a protective belt for themselves or their loved ones and learn how Belarusian national mentality is remarkably represented in symbolic motifs. In the late

XIX and early XX c. an openwork pattern cut in a sheet of white, black or colour paper could be found in many Belarusian houses. At present one can make paper serviettes and snowflakes, colourful rosettes, ornaments to hang on the walls, and lace curtains easily with one's own hands, too. Belarusian master craftsmen were highly skilled also in making stucco. Closely connected with decorating houses of worship and circular buildings, this type of art emerged in the Early Middle Ages. In Belarus stucco moulding was at its height in the late XVII and early XVIII c. Plaster was soaked in special composites, which made it especially strong. Moulded plaster was easy to paint, in order to imitate more expensive materials. Apart from this information, much more can be learnt from the master craftsman, who will also instruct how to make a souvenir that will bring back happy memories of old Polotsk.

- 📍 8 Skaryna Ave, Polotsk, Viciebsk Region, The Republic of Belarus
55.485158, 28.766435
- 📞 www.polotsk-turizm.com
+375 214466949





Polotsk District Centre of Crafts and National Culture

The Polotsk Centre of Crafts will introduce visitors to traditional pottery. It is one of the oldest crafts on the lands of what is now Belarus. Supervised by a master craftsman, visitors will be able to make small ceramics or souvenirs shaped as toys or various symbols. One can also get an



insight into the specific methods of making painted carpets, which depict both scenes of everyday life and a fantasy world of fairy tales and legends. This tradition of popular painting flourished in the west of Viciebsk Region between the 1920s and the 1960s. Visitors can make a small painted carpet with their own hands.

One can also get an idea of the local traditions of making dolls to serve as protective charms. The Slavs used them to guard their houses against misfortune. Every visitor will be able to create their own protective charm.

📍 27 Nižnie-Pakroŭskaja St, Polotsk, Viciebsk Region, The Republic of Belarus
55.484285, 28.768005

🌐 www.polotsk-turizm.com
+375 214466949



🌐 www.polotsk-turizm.com



LITHUANIA

VILNIUS DISTRICT

Vilnius District can take visitors to the heart of tradition and cuisine of different nations. For many centuries, representatives of many nations formed the unique originality of the location and its traditions. Visitors can recharge their batteries while learning about candle making, straw weaving, wool felting and ceramic craftsmanship, smell and taste traditional Tatar dumplings, as well as make a pumpkin pie with their own hands.

Also visitors will discover the best palm-weaving traditions which were formed in Vilnius Region. Such palms are particularly frequently made in a few villages and transferred from generation to generation of women. Learn all the mentioned crafts during the visit!



Forty Tatars Village

The rural Tatar community, which is the oldest ethnic group living in Lithuania, having settled in the country when it was the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the XIV c., offers several culinary educational programmes through the culinary heritage of the Tatars and by revealing the distinctiveness of national minorities living in Lithuania. *Čeburekai*, *šimtalapiai*, *šurpa* soup, *koldūnai*, *plovos* and *balandėliai* – all of these are traditional Tatar dishes. These foods had a severe impact on forming Lithuanian culinary heritage. Here each visitor can apply for a master class with experienced craftsmen and learn how to make authentic Tatar dumplings, poppy seed cake, halva, sweet crust, pumpkin pie or jam with their own hands.

📍 9 Vytauto St, Fourty Tatars Village, Vilnius District, Lithuania
54.561440, 25.169833

🌐 www.fortytatarsvillage.lt
+370 67600250



Soap Farm

A small family-run business of two traditional Lithuanian hand craftsmen – soap makers. Since 2009 these products have been recognised as part of Lithuanian national heritage.



In the farm's fields bloom various wild plants such as wild roses, marigold, camomile, mint, sage and lavender. All these plants are turned into flower waters, herbal oil extracts and soaps. Essential oils in the saponification process do not reach

a high temperature, which is why they still keep nourishing the skin. Only natural materials are used in the soap making process and soaps are only coloured with flower petals and plant seeds. For those who want to try to make it themselves, this is the best opportunity!

