



Lithuania

📍 370 / POP 3.55 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Hotel Restaurant Labanoras (p327)
- ➔ Balzac (p308)
- ➔ Senoji Kibininė (p321)
- ➔ Lokys (p309)
- ➔ Sweetroot (p309)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Miškiniškės (p325)
- ➔ Bernardinu B&B (p306)
- ➔ Miško Namas (p370)
- ➔ Litinterp Guesthouse (p359)
- ➔ Domus Maria (p306)

Why Go?

A land of wood and water, proud, independent Lithuania (Lietuva) is fast being recognised as one of Europe's gems. Southernmost of the Baltic states, it's a pocket-sized republic that's a nature lover's delight, yet lacks nothing in urban excitement.

Lithuania's foremost attraction is its stunning Baltic coastline, especially the unique sliver of white sand known as Curonian Spit. Lonely coastal wetlands lure migrating birds by the tens of thousands while inland, lush forests watch over burnished lakes.

The capital, Vilnius, is a beguiling artists' enclave, its timeworn courtyards, cobbled streets and baroque churches animated by the vibrant, optimistic culture of today.

Further afield, remnants of Soviet times – a disused nuclear missile site (now a museum to the Cold War) and a Soviet sculpture park – are reminders of a dark recent past, while the Hill of Crosses and Orvydas stone garden stand testament to the land's enduring faith.

When to Go

- ➔ Lithuania is at its best in high summer, from June to August, when the days are long, the nights are short, and the Baltic Sea's waters are warm – or at least swimmable. Festival season hits high gear: one not to miss is Klaipėda's three-day Sea Festival.
- ➔ Spring (April and May) is cool and arrives late but is good for canoeing, as the thawing snow feeds the rivers.
- ➔ Autumn (September to November) can be ideal, with sunny days and chilly nights. Culture reaches a crescendo with classical music festivals and the annual Mama Jazz festival in Vilnius.



Lithuania Highlights

- 1 Wander the backstreets of the beautiful baroque capital **Vilnius** (p288), looking for that perfect bar or bistro.
- 2 Head to **Curonian Spit** (p363) to spend time

cycling, swimming in the Baltic Sea, or exploring hardy human settlements on this thin spit of sand and spruce.

- 3 Lose yourself in the whispering rushes, teeming

birdlife and perfect serenity of the **Nemunas Delta** (p373).

- 4 Stare down the barrel of a disused nuclear missile silo before taking a peaceful