

SEMIGALLIANS

Tourism guide

SIGHTSEEING SPOTS



DESIGNATIONS



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-  Location
-  GPS GPS coordinates
-  Trail length
-  Trail surface
-  Museums
-  Information Centres
-  Educational programmes
-  Crafts
-  Recreation, entertainment
-  Historic sites
-  Nature, landscape
-  Recipe
-  Souvenir shop
-  Places to eat
-  Adventures
-  On foot
-  By bicycle
-  Bicycle rental
-  Parking area
-  Toilet
-  Information panel
-  Keep the area clean
-  Waste containers
-  Pets allowed
-  Horse riding
-  Accessible for people with movement disabilities
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-  Observe silence
-  Drinking water available
-  Catering
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-  Camping places
-  Tent campsites
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INTRODUCTION

LET'S TRAVEL ALONG THE "BALTS' ROAD"!

WHO ARE THE BALTS? The Balts formed in the 3rd millennium B.C., when tribes of Corded Ware and Battle Axe cultures, considered Indo-European, arrived in the forests of Eastern Europe from the steppe area of the northern coast of the Black and Caspian seas and mixed with local Neolithic tribes. The Balts inhabited the territory from present-day Poland to the middle of the European part of Russia.

WHAT WERE THE TRIBES OF BALTS?

The Semigallians, like the Latgalians, Selonians, Curonians, Samogitians, Aukštaitians, Prussians, Lamatians, Skalvians, Nadruvians, Yotvingians and Galindians, were one of the tribes of the Balts. There is reason to believe that the ancestors of the Balts entered the territory of present-day Latvia and Lithuania around the 3rd millennium B.C., and mixed with the natives living here, but the Semigallian tribe formed in the first centuries of our era. In the 12th-13th century, the further development of the Balts people was interrupted by the arrival of the German crusaders and the creation of Livonia. In the further course of history, the assimilation of several Balts tribes took place in the Baltic region, as well as the formation of a unified Latvian nation in the territory of present-day Latvia and the formation of the Lithuanian nation in the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

THIS GUIDE IS DEDICATED TO THE SEMIGALLIANS,

who inhabited the middle part of Latvia (Semigallia (Zemgale) plain) and the northern part of Lithuania during the Iron Age and the Middle Ages. Semigallians are linked to the early Iron Age (1st-4th centuries), however, the first scarce written information about Semigallia is retrieved from the Danish Chronicle of 9th century.

The Semigallians were one of the Balts tribes that formed the Latvian and Lithuanian nations. They were one of the most militant and prosperous nations in Northern Europe, and they were also known as excellent merchants. The Semigallians successfully fought against the expansion of neighbouring nations, including the Vikings. Of all the tribes living in the territory of Latvia, Semigallians resisted the Crusaders and Christianity the longest – until the middle of the 14th century.

The guide includes more than 100 of the most interesting, valuable and newest objects in Semigallian region of the territory of Lithuania and Latvia related to the Balts' past and present life, cultural heritage and its manifestations today. For the convenience of travellers, the objects are combined in 6 destinations in Semigallia region and 8 in Northern Lithuania, allowing you to freely choose the most suitable route and plan your next trip!

Travel and get to know the majesty of Semigallia region and its people!



LATVIA

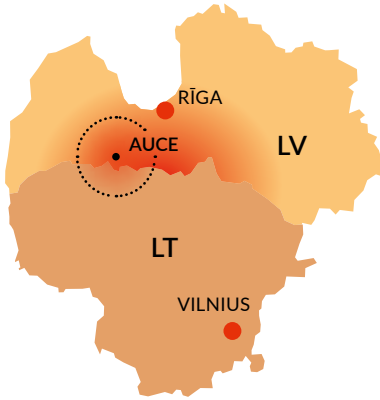


[Watch the video -
the ancient
Semigallian tribe](#)



SEMIGALLIANS

Semigallians (*Seimgaler, Semigalli, Semegallen, Зумъгола*) – is an ancient tribe of Balts people, one of the founding nations of Latvia and Lithuania, that, during the Iron Age and Middle Ages, inhabited the central part of Latvia – Semigallia (Zemgale) plain – and the northern part of Lithuania. The Semigallians were one of the Balts tribes that formed the Latvian and Lithuanian nations. Also, the Latvian literary language is based on the Semigallian subdialect of the middle dialect of Latvian. As one of the most militant and prosperous nations in Northern Europe, the Semigallians ruled over the two largest rivers in Latvia – the Lielupe and the Daugava, as well as the largest port in the region, “Portus Semigallia”, and were also known as excellent merchants. The Semigallians successfully fought against the expansion of neighbouring nations, including the Vikings. Among the nations residing in the territory of Latvia, Semigallians resisted the German Order the longest – until the middle of the 14th century. Semigallians are linked to the early Iron Age (1st-4th centuries) as a population group characterised by the culture of burial mounds with a circle of stones and later, in the 5th century, by the flat burial sites. The first scarce written information about Semigallia is retrieved from the Danish Chronicle of 9th century “Annales Ryenses” and Scandinavian runic writings on stones and objects. The Semigallian society can be judged from the information on the division of land mentioned in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia and Chronicle of Rhymes and other documents. Based on the analysis of these documents, it is believed that in the 13th century Semigallians inhabited twelve lands – Silene, Žagare, Dobene, Spārnene, Tērvete, Dobele, Sidrabene, Plāne, Nogailenas, Gostagales, Šurpenes and Putelene. All these lands can be divided into two large geographical units – Eastern Semigallia (*Austrumzemgale*), which is called Upmale in the documents issued by the bishop, and Western Semigallia (*Rietumzemgale*), called Semigallia (*Zemgale*). Upmale included several smaller territorial units – districts, lands – Mežotne, Nogailenas, Plāne, Gostagales, Šurpenes, Putelene. In the central part of Upmale, was the Mežotne district with the largest and most influential hillfort in Eastern Semigallia (Upmale) – Mežotne. The land of Tērvete, Dobele, Silene, Spārnene, Žagare, Dobene and Sidrabene was included in Semigallia (Western Semigallia). Among the mentioned lands, Tērvete was considered the political, economic and military centre of Semigallians, where the kings mentioned in the written sources – Viestards, Namejs and, probably, Šābis – lived and ruled in the 13th century. There are 35 hillforts (23 in the territory of Latvia and 12 in Lithuania) known in the areas historically inhabited by Semigallians, most of which are located on the land elevations near larger or smaller rivers. Since ancient times, the name “Semigallia” has been associated with wealth, because Semigallians had the most fertile lands in the region and the most advantageous geographical position, thanks to which they could control the most important land and water routes.