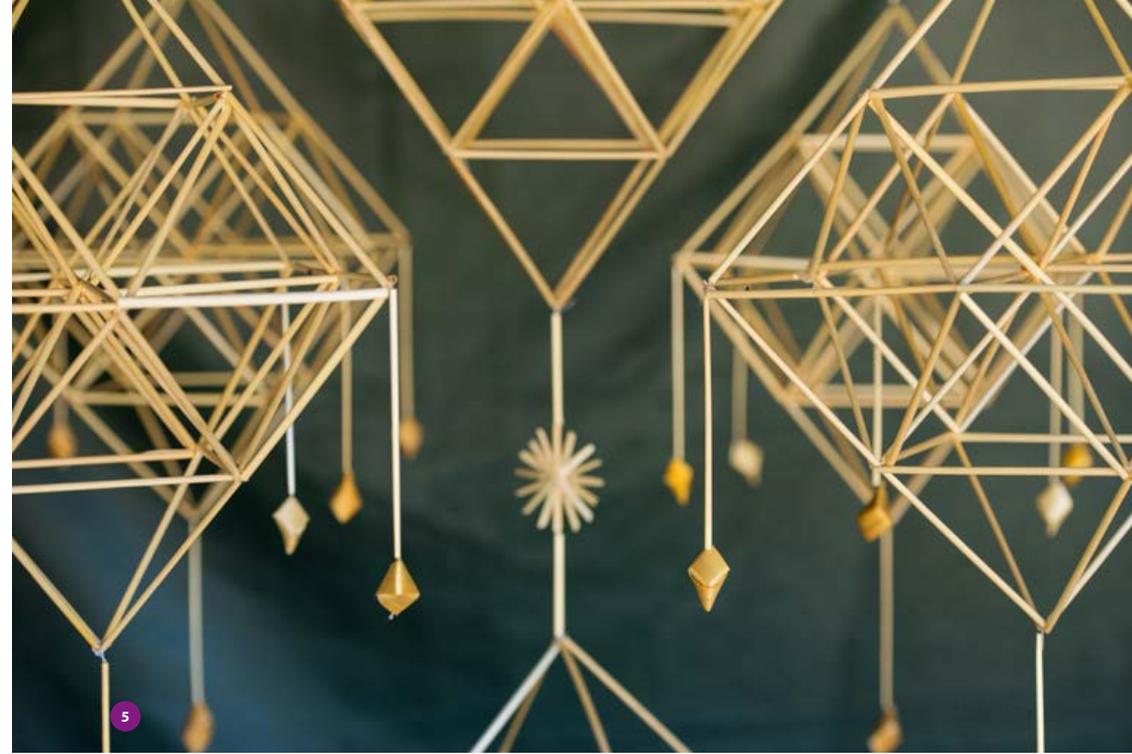
- 📍 1 Staikiškių Village, Vilnius District, Lithuania 54.821981, 25.096542
- 🏠 www.muiloukis.lt +370 68720501



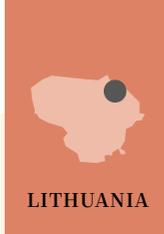
Centre of Traditional Crafts at Houvalt Manor

In the centre, folk artists and local folklore Scholars, as well as craftsmen with certificates of national heritage of Lithuania offer visitors various educational activities. A team of experts consisting of a woodcarver, a paper cutting expert, a soap maker and a carpenter willingly share their knowledge in the field of their crafts by organising master classes where any visitor can try to learn. Visitors are also invited to learn about candle making, straw weaving, wool felting and ceramic craftsmanship or learn the art of Lithuanian palm weaving, exclusively practised in and characteristic of Vilnius Region.

- 📍 4 Algirdo St, Maišiagala, Vilnius District, Lithuania 54.867074, 25.062340
- 🏠 www.vrtic.lt +370 67290225



ROKIŠKIS DISTRICT



Rokiškis District is unique not only because of its rich history and legacy of the Selonians, but also because of its cherished old crafts and traditions. Visitors may encounter craftsmen of various fields. They share their experience eagerly, and the products of these weavers, woodcarvers, wool-felt makers, wicker-makers, cutting-makers, bakers, or wine-makers are certified as national heritage. The craftsmen of Rokiškis District astonish their fellow countrymen and visitors with their exceptional works and wares.

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Dusetos Craft Centre

Woodcarver Erikas Čypas is a craftsman of certified traditional products of Lithuanian national heritage, who fosters old crafts such as toy-making and vat-making, and has been carving for more than 30 years.



