



Road-tripping across Lithuania: 7 Country's Highlights Not to be Missed



Sailing ship Meridianas in the Oldtown of seaport Klaipėda, © Andrius Gaillūnas

Lithuania is a compact country, which means that the short distance from cities makes it an ideal destination for road-trips. Travellers can visit the state's highlights and make the most of a short holiday by receiving a well-rounded experience and getting to know the country.

August 2, 2021. [Surveys](#) have found that the pandemic has changed travelling habits, as more people opt to travel abroad by car rather than rely on other modes of transportation, due to levels

of lingering uncertainty. Lithuania is a car-travel friendly country with free roads, offering plenty of exploration-worthy locations that are convenient for road-trips.

Travelling by car in Lithuania, vacationers are able to swiftly visit many locations due to short distances, as well as enjoy the surroundings—Lithuania is known for lush forests covering a big part of the country and relaxing green scenery. It is a convenient option for travellers on a short holiday, who want to spend a few days getting to know a foreign country—during a brief getaway explorers will be able to visit the most famous destinations in Lithuania, truly experiencing the state and what it has to offer.

Here are 7 highlights of Lithuania for a well-rounded road-trip experience.

1. Old Town of Vilnius. Starting at the country's capital Vilnius, travellers can explore the winding cobblestone streets of the Old Town, part of the UNESCO [heritage](#). Here, elegant Baroque buildings, myriads of churches and quirky medieval backyards blend with the humming city life, modern gastro scene and lively streetside bars. Exploring the Old Town of Vilnius, the Cathedral square is sure to catch the visitors' eye—the grand bell tower and the Cathedral [Basilica](#) of St. Stanislaus and St. Ladislaus are impressive pieces of Catholic architecture and may remind travellers of Italy. Not far from there, visitors can experience a taste of France as well—the Gothic style Church of St. Anne is reminiscent of the Notre-Dame cathedral, and its bronze hue alongside intricate designs is a glimpse into Europe during the 15th century.

2. Trakai medieval castle. Heading west out of Vilnius, just half an hour away, vacationers will find the small city of [Trakai](#), a medieval Lithuanian capital. The Trakai castle is situated on an island and is reminiscent of the time when the country was the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A real-life scene out of a movie about medieval times, the Trakai castle also has a museum, where visitors can learn all about life in Lithuania hundreds of years ago. Besides the grand castle, travellers can enjoy paddleboarding, sailing with a yacht or sunbathing on numerous beaches on the lake of Galvė, as well as heading to shore to try out the local cuisine, such as *kibinai*—pastries filled with meat, vegetables or mushrooms.

3. SPA and wellness in Druskininkai. Heading south from Trakai, travellers will find the town of [Druskininkai](#)—the SPA and wellness centre of Lithuania. Surrounded by vast forests, the town is known for its clean air, healing mineral water and local mud procedures. Locals and travellers head to Druskininkai and to its many SPAs for a soothing experience for the body and the mind, as the serene and cozy SPA town is a perfect getaway to relax.

4. Kaunas—European Capital of Culture 2022. Moving towards the centre of Lithuania, 130 km from Druskininkai, travellers will find the second biggest city in Lithuania and its former capital during the interwar period, Kaunas, which has been awarded the [title](#) of European Capital of Culture 2022. Home to modernist interwar architecture that can be observed by wondering the streets of the city centre, Kaunas is abundant with historical and contemporary sights, from the popular Kaunas castle—a site from the medieval period—to the newly restored Unity Square, featuring modern water fountains, lounge areas and a unique design, even winning an international [award](#).

5. Port-city Klaipėda. About two hours away from Kaunas, travelling towards the seaside, visitors will find [Klaipėda](#)—the third biggest city in Lithuania and an especially popular destination amongst the locals during summer. Klaipėda is home to Lithuania's only port and its Old Town

has many architectural sights to explore. For example, the Drama Theatre of Klaipėda and the Cathedral of Klaipėda both have a strong German influence from the time when the city, at the time named “Memel”, was governed by the German Empire. Visitors can also enjoy the local cuisine, abundant with delicious sea-food. Right next to Klaipėda travellers will find the summer capitals of Lithuania—the small towns of Palanga and Šventoji, featuring sandy beaches where vacationers can enjoy the Baltic Sea.

6. The Curonian Spit. From Klaipėda travellers can take a ferry and visit the unique landscape of the [Curonian Spit](#)—a peninsula nestled between both the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon, part of the UNESCO heritage. It is home to five small beach towns, former fishing villages, and the drive from the first town—Smiltynė—to the last—Nida—takes about an hour. The grand sand dunes of the region are a popular destination and a unique sight, often referred to as the “Lithuanian Sahara.” Here, travellers can enjoy the one-of-a-kind scenery with wide, unspoiled beaches and all-engulfing sunsets, the old fishermen settlements and the Nida lighthouse. For a unique and almost mystical experience, travellers can explore the outdoor gallery [Hill of Witches](#) that houses wooden characters from Lithuanian folklore, such as witches and devils.

7. The Hill of Crosses. Leaving the seaside and heading towards northern Lithuania, travellers will come across the city of Šiauliai, which is home to one of the most unique sights in Lithuania—[The Hill of Crosses](#). As the title suggests, it’s a hill covered in crosses of different sizes and various designs. During the occupation of the Soviet Union, the Hill of Crosses became the symbol of the fight for freedom, as Soviets tried and failed to dismantle the site multiple times. The exact number of the crosses, crucifixes and statues of the Virgin Mary is unknown, but it is estimated to be more than [100,000](#). The site is a popular religious destination, as even Pope John Paul II visited the location and said a [prayer](#). The mystical sight is often mentioned in lists containing the scariest places of the world or dark tourism destinations, though the locals see it as a place of serenity.

More information about Top destinations and activities in Lithuania can be found on:
www.Lithuania.travel

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ABOUT LITHUANIA TRAVEL

Lithuania Travel is a national tourism development agency responsible for Lithuania’s tourism marketing and promotion, acting under the Ministry of Economy and Innovation. Its strategic goal—to raise awareness of Lithuania as an attractive tourism destination and to encourage inbound and domestic travel. The agency closely collaborates with tourism businesses and organizations, presents Lithuanian tourism products, services and experiences on social and digital media, press trips, in international travel exhibitions and B2B events.

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