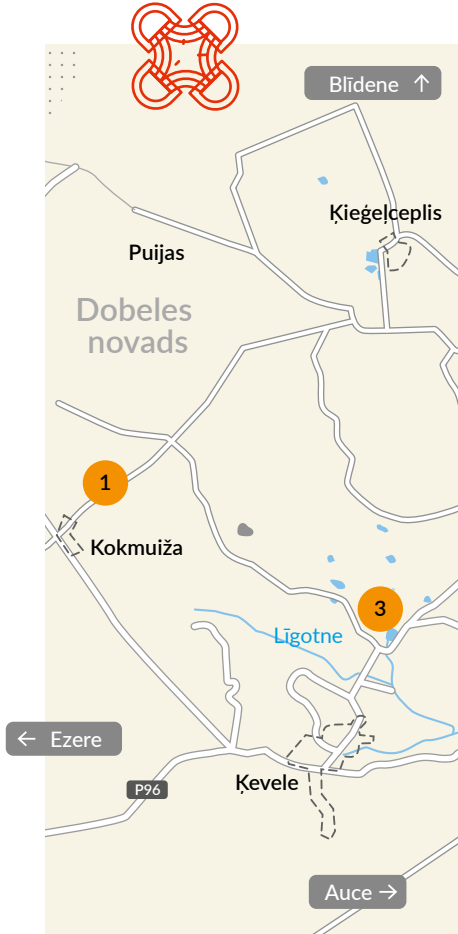


AUCE AND SURROUNDINGS

AUCE - DOBELE

Tourism Information Centre homepage:
www.visitdobele.lv

ANCIENT LANDS - DOBENE, SPĀRNENE





1. INCĒNI (DOBES) HILLFORT



Incēni (Dobes) Hillfort was inhabited by Semigallians from the 1st millennium A.D. It was the centre of Land Dobene and the main fortification. The 35 x 40 m plateau of the hillfort has an almost quadrangular form with unusually steep sides, while a 70 x 7 m high rampart was created on the southern edge. The ancient road led to the hillfort from the south side, but the gate was located on the east side. The ancient city was located at the eastern and south eastern foot of a 20 m high hill, and the largest archaeological findings in Latvia are proof of this. It is believed that the ancient Semigallian hillfort was built on one of the hillocks of the Dobe hillock chain, but its position in the middle of the field and how the hill stands out in the surrounding landscape allows one to suggest that Dobe Hillfort is among the rare artificial

hillforts of ancient times. The Dobe hillfort complex also includes Mežakalna Hillfort located on the left bank of the River Avīksne. In written sources, Dobene (Dubene) is one of the lands mentioned in the agreement on the division of Upmale and Semigallia (1254) concluded between the Archbishop of Riga, the Livonian Order and Riga Dome Capitol. The Chronicle of Rhymes mentions that after an unsuccessful attack on Tērvete, the Livonian Order built a castle on Dobe Hill. According to the document of Riga Dome Capitol of 1272, with which Dobene had to be given to the Livonian Order, it is known that there were 16 smaller administrative units in the Dobene region, which were called provinces (provinciae). A thick cultural layer has been discovered on the hillfort, one of the most remarkable in the Baltic region.



Spārnu Hillfort

Two significant deposits have been found at the foot of Mežakalns Hill. The first – in 1869, deepening the moat and finding 1260 objects at a depth of 45 cm: jewellery, weapons, household items and blacksmith's tools – a total weight of 120 kg, dating from the 5th -7th century, which is considered to be a donation, possibly after a successful campaign and a victory in battle. The second – Kokmuiža (Līgotnes) deposit – was found in 1929 near the first deposit. It contained 130 broken and burnt antiquities: jewellery, weapons and household items – a total weight of 16 kg. Antiquities can be viewed both in the Latvian National History Museum, and some in the Jelgava History and Art Museum. Approaching the hillfort, its distinct shapes can be seen from afar. The rampart of the hillfort offers spectacular views of the surroundings.



Vītiņu Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality

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2. SPĀRNU HILLFORT



In a rolling terrain, which is not typical for the usually flat region, surrounded by forests and lakes, there is the ancient hillfort of Semigallians which was inhabited in the 9th-13th centuries. It is 30 m high, orientated in the north-southwest direction. The hillfort has a 2 m high rampart in the northern side, and there is a slope on the southern side of the 30 x 40 m large plateau. Its edges are unusually steep, which is a rarity for Semigallian hillforts. On the western side, the site of the ancient city was discovered with a cultural layer of 30-90 cm, where animal bones and fragments of burnt clay plaster were found. The findings on the hillfort, the location and the name of the hillfort and Lake Spārnu confirm the opinion that one of the largest Semigallian land centres mentioned in the historical sources – Spārnene Castle (*castrum Sparnene*) – was located on Spārnu Hilllock. Spārnu Hillfort was Semigallian land, which was mentioned in the agreement on the division of Upmale and Semigallia (1254) concluded between the Archbishop of Riga, the Livonian Order and Riga Dome Capitol. According to the

document of Riga Dome Capitol of 1272, with which Spārnene had to be given to the Livonian Order, it is known that there were 19 administrative units in the land of Spārnene, which were also called counties or provinces: Pelkua, Zervinas, Pakarde, Rymmen, Daugules, Senmoa, Areneen, Mimayn, Pelsua, Pestene, Wayvere, Arine, Zetzedua, Szilua, Wanpen, Cacten, Bersenene, Zedreveos, Bayena. The hillfort and its surroundings stand out with their natural terrain, but the nearby Lake Spārnu creates a special atmosphere. Before arrival, read the ancient tale about a duck that entered a hole in the hillfort but was later found swimming in the lake.

“27” (which is the number of springs) is a powerful, magical number used in various cult rituals in ancient times. The waters of the stream formed by nine springs flow 400 m into an artificial mill installation, which forms Lake Svētezers. However, the first nine springs are the most accessible and most visited by people.

 *Vitiņu Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality*
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 *Īle Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality*
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3. KEVELE SPRINGS (THE KING'S SPRINGS)

The springs are located in a ravine, in the ancient land of Dobene, Semigallia, which may have been known as holy springs since ancient times. The Kevele springs surprise not only with the number of springs, but also with the fact that they are located relatively close to each other and are very different. Although the spring water is colourless and odourless, the taste of each spring water and its healing properties are different. There is a legend that Charles XII, the King of Sweden, was cured with the water of the Kevele springs. The stream formed by nine springs has many other springs further along the way. Locals say that



Kevele Springs (the King's Springs)

4. LAKE ZEBRUS AND EZERLŪKI HILLFORT



One of the most legendary places in Semigallia, shrouded in stories and myths, is the 1.5 m deep, largest (412 ha) lake in the region – Lake Zebrus and its surroundings, where several Iron Age settlements, burial grounds and hillforts have been found. This shows



that Semigallians have been ruling here since ancient times. The inhabitation period and role of the nearby Ezerlūki Hillfort have not yet been established. Perhaps it served as a shelter in the case of an attack or was used as an

observation point to protect the nearby sacred place – Elkus Hillock (Elkus kalns). Ezerlūki Hillfort is a high hillfort with a 45 x 25 m oval-shaped area, which is overgrown with trees and surrounded by 30-metre high slopes. At the western foot of the hillfort, on the shore of the lake, an additional fortification was found, possibly the site of a forecourt. There are also several springs in the area. The archaeological complex of Lake Zebrus and the nearby sacred place of Elku Hillock is one of the largest in Semigallia, and possibly in Latvia, according to its geographical location and natural relief. The ancient natural objects in this area have not been studied much and do not allow us to draw objective conclusions, but certain things indicate that they belong to sacred places.