Mr Čypas makes unitary wood carvings and organises educational programmes for people, who want to learn to carve in the craft centre that he has established. Visitors are invited to attend the museum, are able to buy original works of the woodcarver and take part in the educational programme "Secrets of the Wood", where

they can learn to carve a bird or a small tub, a scoop, and decorate their works with old Lithuanian symbols and ancient signs: grass-snakes, suns and trees of life.

📍 1 K. Būgos St, Dusetos, Zarasai District, Lithuania
55.74733, 25.840215
🌐 www.visitzarasai.lt
☎ +370 61026296

7

Salos Manor Craft Workshop

The educational programmes of wicker making, decoration of wooden toys, carving of rattles and spoons, clay moulding and throwing are organised in the craft workshop opened in the house of Salos Manor. Visitors are invited to get familiar with old crafts – to spend their leisure time creatively, to acquire personal experience, and to leave not only with own-made items but also with the joy experienced by creating. Besides, visitors may walk around the old park of Salos Manor on the island of Lake Dviragis.

📍 13 Kaštonų St, Salos Village, Kamajai Eldership, Rokiškis District, Lithuania
55.811849, 25.367927
🌐 www.rokiskiotic.lt
☎ +370 61000610

8

Rokiškis Folk Art Gallery

The gallery is located in the very centre of Rokiškis Town, in the historical part that has been recognised as urban heritage. It has a spacious exhibition hall and a place for educational activities, where folk artists of Rokiškis District organise educational programmes intended to popularise crafts and preserve the continuity of ethnic traditions. Visitors of various age groups will enjoy the educational activities – "Weaving", "Wool-Felt Making", "Secrets of the Tree" and others – and will learn how to make a felt toy or cap, weave a bookmark, carve a wooden spoon or some other carving. Besides, visitors may buy the works created by Rokiškis folk artists here.

📍 8 Nepriklausomybės Sq., Rokiškis, Lithuania
55.964674, 25.587066
🌐 www.rokiskiotautodaile.lt
☎ +370 68951279



🌐 www.rokiskiotic.lt

8



ZEMGALE REGION



LATVIA

In Zemgale, which is rich in ancient crafts and trades, fertile plains thrive with places and people who know and encourage others to adopt traditional craft skills such as weaving, leather processing, pottery and baking, in a way that proper landlords and those taking care of the land should know. It is a great opportunity, when visiting these tourism route objects, to not only get an idea of various Latvian traditional craft skills and knowledge accumulated over generations, but also feel like a craftsman, producing a unique souvenir from Zemgale with one's own hands.

9

Story of the Black Pot

Lovers of ceramic art, crafts and skills have the opportunity to get acquainted with the "Story of the Black Pot" at the guest house "Baltā māja", where visitors may watch and participate in the production of their own ceramic objects. After drying, the created dishes are polished with glass,

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metal or a special stone; then the works are put in a kiln at a temperature of above 1000 degrees to achieve a miraculous transformation from red clay to black. Visitors also have the opportunity to create works with the gluing technique, instead of the usual one on a lathe. Almost every work starts with the creation of a small bowl, but further, new layers of clay are added one by one. Visitors may see the workshop and the kiln, buy works and see attractive exhibitions.

📍 "Baltā māja", Pilsrundāle, Rundāle Parish, Rundāle Municipality, Latvia
56.416103, 24.030190
🏠 www.visit.bauska.lv
+371 29685191

10

Ceramic studio "Laima Ceramics"

Laima Grigone has created an open ceramics workshop at her childhood home. Here, the artist prepares Latvian earthenware, which is burnt in a traditional smoked wood kiln, as well as porcelain dishes and stoneware. The artist offers excursions and creative classes for visitors – making and decorating dishes with



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📍 www.visit.bauska.lv

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patterns and wooden stamps of their choice (with Latvian and Indian symbols). There is also a master class on turning, crafting plaster cast bracelets, earrings and rolled dishes, a graffiti lesson – decorating porcelain dishes with clay slip (engobe), on which one can make a detailed carving with a needle. Individual master classes are also available, where visitors may make an object from an original idea of their own.

