

Warsaw, The Baltics & Helsinki

Day 1 WARSAW, POLAND. Welcome to Warsaw! At 6 pm, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions for a welcome dinner at your hotel. (D)

Day 2 WARSAW. Hear about the tormented, often tragic history of this important gateway between East and West during your guided sightseeing tour. Visit the medieval STARE MIASTO (Old Town) with its market square and the 14th-century St. John's CATHEDRAL, a masterpiece of post-war reconstruction. Sightseeing also features the "wedding cake" Palace of Culture and Science, the remnants of the Jewish ghetto, and a picture stop at the Ghetto Monument. Later, [LF] attend a PRIVATE CHOPIN CONCERT. Tonight, why not join an optional Polish dinner? (B)

Day 3 WARSAW–VILNIUS, LITHUANIA. The next days are dedicated to the three small Baltic countries that quite recently regained their independence. Each has its own language and distinct culture. First, travel to Lithuania, the largest and southernmost of the three. Arrive in the capital, Vilnius, once the splendid center of the mighty Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Today's Distance: 342 mi / 550 km (B,D)

Day 4 VILNIUS. Vilnius' picturesque historic nucleus is clustered around the remains of a castle built by Prince Gediminas in 1323. Your Local Guide will accompany you on a walk from Cathedral Square through narrow, winding lanes to the OLD UNIVERSITY, founded by Jesuits in 1569. Also visit the KGB MUSEUM, and end your tour with a [LF] visit to Vilnius' artist quarter, UŽUPIS. (B)

Day 5 VILNIUS–RIGA, LATVIA. Enjoy a scenic drive from the Neris River through a landscape of alternating dark forests, swamps, and lush pastures. Stop at the Hill of Crosses memorial site on your way to the Baltic port of Riga, the Latvian capital. Today's Distance: 174 mi / 280 km (B,D)

Day 6 RIGA. Sightseeing with a Local Guide features the historic center on the right bank of the Daugava River and a walking tour of the OLD TOWN and the ART NOUVEAU QUARTER. Don't miss the opportunity to [LF] TASTE Riga Balsam (a traditional Latvian herbal liqueur) and Laima chocolate. The afternoon and evening are at leisure; exciting optional excursions are available. (B)

Day 7 RIGA–TALLINN, ESTONIA. Trace the coastline of the Gulf of Riga past the Estonian health resort of Pärnu, a site inhabited since the early Stone Age, on your way to Tallinn, capital of the smallest of the Baltic countries. During your afternoon sightseeing with a Local Guide, discover the Hanseatic Old Town with its 15th-century Lühike Jalg Gate, and visit the onion-domed ALEXANDER NEVSKY CATHEDRAL and the medieval ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH. Today's Distance: 211 mi / 340 km (B)

Day 8 TALLINN–HELSINKI, FINLAND. This morning, travel by FERRY across the Baltic Sea to Helsinki. Guided sightseeing includes major sights, such as the City Hall and Parliament House, the great LUTHERAN CATHEDRAL, and the SIBELIUS MONUMENT. Browse for souvenirs in Helsinki's OPEN-AIR MARKET. Tonight, dinner has been prepared at the hotel to celebrate the success of your Baltic stay. Today's Distance: 37 mi / 60 km (B,D)

Day 9 HELSINKI. Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. (B)