**Bikstu Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality**

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5. LAKE SVĒTE AND ELKU HILLOCK



The 55-ha Lake Svēte and the nearby Elku Hillock can be considered one of the most notable Semigallian worship places. The hillock is located halfway between Lake Zebrus and Lake Svēte. According to legends, a secret road made of limestone, the God's or Priest's Road, led from Lake Zebrus to Ezerlūķi Hillfort. Both the lake and the hill, rich in rare plants, are located in an area surrounded by forests and swamps, and during the prehistoric period, it was home to a Semigallian sacred site. When the well-known researchers A. Bielenstein and J. Döring wrote about Elku Hillock in the middle of the 19th century, there was a 20-step-long rampart made of stones on the eastern side of the hillock, but the researchers believed that it could have been longer. At that time, on the opposite side of the hillock, towards Lake Svēte, the stone rampart was 116 steps long. According to local farmers, there was also

a stone rampart on the northern side of Elku Hillock; however, at the time of the visit, the stones had already been taken away for construction purposes. In order to verify the legends and stories about the road that connected Elku Hillock with Ezerlūķi Hillfort, an underwater survey of Lake Zebras was carried out. During



this survey, it was found that a stone ridge or shoal has naturally formed at the bottom of the lake from Ezerlūķi Hillfort towards Elku Hillock at a depth of 0.5 to 2 m. A. Bielenstein concluded that these stones could once have included the entire highest part of Elku Hillock. It has been largely modified in later times. In the middle of the 19th century, it was recorded that a particularly wide variety





Above: Lake Svēte

Below: Krievkalni Hill



of plants can be observed on Elku Hillock. On St John's Day, the herbs collected here were used in folk medicine. The wide variety of plants on Elku Hillock can be observed even today. Therefore, this peculiarity is repeatedly mentioned in the literature as a reason for choosing the place for various cult rituals. In the summer of 1999, small archaeological test excavations were carried out on the hillock, during which it was established that the stones, at least in the excavation areas, are located in their natural places. The phosphate analyses carried out showed that Elku Hillock is not characterised by an intense presence of ancient people. However, it is significant that the presence of people is mostly determined in the perimeter of the highest part of the hillock, where stone ramparts may once have existed.



6. KRIEVKALNI HILL



Krievkalni is a long rampart surrounded by a forest – a unique relief formation in the Semigallia landscape, located on the western side of Dobele. Perhaps Krievkalni was an ancient sacred site, a Semigallian worship place. The highest point reaches 149 metres above sea level, revealing a far and impressive panoramic view to the east. Several settlements and burial grounds of the ancient Semigallians have also been recorded in this area. The oldest name of the Krievkalni hills may have been “Krivi Hill”, which should be seen in the context of the archaeological complex of Lake Zebrus. As is known, the “Krivi” were the clergy of the ancient Balts, including Semigallians. A pedestrian path leads to the Krievkalni hills and there is a recreation site with tables and benches.



**Zebrene Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality**

GPS

Parking area
56.61773, 22.99361
Elku Hillock
GPS 56.6190833, 22.9925



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Enjoy the Latvian food of Marika Grīslīte, the hostess of “Bemberi”
“Bemberi 1”, Īle Rural Territory, Dobele Municipality
+371 26201427

“Bemberi” nurtures and preserves Latvian traditions. It will be told an informative story, and you can learn how to bake delicious bread with natural yeast, just like in ancient times. During Christmas, young and adult visitors are invited to take part in baking and decorating gingerbread.



**Zebrene Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality**

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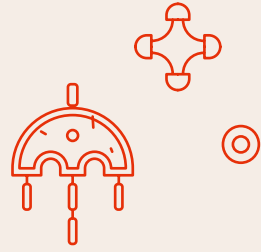
←→ 1 km



Forest path



INHABITED HILLFORTS AND SETTLEMENTS OF SEMIGALLIANS



The choice of the Semigallian people's place of residence was determined by the geographical location of Semigallia, the small proportion of hillsides and hills in the wide Semigallia plain. As places of residence, the Semigallians chose isolated hills or hill ridges, which were modified and fortified for the construction of castles near rivers or lakes. To this day, there are many ancient testimonies of the fact that mighty hillforts were found on the Semigallia plain and on the banks of the rivers starting from the Iron Age. At the foot of some of the larger hillforts there was an ancient city complex, which included a port, a sacred site (worship place) and a burial ground.

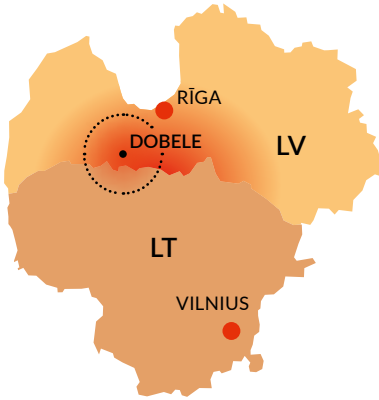


The area of the Semigallian settlements varied – from 200 m² to several hectares. The largest of them can be considered as village sites, the smallest as farmsteads. Up to 4.000 people could live in the hillforts and their ancient cities at the same time. In the 5th–8th centuries, the hillforts served as a place for storing food and sheltering people. For the purpose of protection, large-scale fortification works were carried out in the hillforts in the 9th–12th centuries. The hillforts stand out with steep slopes, large ramparts and a unique shape. Often hillforts were supplemented with forecourts, terraces and moats. Among the most notable centres are Mežotne and Tērvete. In the southwestern Vidzeme region, Semigallians bordered

with Latgallians, later the River Daugava became the natural border, and from the 10th century, the northern neighbours of Semigallians were Livs. In the south, the burial grounds of the Semigallians of the 5th–13th centuries extended approximately to modern Šiauliai and Panevėžys, where they bordered with the Aukštaitians.

The southern border of modern Latvia was formed during the wars of the Livonian Order with the Lithuanians and was regulated several times – in 1328, 1392, 1473, 1541/1542 and 1545. As a result, part of the territory inhabited by the Semigallians – Upmale, Žagare (Sagare) and Silene – came to Lithuania.