- 📍 "Urštēni", Svitene Parish, Rundāle Municipality, Latvia
56.405860, 23.959154
- 🌐 www.laimaceramics.com
+371 28338711



11

Tērvete Bakery

Baker Jānis Kurpnieks, with a diploma of the "Latvian Chamber of Crafts" in his pocket, has 20 years of experience in baking bread. In his own small bakery, the owner tries to combine the old traditions of bread baking with new knowledge and skills. The bakery offers more than 12 types of bread made

from its own recipes. The bakery organises tours with the opportunity to taste and buy fresh bread, broaden one's knowledge of the secrets of baking, as well as learn about Latvian folk wisdoms of breadmaking.

- 📍 "Straumes", Tērvete Parish, Tērvete Municipality, Latvia
56.447987, 23.389050
- 🌐 www.facebook.com/tervetesmaize
+ 371 29967553

12

Folk Studio of Applied Arts "Bēne"

The studio preserves Latvian culture through weaving skills that everyone is encouraged to learn. In the studio national skirts, woven scarves, belts, scarves, as well as other beautiful things are made and can be discovered and purchased right here. Visitors may watch and participate in classes led by professional weavers. Here, the profession of weaving of Latvian ancestors seems reborn, because the activity takes place on real looms. During the visit, one can learn everything about the typical Zemgale Region folk costume, the nuances of its making and wearing, as well as to explore the patterns of ancient fabric patterns, their meaning and contemporary applications.

- 📍 8 Stacijas St, Bēne Parish, Auce Municipality, Latvia
56.482059, 23.067792
- 🌐 www.auce.lv
+371 26201427

13

Auce Craft House

The craft house has a studio where folk costumes, woven national scarves, linen towels, tablecloths, woollen blankets and various rugs are made. One can see ready-made products and have a possibility



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- 🌐 www.tervetesnovads.lv
www.auce.lv

to buy them. The studio cultivates and keeps alive the knowledge and skills of this ancient craft, strengthening the sense of belonging to Latvian roots, which has been passed down from ancestors through weaving over many generations. The helpful forewomen "do not hide the candle under the dowry" and during the process of work they gladly share the knowledge they have accumulated over the years, and also allow visitors to observe and participate.

- 📍 14 Raiņa St, Auce, Auce Municipality, Latvia
56.463126, 22.894552
- 🌐 www.auce.lv
+371 28396984

14

Limited Liability Company "Krīgeri"

Situated in Īle Parish, "Bemberi" farm is looked after by the Grīslīši family that nurtures and preserves Latvian traditions. The hostess Marika is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable weaver who is happy to show her skills and teach everyone who wants to learn about cultural heritage,

which is so characteristic and important to Latvians. Visitors of the farm are also treated with soup cooked on the fire, home-baked bread and sweet snacks. An informative story teaches how to bake delicious bread with natural yeast, just like in ancient times. At Christmas time, both children and adult visitors are invited to take part in the baking and decorating of gingerbread cookies.

- 📍 "Bemberi 1", Īle Parish, Auce Municipality, Latvia
56.562107, 22.967391
- 🌐 www.auce.lv
+371 26201427





Legend:

- Zemgale Region
- Nereta Municipality / Jēkabpils City
- Rokiškis District / Vilnius District
- City and District of Polotsk



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www.dobele.lv
www.visit.jelgava.lv

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Dobele Craft House

The craft house has created a perfect environment for learning ancient and modern crafts – here it is possible to demonstrate, learn and pass on a variety of Latvian traditional craft skills and knowledge. In various creative workshops, one can learn to weave, knit, crochet, braid, felt wool, make jewellery, embroider, spin and twine, make objects from clay and embed the wisdom of Latvian folk cuisine. It is also possible to participate in excursions, creative master classes, attend exhibitions, as well as receive consultations on making and wearing folk costumes of Zemgale Region.

- 📍 8 Baznīcas St, Dobele, Dobele Municipality, Latvia
56.623355, 23.283425
- 🏠 www.kulturadobele.lv
+ 371 22049477

16

Svēte Ceramic Workshop

At the workshop, which is located on the premises of the former Svēte Manor, visitors have the opportunity to watch the potter's work in process, as well as to participate in practical classes and learn about the potter's job, working on a lathe and making their own ceramic product – a mug, a piggy bank or a medal. A programme for newlyweds offers the creation of a signature dish for the new family, while classes for teams of colleagues, families and friends are specially themed. At the workshop, visitors can buy ready-made ceramic products or place individual orders.

