

## **THE BALTIC STATES & THEIR CAPITALS, VILNIUS, RIGA & TALLINN**

**(A suggested 8-day leisurely program that can be arranged self-drive or with a private car and English-speaking driver/guide)**

**DAY 1: VILNIUS (LITHUANIA).** Guests arrive into Vilnius airport, are met and privately transferred into the Old Town, where 3 nights are included at the charming 5 star Hotel Narutis. Balance of the day to relax and explore.

**DAY 2: VILNIUS.** A morning guided sightseeing tour of the UNESCO World Heritage Site (the Old Town) includes the open-air market, the Presidential Palace (outside), the Gates of Dawn, St. Anne's Church (the finest example of Gothic architecture in Lithuania) and Vilnius Cathedral, a stunning example of Classical architecture. The afternoon is free to explore individually.

**DAY 3: TRAKAI CASTLE.** Just 17 miles from the capital's center is Trakai Castle and National Park. A guided visit to the Castle, located on a small island in the middle of a lake, will be a highlight of the entire trip. Afternoon is at leisure.

**DAY 4: RIGA (LATVIA).** After breakfast guests collect their rental vehicle, or (if selected) are met by an English-speaking driver/guide and private vehicle) and head northwest into Latvia and it's elegant capital, Riga, just a 3-hour drive away. Check into Gutenbergs, a charming 4 star boutique hotel located close to the Dom Cathedral in the historic old section of the city. 2 nights. The afternoon is free to individually explore. NOTE: A diversion can be made out of Vilnius to visit the unique Hill of the Crosses. This will add about another 2+ hours to the drive to Riga, but is well worth it...

**DAY 5: RIGA.** A morning guided tour focuses on the Blackheads House, the "Three Brothers", St. Peter's Lutheran Church, the Dome Cathedral (the largest church in Latvia) and some of the wonderful architecture of the old part of the city. The afternoon is free to individually explore – and shop for amber!

**DAY 6: TALLINN (ESTONIA).** After breakfast guests who have opted for a rental vehicle drive themselves north (3 hours) to Tallinn, where they'll drop off their rental. Guests who opt for a driver/guide and private vehicle will be driven to Tallinn. 2 nights are included in Barons Hotel, a former bank transformed into a lovely 4 star hotel and located a 2-minute walk from the historic Town Hall Square. The afternoon is free to individually explore perhaps the best-preserved medieval capital of Europe.

**DAY 7: TALLINN.** A morning guided tour highlights the Town Hall Square, the Town Hall Pharmacy (the oldest functioning pharmacy in the world, first mentioned in 1422), St. Nicholas' Church, Toompea Castle and the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. The afternoon is free to continue individually exploring.

**DAY 8: DEPART, OR...** After breakfast guests are transferred to Tallinn airport, OR possibly take the high-speed catamaran across to Helsinki, where IQOTC can provide more custom-designed services...

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