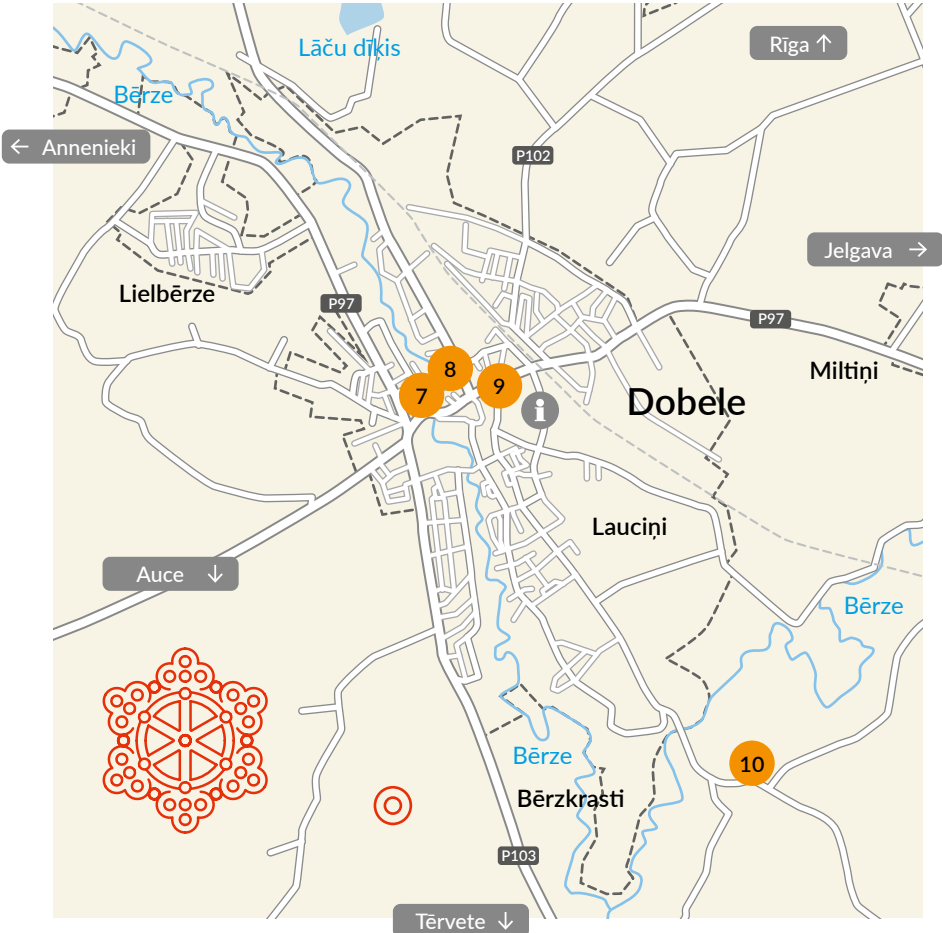


DOBELE AND SURROUNDINGS

DOBELE CITY

Tourism Information Centre homepage:
www.visitdobele.lv

ANCIENT LAND - DOBELENE





7. DOBELE CASTLE



In Dobele, on the right bank of the River Bērze, stands the 14th century stone castle of the commander of the Livonian Order, which was built to replace the Semigallian wooden castle (13th century). This castle was the political-economic centre of the Land Dobele (Doblen, Dubelenes) with the residence of the ruler of the land and one of the strongest Semigallia castles, next to which the ancient town was located. The wooden castle was located on a hill with steep slopes and it had two forecourts, separated from the hill by a deep moat and probably also a rampart typical of Semigallian hillforts. The site of the ancient castle with the filled-in moat and the territory of the ancient town can still be seen today. Dobele has been mentioned multiple times in the Chronicle of Rhymes: it tells of fierce battles

between locals and German knights during the Livonian Crusade in the 13th century. Between 1279 and 1289, Dobele Castle survived six Livonian Order sieges. Semigallians demonstrated enormous resistance fighting their enemies, who struggled to occupy the castle, and Dobele can be considered the only castle in Semigallia that the Livonian Order never managed to conquer during the Crusades. When all was destroyed, in 1289, Semigallians set their castle on fire and moved undefeated to the Lithuanian Grand Duchy. Today there are the ruins of a stone castle built by the Livonian Order, where the central object is part of the former castle chapel of the Order. In 2020, after two years of conservation, restoration and reconstruction, the chapel partially regained its shape. New exhibition halls



Dobele Local History Museum

and an observation deck have been built on its roof. Exhibitions about the history of Dobele and antiquities obtained during archaeological excavations are located in the exhibition halls: In the large hall there is an exhibition – “Dobele Castle ceramics”, in the creative room – “Dobele in the Duchy of Courland – Semigallia”, in the basement exhibition hall – “The surroundings of Dobele in the prehistoric period. Dobele under the command of the Livonian Order”, and in the palace garden – “Duchess’s Garden of medicinal plants”.

8. DOBELE LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Dobele Local History Museum offers to get acquainted with the history of Dobele Castle and the region. One part of its exhibition is dedicated to Semigallians focussing on the reconstructed Semigallian garments, authentic household items, jewellery and weapons. The museum hosts regular exhibitions



 2c Brīvības Street, Dobele,
Dobele Municipality

GPS 56.62282, 23.27297

 www.dobelespils.lv





Dobele Crafts House

and displays dedicated to the material culture of Semigallians and the history of the region. A guided tour around the museum will provide more information about the history of ancient Semigallians and Dobele. The museum collection includes more than 23,000 items: photographs, documents, archaeological finds, household items, works of art and other groups of objects.

9. DOBELE CRAFTS HOUSE

Dobele Crafts House is a place dedicated to mastering ancient and contemporary crafts, and acquiring skills and knowledge of the ancient and ethnographic crafts of Semigallia. It is the right place to learn to weave, knit, crochet, roll wool, make jewellery, embroider, spin and twist, carve spoons, create pottery items from clay and pick up some secrets of Latvian folk cuisine. Various Latvian annual holidays are celebrated here: Miķeļi (Latvian autumn equinox and annual harvest festival), Veļu Night (commemoration of the dead), Christmas, Candle Day, Ūsiņš Day (ancient Latvian spring festival) and other celebrations. Craftsmen and artists can show their work in the exhibition hall of the Crafts House, thereby introducing the traditional culture of the Semigallia region. Craftsmen's outdoor events, master classes and fairs are often organised in the Crafts House. Guests are invited to participate in excursions and creative master classes, dance, and play games. Special programmes are offered here for adults, children and young people, as well as newlyweds. Dobele Municipality Tourism Information Centre is also located here.

 7 Brīvības Street, Dobele, Dobele Municipality

GPS 56.625205, 23.276244

 www.dobesmuzejs.lv



 8 Baznīcas Street, Dobele, Dobele Municipality

GPS 56.62352, 23.28324

 www.kulturaadobele.lv/amatu-maja



10. FARM "RŪKĪŠU TĒJA"



Throughout the year, the farm offers to enjoy 80 delicious teas, combined from 40 different plants, collected in an ecologically clean 30-hectare large farm. A variety of berry products are also produced here – jams, syrups and juices, prepared according to ancient traditions. The owners of the company believe that the healthiest substances for the human



body are those found in plants and fruits grown on farms of his/her homeland. Tea makers use technologies that preserve the valuable substances of plants. Flavourings, dyes and thickeners are not added to berry products, so the natural smell and taste is excellent.



"Rūkīši", Krimūnu Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality

GPS 56.597634, 23.315266



www.rukisuteja.lv



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Ceramic workshop of Ieva Jurka
"Atpūtas", Bērze, Dobele Municipality
+371 28651715
www.ievajurka.com

In the ceramic workshop, it is possible to get acquainted with the craft of a ceramist, participate in the work process, buy products made by the artist, as well as place orders. In the creative classes, visitors can make their own ceramic products.

Bērze Mill
Bērze, Dobele Municipality
+371 26439106

Bērze Mill was built in 1863, and later rebuilt several times. The Bērze water mill complex with a derivation channel and a dam is the only operating water mill in Latvia. Using water as its power source, the water mill employs grain processing techniques. Grains are ground, and grits and pearl-barley are produced here. In the mill, the old equipment is still preserved, so you can get acquainted with the historical construction and with the grain processing technology.

KINGS OF SEMIGALLIA – VIESTARDS, ŠĀBIS AND NAMEIĶIS

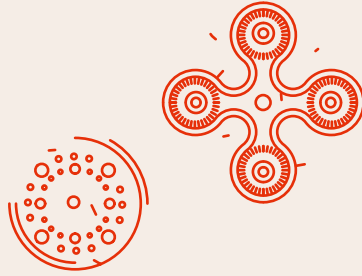
Throughout the 13th century, several individuals were seeking to unite territories inhabited by Semigallians. The Semigallian kings have been cited by historical sources multiple times in the context of the Crusades in Semigallia region and Livonia. The available evidence confirms that Semigallians experienced the times of heroic and honoured kings. In the first decades of the 13th century, there was King Viestards (original spelling: Vesthardus, Vester, who ruled before 1205 and after 1228), who is the only one named both a noble person and military leader in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, while in the Chronicle of Rhymes he is called the King. According to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, Viestards was the king of the Land Tērvete exerting power over all the lands of Semigallians. His status, influence and power are also evidenced by the fact that the Pope's legate Wilhelm of Modena



requested to grant him an audience with the Semigallian king, which is a unique case not only in the history of the Balts' lands, but also in the political history of all European countries of the 13th century. The second leader of Semigallians mentioned in historical sources of the 13th century was

Šābis (Schabe, Schabbe), who was mentioned in connection with the rebellion of Semigallians against the Livonian Order in 1259. Following the orders of Šābis, the Catholic priests and vogts, who collected taxes following the division of Semigallia in April of 1254 between the Archbishop of Riga and the Livonian Order, were expelled from Semigallia. At the end of the 1270s, the king of the Semigallians was Namejs (Nameise, Nameyxe, Nameise), the elder of Tērvete Semigallians and a later king and military leader of all of Semigallia. He died in the Crusades fighting the German Order in Lithuania or Prussia some time after 1281. The Chronicle of Rhymes mentions another unnamed Semigallian king who died in the battle near Goroza, the most outstanding victory over the Livonian Order troops in 1287.