- 📍 18/8 Lielsvētes St, Svēte Parish, Jelgava Municipality, Latvia
56.591561, 23.664722
- 🏠 www.visit.jelgava.lv
+371 26003899

17

Craft Centre "Jaunlidumi"

The centre employs experienced leather masters, providing visitors with the opportunity to learn about leather processing and the creation of leather articles, as well as to participate in practical classes under the guidance of the masters. Here, work is mostly performed with haberdashery leather, which is soft and malleable, suitable for making various



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albums, notepad covers, jewellery and accessories. Latvian signs of strength and natural motifs are used as decorative elements in leather products. Visitors can make their own leather bracelet, as well as buy works made by craftspeople.

- 📍 12 Ievu St, Dzirnīki, Jaunsvīrlaukas Parish, Jelgava Municipality, Latvia
56.564978, 23.875249
- 🏠 www.visit.jelgava.lv
+371 26383129

18

Studio of Applied Arts "Stalģene"

Until the XIX c., Zemgalian women made costume fabrics at home from local materials – wool and linen – that were dyed with vegetable dyes. In Zemgale, the most prized ones were a "rose" skirt fabric and a "star" blanket, with which boys would cover



themselves on cold nights, believing that the “stars” protected them from evil. Until the middle of the XIX c., the forewomen wove for practical purposes, but starting in the XX c. they began to focus more on weaving decorative products. The studio makes traditional blankets, towels, scarves, rugs and skirts, and the weavers participate in local and national exhibitions, they present the weaving process to visitors, who can both watch and participate under the guidance of professional weavers, as well as buy finished products.

- 📍 5 Lielupes St, Staļģene, Jaunsvirlaukas Parish, Jelgava Municipality, Latvia
56.571180, 23.957523
- 🏠 www.visit.jelgava.lv
+371 28674293



18

Leather Accessories Workshop “Dunense”

At the leather accessories workshop with the beautifully sounding name “Dunense”, which historically resonates with the names of the River Daugava and the Hanseatic Way, the visitor enters a truly creative art atmosphere. “Dunense” continues the ancient traditions of the leather worker’s trade, passing on the accumulated knowledge of this profession to future generations. Anyone interested in participating in creative excursions

can actively participate together with the masters in the creation of one or another leather product, learn to distinguish between different types of leather (buffalo, snakeskin, salmon and others), feel like a craftsman and make a unique souvenir – a key chain or a bracelet in his or her own style. It is also possible to appreciate and buy one of the desired products.

- 📍 7 Year 1905 St, Koknese, Koknese Municipality, Latvia
56.644623, 25.432297
- 🏠 www.dunense.com
+371 29227936

20

Potter’s Workshop “Zaļbirzes”

At her workshop “Zaļbirzes”, a family house of several generations near the Atašiene Castle Mound, potter Ineta Dzirkale makes practical and decorative clay products that have long been needed at farms and are still used today. Visitors can discover the works produced for exhibitions, buy mugs, bowls, plates, honey bowls, candlesticks, whistles, wind chimes and other souvenirs. Those who are interested have the opportunity to observe and try making a dish themselves on a potter’s lathe or using various other shaping techniques.

- 📍 “Zaļbirzes”, Atašiene Parish, Krustpils Municipality, Latvia
56.511536, 26.419704
- 🏠 www.krustpils.lv
+371 26559420

21

Vipe Craft Centre “Māzers”

“Māzers” – a place where traditions live with the times. Visitors are offered to not only see the exhibitions and workshops, but also create a small piece of clay art themselves. Guests are given the opportunity to feel

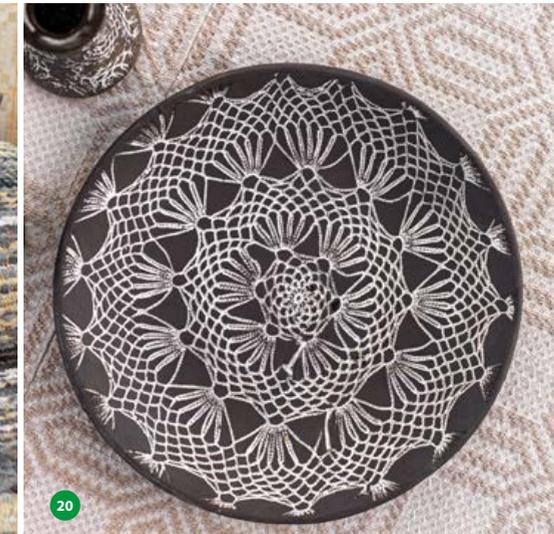


21

- 📍 www.visitkoknese.lv
www.krustpils.lv



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like Krustpils craftsmen by participating in a ceramic painting and weaving workshop. Anyone can try rag weaving and paint a clay cup as testament to their creativity. The craft centre also exhibits Krustpils region folk costumes and sells handicrafts.