PRECIOUS JEWELLERY OF SEMIGALLIANS



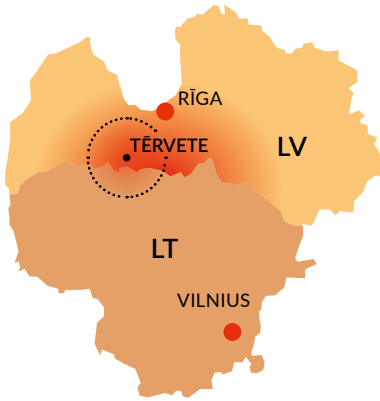
The lifestyle of Semigallians and their proximity to the trade routes allowed the accumulation of wealth for centuries. This is also reflected in the garments and jewellery of Semigallians. The wealth of Semigallians can be judged by the jewellery, which was often made of bronze, iron, pure silver, or silver-encrusted or plated and, in some cases, also made of gold. There was an unusually high proportion of silver usage, as evidenced by the silver deposits, among the largest found in Latvia. Gold-encrusted and completely gold-plated arbalet fibulas dating back to the 5th–7th centuries found in Semigallia (Zemgale) are a unique finding in the Balts' countries. Semigallian jewellery forgers made jewellery that differed from the creations of neighbouring tribes and emphasised the prosperity of Semigallians and the skills of their jewellery forgers. A great variety of rings, wreaths, neck rings, cuffs, decorative pins, chain ornaments and brooches were worn by Semigallians. Multiple neck rings, three wreath soldier bracelets, crowns with large splitters and silver inlaid, iron pins with cruciform head with silver inlaid, as well as bronze pins with cruciform head with

silver plating – these are characteristic only for Semigallians. But according to the decorative pins and chain ornaments found, it can be concluded that the women of Semigallia, just like Livs, wore sarafan-type skirts as well. Unfortunately, only fabric fragments have been found in archaeological excavations, which cannot be used to determine the shape of the entire garment. Around the 11th–12th centuries, plate brooches were also introduced. In the Late Iron Age, instead of the bronze chain ornaments worn by wealthy



women, iron chain ornaments were used, which were significantly more expensive because the process of making them was much more complicated and longer. Perhaps Semigallians attributed special powers to iron, such as protecting the wearer from disease, the evil eye or misfortune, as it was the hardest and most mysterious metal in the Iron Age, which was also used to make weapons, work tools and household items.





TĒRVETE AND SURROUNDINGS

TĒRVETE - VILCE

Tourism Information Centre homepage:
www.visitdobele.lv

ANCIENT LANDS - TĒRVETENE, SILENE

11. TĒRVETE WOODEN CASTLE OF THE 12TH CENTURY H

In order to sense the presence of mighty Semigallians and their kings, you are invited to visit the wooden castle in Tērvete. Built according to archaeological research materials, it is a real-life version of a 12th century Semigallian fortification on the nearby Tērvete Hillfort.



The castle on Tērvete Hillfort was a powerful centre of the ancient Semigallians, whose inhabitants fought for their political and economic independence until the end of the 13th century. Tērvete Hillfort and Semigallians who inhabited this region are a symbol of the Semigallians' will power, steadfast, firm and persistent character. Tērvete wooden castle is a history museum, which has many exhibition rooms with the largest collection in the Baltics of Semigallian heritage dating back to the Iron Age. The museum has four floors where it is possible to view Semigallian jewellery, garment, pictures of hillforts, the reconstruction of Tērvete Castle and its fortifications – a model, household items, furniture, weapons and an exhibition with the largest collection of swords in Latvia. A wax figure of Viestards, the king of Semigallians, and a 3D film about the life of the ancient Semigallians in the Iron Age can also be viewed. In the courtyard of the wooden castle, you can also see household buildings. Every year, on the second weekend of August, the traditional Semigallian festival takes place in the courtyard of the castle, when tournaments of soldiers and knights are held, and an attack on the castle is staged, during which the inhabitants of the castle defend themselves. Meanwhile, the masters of ancient crafts not only trade, but also demonstrate their craft skills, involve festival participants in the activities and invite them to participate in creative workshops for making Semigallian jewellery and household items. The owner of Tērvete wooden castle – historian and archaeologist Normunds Jērumis, gives lectures on the material culture of Semigallians, demonstrating both antiquities found



in archaeological excavations, as well as reconstructions of jewellery, garments, and military equipment. Children can take on the role of castle residents, learning how to shoot a bow, herd rabbits, watch how housewives dressed in reconstructed ancient costumes cook soup in the courtyard cooking hut. If you also want to know more about the history of Semigallians and Tērvete Castle, please apply for a guided tour during museum working hours.



**"Lielkēniņi", Tērvete Rural Territory,
Dobele Municipality**

GPS 56.481445, 23.376066



www.lielkenins.lv





Above: Tērvete Wooden Castle of the 12th century
Below: reconstruction of 12th-13th century garment and jewellery of Semigallian women



Reconstruction of the garment and armament of Semigallians (13th century war congregation)





Above: Semigallian celebrations

Below: Tērvete Archaeological Complex



12. TĒRVETE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX

In the 13th century, Tērvete Hillfort and its surrounding areas were a mighty and powerful Semigallian centre and kings' residence. It was ruled by the famous Semigallian kings – Viestards, Namejs (Nameisis, Nameiķis) and probably also by Šābis. The Tērvete Archaeological Complex includes Tērvete Hillfort with two forecourts, the hillock Svētais Kalns with the forecourt, the ancient town, hillock Putnu Kalns, hillock Klosterkalns and the Livonian Order Castle ruins. The hillfort was predominantly created and shaped during the 11th–13th centuries, a period of time during which Semigallians resisted the German Order. At that time, the hillfort enclosed a Semigallian wooden castle with protective structures, residential and household buildings, as well as craft workshops. It has preserved the steep slopes and the rampart, one of the largest in the Baltic region. The hillfort got the name “Zuckerhut” at the end of the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century. There are only assumptions as to how the name Tērvete originated and what it meant. Tere veten is a word of Finno-Ugric origin, which means “water greets”. Tērvete Hillfort is a 17–19 m high hill, which together with the rampart forms an almost 30 m high promontory. The hillfort has naturally formed steep slopes, but in ancient times, when fortifications were built, they were made even steeper. The widest point near the rampart is about 45 m. Tērvete Hillfort has a distinctly thick cultural layer, which reaches 7.5 m on the northern side. In the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia and other written sources of history, Tērvete (Thervetene,



Watch the video –
[Tērvete in the Middle Ages
in 3D](#)



Tervethene, Terweten) is mentioned in 1219 and 1254–1286, mainly in connection with the Semigallian independence battles and the Semigallia division agreements concluded between the German Order, the Archbishop of Riga and Riga Dome Capitol. In the Tērvete archaeological complex, extensive research was carried out in 1951–1960. As a result of research, it has been established that Tērvete was already inhabited in the 1st millennium B.C. 4,692 antiquities were found in the complex of Tērvete ancient sites, 3,966 of them on the Tērvete Hillfort. A unique piece of clay plaster found in Tērvete with the image of a piper is unique to the territory of Latvia. It should also be noted that in terms of size, one of the largest Namejs rings was found right on Tērvete Hillfort during the archaeological excavations. The history of the Tērvete Archaeological Complex is told in the nearby reconstructed version of Tērvete Wooden Castle of the 12th century. Wooden stairs have been installed on the northern slope and rampart of the hillfort, as well as an information stand with pictures of the antiquities found on the hillfort and a description of its history.



Hillfort (Cukurkalns), Tērvete Rural
Territory, Dobele Municipality

GPS 56.482200, 23.384630





13. SILAKALNS HILLOCK



The mighty and mysterious hillfort of Semigallians – Silakalns (Augstais hill) – is 20 metres high and surrounded by forests. The findings on the hillfort link it to the late Iron Age, while the ceramic fragments demonstrate that the hillfort was already inhabited in the 1st millennium BC. On the east and north sides, Silakalns is surrounded by a ravine and a 1 m high rampart. The cultural layer on the plateau and on the slope is more than a meter thick, and there are reports of finds of antiquities. Archaeologists have established that two forecourts

and an ancient town existed near the heavily fortified hillfort. Historians have put forward several hypotheses about Silakalns. One of them suggests that the hillfort is the main fortification of the ancient Land Silene, as cited by Semigallia land division agreement of the 13th century. According to another hypothesis, it can be assumed that *Sidrabene* mentioned in the Chronicle of Rhymes can be found on Augstais hill of Silene. So far, no archaeological research has been carried out on the hillfort. Getting to the hillfort will be a real adventure, since Silakalns is located in the forest, is overgrown with coniferous trees and bushes, and a swamp encloses it on its southern and western side.



Augstais kalns, Vilce Rural Territory, Jelgava Municipality

GPS

Parking
56.381817, 23.412561;
Augstais hill
GPS 56.37732, 23.41181



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Latvia's State Forests Nature Park in Tērvete "Tērvetes sils", Tērvete, Dobele Municipality +371 28309394
www.mammadaba.lv/galamerki

The nature park in Tērvete is one of the most family-friendly places in Latvia. Picturesque nature, rich cultural history, ancient hillforts, the Anna Brigadere's Memorial Museum, the ancient valley of the River Tērvete, a unique Old Pine Park, where the trees are almost 300 years old. The most popular places in the park, which require at least three hours to visit, are the Fairytale Forest and the Dwarfs' Forest.



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Bakery "Tērvetes maize" "Straumes", Tērvete Rural Territory, Dobele Municipality +371 29967553

The bakery organises tours with the opportunity to taste the bread, learn everything about bread baking and the traditions related to it. It is a place where you can feel the blessing of bread with your own hands – participate in the rituals of real bread baking.



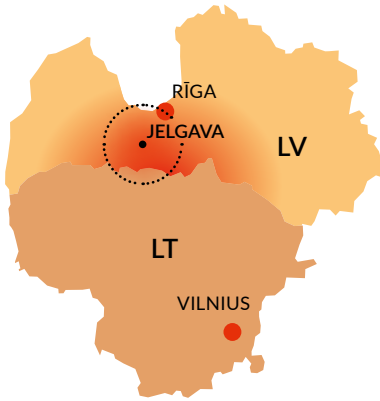


NAMEJS RING

One of the most recognisable imitations of Balts' jewellery is the Namejs ring, which is common to all Balts' and Baltic Finn nations and is not particularly related to a certain area. The rings were often found in the burials of both women and men. It can be claimed that women worn this ring the most – up to eight rings at the same time. This ring has many variations with several manufacturing techniques. They can be cast in bronze or silver, forged or twisted, twisted in bronze or silver wire. The simplest ones are with a frontal twist, or an imitation of a twist, made by casting bronze in clay or stone moulds. The most complex and beautiful are the twisted rings, which



are made by twisting several bronze or silver wires in different ways, with different wire diameters, and bending their ends. There are about 20 different types of Namejs rings, depending on the shape and method of manufacture. Facts are intertwined with history, as two silver rings were found on Daugmale Hillfort in the 1930s; and a legend was born to link the rings with the Semigallian King Namejs. This is how the wide use of the rings began. It should be noted that one of the biggest rings of this type was found in Tērvete Hillfort during archaeological excavations. The popularity of the ring and the origin of its name were also promoted by the novel "Ring of Namejs" by the Selonian-born writer Aleksandrs Grīns. Namejs ring has become a symbol of Latvians, and when you meet a person with such a ring on their finger anywhere in the world, it is associated with Latvians and Latvia.



JELGAVA AND SURROUNDINGS

JELGAVA – VILCE – SESAVA – OZOLNIEKI

Tourism Information Centre homepage: www.visit.jelgava.lv

ANCIENT LAND – UNKNOWN

14. JELGAVA HISTORY AND ART MUSEUM OF Ģ. ELIASS

Jelgava History and Art Museum of Ģ. Eliass (the second oldest museum in Latvia, 1818) is located in the building where the first higher education institution in Latvia, Academia Petrina, was opened in 1775. The building is one of the few that survived the Second World War in the city. The museum hosts exhibitions that tell of Jelgava from the prehistoric period to the end of the 20th century. Here you can also see the works of art of the outstanding Latvian artist Ģederts Eliass, his furniture, books, decorative art collection, etc. exhibits. The exhibition “Prehistoric and Middle Ages in Semigallia” covers the period from the end of the Palaeolithic to the end of the Middle Ages – the collapse of the Livonian Confederation in 1561. In addition, visitors can get acquainted with the development of Jelgava in the Middle Ages. The installation “Clash of Civilisations” examines the clash of Christian culture, the spiritual values and traditions of local peoples.



The exposition also includes the changing exhibition “The latest archaeological finds in Jelgava and its surroundings”. Residents and visitors of Jelgava can get acquainted with a small part of the rich heritage that is hidden in the deepest layers of the earth.

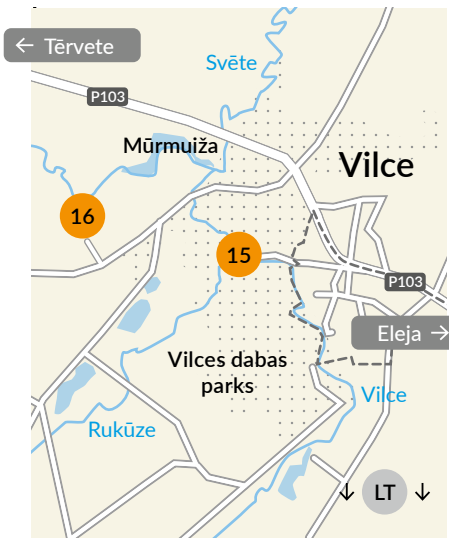
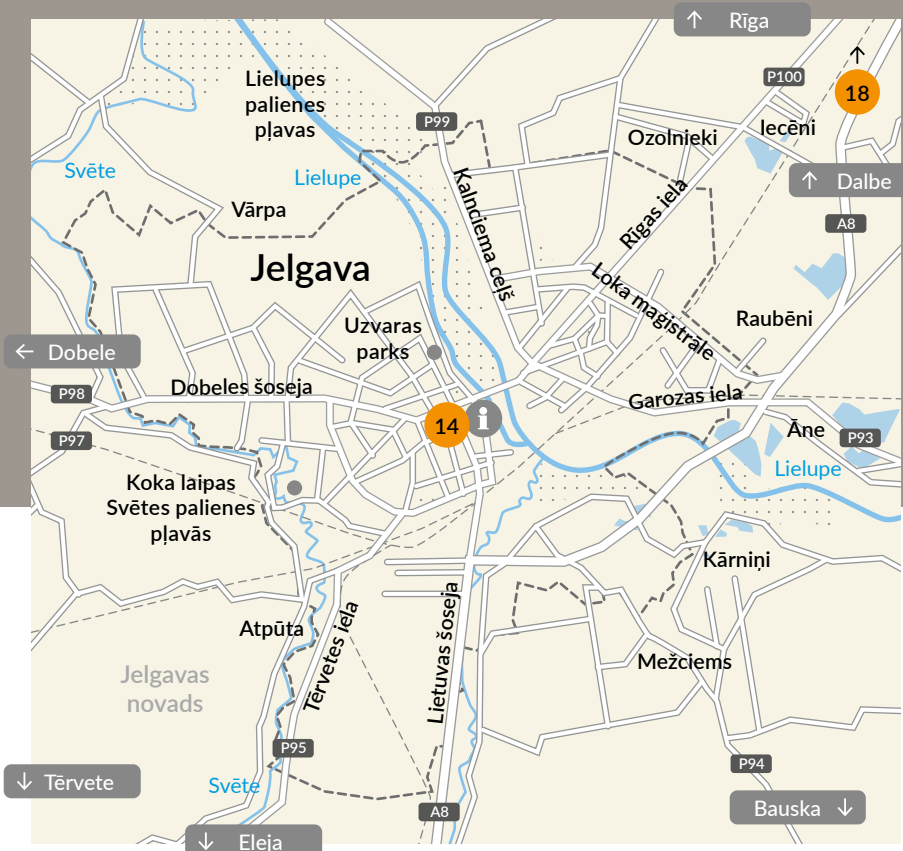