📍 "Vālodzīte", Vipe, Vipe Parish, Krustpils Municipality, Latvia
56.467090, 26.092938
🌐 www.facebook.com/maazers
+371 26611297



22



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22

Craft Centre "Rūme"

"Rūme" is a place where antiquity meets the present and where ancient Selonian crafts are nurtured, explored and studied. Visitors may listen to stories about crafts nowadays and in the past, as well as see the latest ceramic works, which can also be purchased.



www.jekabpilsnovads.lv
www.muzejsselija.lv

Here everyone is welcome to not only see the work of the centre's craftspeople and artists, but also participate themselves, learn new skills and spend time creatively, because "Rūme" offers creative workshops in ceramics, batik fabric and applied leather processing. Visitors also may see the reconstructed archaeological costumes and ornaments of the Selonian tribe (XI-XIII c.).

📍 "Rūme", Zasa, Zasa Parish, Jēkabpils Municipality, Latvia
56.294570, 25.981419
🌐 www.facebook.com/amatniecibas.centrs.rume
+371 22335439

23

Viesīte Craft Centre

The knitters of the centre preserve the ancient symbols and colours that are characteristic of Selonia in their works and bring the traditional skills of Selonian crafts to life.

Here one can make works by weaving, knitting and crocheting. Anyone can learn the basics of these techniques, broaden their existing knowledge of the process, or watch the masters.

Those interested are welcome to participate in practical classes – create a maple leaf hat, embroider their monogram and weave on a loom – getting to know the values of the ethnographic heritage of the Latvian people. It is also possible to buy finished products and attend a permanent exhibition.

📍 7 Annas Brodeles St, Viesīte, Viesītes Municipality, Latvia
56.342242, 25.555184
🌐 www.muzejsselija.lv
+ 371 28681126

NERETA COUNTY



LATVIA

The experienced potter from Nereta will let visitors feel the practical expressions of ancient professions, discover the depth of thought, open up their vision and ignite the bright joy of creation. It is a great time to visit Nereta for those visitors who have been searching for their creative inner spark, as it is possible to create a clay souvenir of one's choice together with a skilled master.

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Potter Zanda Ragele

Zanda Ragele has been creating pottery pieces - one of the oldest professions – for 18 years, and one can find her pottery workshop in a picturesque location – on the coast of River Dienvidsuseja.



www.neretasnovads.lv

Her pottery works are not made on the potter's wheel, but are shaped by hand, which adds antiquity to them and lets her use four techniques that are characteristic of her work: patching, plant print technique, clay sausage technique, and pouring in plaster shapes. Everyday attractive products such as pots, bowls,

candlesticks and vases are made and can be bought in the workshop. Usually, natural tones are used to glaze them: salad green, sky blue, dark brown, white, grey and yellow. This emphasises the antique appearance of the items even more. Zanda leads workshops, where visitors can learn the skills of the profession by creating their own clay items. And two weeks after firing, they become the owners of these items.

📍 "Kalna Gribacāni", Nereta, Nereta Parish, Nereta County, Latvia
56.200769, 25.322828
🌐 www.neretasnovads.lv
+371 28685585



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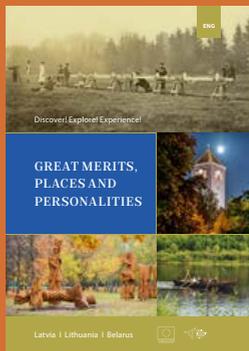
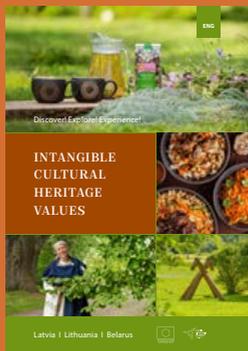


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Design, layout: Jolanta Deģe

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Discover
and look for
other tourism
routes



Latvia | Lithuania | Belarus