 10 Akadēmijas Street, Jelgava

GPS 56.649982, 23.729019

 www.jvmm.lv







15. VILCE HILLFORT



Inhabited during the Middle and Late Iron Age by Semigallians, the 12 m high Vilce hillfort is located at the confluence of the Vilce and Rukūze rivers. The plateau of the hillfort is not large – 10 x 5 m, most of it has been washed away by the

and several antiquities, thus obtaining evidence to consider this ancient site as a real hillfort. From the Vilce manor, you can go along the walking path to the hillfort and from its top you can see the valley and Rukūze sandstone outcrops. Next to the hillfort are the Zaķu pļava grassland and Vilce ravine, one of the favourite places of activity of the legendary robber Kaupēns.



River Vilce. To the south of the hillfort, outside the fortifications, there is a larger levelled area where the forecourt may have been. In 1959 and 1966, the hillfort was surveyed by Ē. Mugurevičs and M. Atgāzis, who found a cultural layer



*Vilce Rural Territory,
Jelgava Municipality*

GPS 56.424048, 23.526935

↔ ~8 km



Hiking along the Vilce river bank



€ if accompanied by a guide

16. "PEPPERMINT HOUSE"



One of the oldest means of traditional healing and medical treatment, since ancient times, have been teas of various plants. "Peppermint House" ("Pīpirmētru namiņš") tries to maintain the popularity of medicinal herbal teas collected in nature and preserve the traditions of their use. In the house, you can get acquainted with more than 30 varieties of mint, enjoy tea made from them, learn a lot about mint processing products obtained in the homemade process – syrup, powder and cookies, as well as participate in the process of their creation. In the creative workshops, you can make mint soap, mint coasters, mint scrubs and other useful things.



"Terēni", Vilce Rural Territory, Jelgava Municipality

GPS 56.424527, 23.507115



www.piparmetras.lv



17. WORKSHOP "SMILGUMI"



In the splinter weaving workshop "Smilgumi" you can get acquainted with one of the oldest crafts – weaving with pine, linden, aspen and black alder wood splinters. In the workshop, you can watch basket weaving demonstrations, as well as participate in a master class and weave your own basket. Visitors can buy various baskets for mushrooms, onions, garlic here, as well as household boxes, firewood baskets and bags. The workshop is also the only one in Latvia that offers splinter baskets with inscriptions, drawings and natural colours.



7 Liepu Street, Bērvircava, Sesava Rural Territory, Jelgava Municipality

GPS 56.39917, 23.74777



www.facebook.com/skalupinumi





18. GARLIC WORLD



Antra, owner of Garlic World, has discovered various recipes for making delicious and interesting products from garlic. Here you can pamper your taste buds with garlic tea, pickled garlic flowers, garlic salsa, "throat ripper" and even garlic hard sweets. The owner gladly welcomes groups of travellers and tour groups to her workshop, organises tastings and talks all about garlic and its health-enhancing properties. Unique recipes will also be shared here, and you can even enjoy and buy healthy finished products. Garlic is one of the oldest crops used in traditional cuisine and has also been used for medicinal purposes as well as performing various rituals in prehistoric times.



8 Priežu Street, Dalbe, Cenu Rural Territory, Jelgava Municipality

GPS 56.76940382, 23.87026839



www.kiplokupasaule.lv



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

**Victory Park (Uzvaras parks)
Uzvaras Street, Jelgava**

Victory Park has seven activity areas, divided into active and educational areas, with entertainment suitable for children.



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

**Route "Weave the Taste of Semigallia on the Centennial Belt"
www.visit.jelgava.lv**

The route combines six tourist attractions – the farm "Blūdži", where tastings of cheese, vegetable salad and home-baked bread are offered, the shiitake farm "Trubenieki", the ZELT sea-buckthorn garden, Peppermint House, "Frog House" with a collection of frog figurines, and Eleja Manor Park with a tea house.



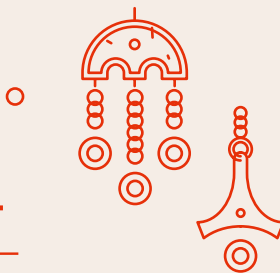
WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

**Wooden Foot-bridges in the Meadows of Svēte Floodplain
Sniega Street, Jelgava**

The total length of the foot-bridges is approximately 1.6 kilometres. They are connected with three gravel paths. In order to promote the diversity of flora, across 1.2 hectares of floodplain meadows, meanders, or wetlands, with various plants such as calamus (Acorus calamus L.), common reed, and purple loosestrife have been created.



SEMIGALLIAN TRADERS AND SEMIGALLIAN PORT



Over the course of many centuries, Semigallians were able to create a developed network of trade routes not only in Semigallia, but also in Europe, Scandinavia and possibly in the East. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia mentions only one trading port on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea – the port of Semigallia (portus Semigallia). Aiming to limit the activities of Semigallians, Pope Innocent III issued a decree in 1200 forbidding all traders from entering the port. The location of the port remains unknown; some researchers are looking for it at the mighty Daugmale Hillfort near the River Daugava, while others – in the River Lielupe estuary.



Already since the 9th century, Semigallia is cited by Scandinavian sagas and rune stones. The stories and testimonies tell us that Viking traders from northern Europe chose and visited Semigallia as their destination. A Swedish runestone tells: “Sigrid ordered this stone to be erected in memory of Sven, her husband. He often sailed to Semigallia in a loaded ship along Cape Kolka”. During the Viking period, the main export items were crops; but from the 11th century, beeswax and fur.



19. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX OF MEŽOTNE HILLFORT** H

Mežotne Hillfort on the left bank of the River Lielupe was one of the largest Semigallian hillforts, the main castle of the land Upmale. The plateau of the hillfort from the 9th to 13th centuries occupied about 3500 m². The Mežotne Complex consists of the hillfort with its ancient city, Vinakalns Hillock, two burial grounds and a port area. Mežotne is cited multiple times by the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia and Chronicle of Rhymes in the 13th century, and even in the notes of an Arab traveller of the 11th century. In the course of archaeological excavations, it was found that the hillfort was inhabited from the 8th–14th century, and the area of the ancient city was about 13 ha. According to the written sources of the 13th century, it can be concluded that Mežotne Castle was the political and economic centre of Upmale (Opemele, Upemelle, Uppemel). The hillfort is located on a 16-metre high parcel of land. To the east it is cut off by the steep bank of the River Lielupe and to the north by a brook ravine. At the foot of the castle's

BAUSKA AND SURROUNDINGS

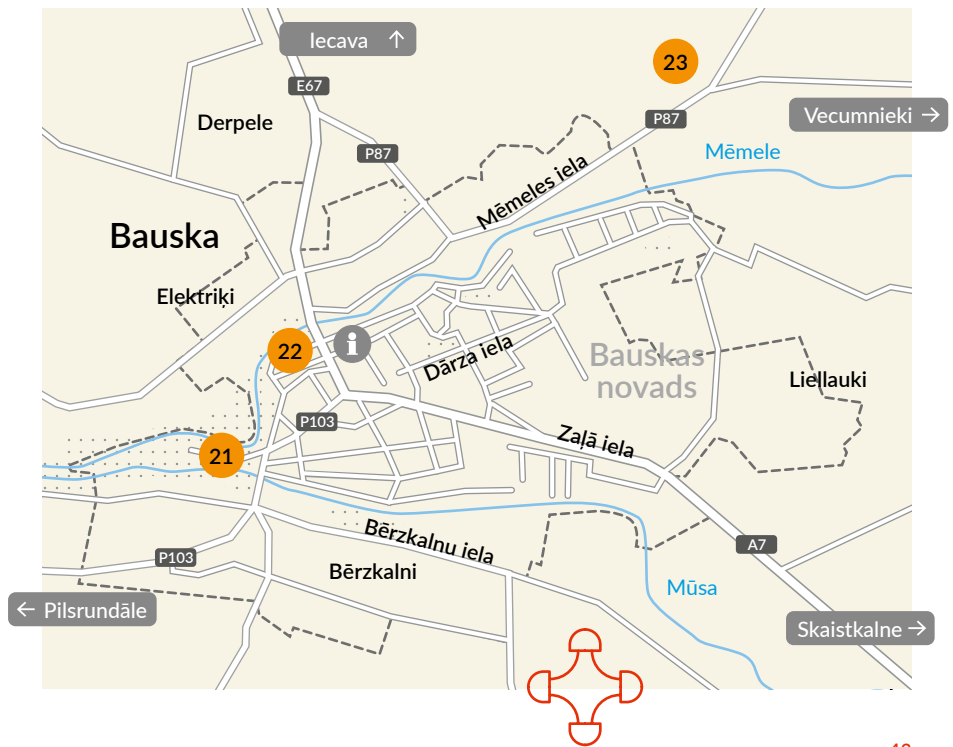
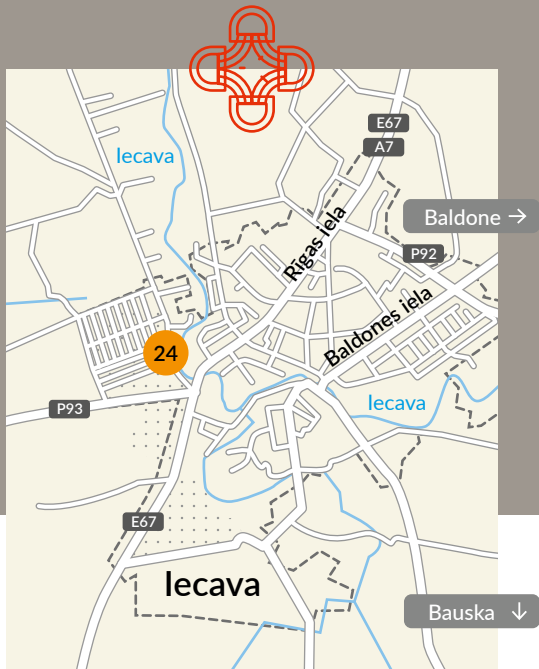
RUNDĀLE – BAUSKA – IECAVA
 Tourism Information Centre homepage:
www.visit.bauska.lv

ANCIENT LAND – UPMALE



fortifications on the bank of the River Lielupe, the site of an ancient port has been found. The hillfort was fortified with two ramparts and ditches. The rampart enclosing the plateau was raised from 3.5 m to 8 m in the period from the year 800 to the 13th century. The first wooden protective structures on Mežotne Hillfort were built in the 9th century. Residential and household buildings were also located on the plateau of the hillfort, in the enclosure of protective buildings. In 1272, Mežotne Castle was destroyed. In April 1321, according to the Chronicle of Livonia by Hermann von Wartberge, a new wooden castle was built in Mežotne, but 25 years later – in April 1346, the castle was captured and destroyed by

↑ Jelgava





Mežotne Hillfort

the Lithuanians. The Trail of the Jet Ant (“Spožās skudras taka”) has been established on the Mežotne hillfort. Next to the hillfort there is the cultural space “Mežotne Church” and the graves of the owners of the Mežotne manor, the Lieven family. A nature trail has been established from Mežotne Hillfort to another ancient hill – Vīnakalns Hilllock. Every year in May, a festival is held on Mežotne Hillfort.

📍 **Mežotne Hillfort, Rundāle Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality**

GPS 56.441584, 24.044910

🌐 www.facebook.com/MezotnesPilskalns

↔️ 2 km

🌳 **Wooden foot-bridges, trails**



20. THE STORY OF THE BLACK POT



Those who like the ceramic craft have the opportunity to hear a story of the Black Pot at the guest house “Baltā māja”, as well as observe and participate in the making of various ceramic masterpieces. Visitors are offered to see the workshops and kiln, watch a presentation on the creation of ceramic works – shaping, turning and firing. It is also possible to buy works and view interesting exhibitions.

📍 **“Baltā māja”, Pilsrundāle, Rundāle Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality**

GPS 56.415889, 24.030297



Reconstruction of the ancient costumes of inhabitants living in Mezőtne Hillfort





Above: The story of the Black Pot

Below: Bauska Castle



21. BAUSKA CASTLE



Bauska stone castle is located in a picturesque landscape between the River Musa and River Mēmele, near the place where they meet to form the River Lielupe. Considering the location of the castle, there is an opinion that the Livonian Order Castle is located in the place of the ancient Semigallian castle, as evidenced by the 2nd-12th century antiquities and ceramics that were found



during archaeological excavations. Bauska Castle ensemble consists of two parts. The oldest – Livonian Order Castle, built in the middle of the 15th century, and the newest – the residence of the Duke of Courland, Ketler, built at the end of the 16th century. The building is the only architectural monument in Latvia that illustrates the manifestations of Mannerist architecture and practical decorative art in the Duchy of Courland. The oldest part of Bauska Castle is the fortress of the Livonian Order, built specifically for the use of firearms, and it characterises the architecture of military buildings in Latvia from the 15th-17th century. The newest part is a residence-type castle fortified with bastions, defensive walls and ramparts,



where today you can see an exposition about Bauska's surroundings and the Semigallians, evidence of their material culture. The collection of Bauska Museum consists of several smaller collections, which gather materials obtained from several archaeological excavations. The object of the museum's research is the castle – its architecture, construction history, fortification system, interior decoration and furnishing, social activities and private life of persons who are linked to the construction and existence of the castle, in the context of the Livonian State and the Duchy of Courland – Semigallia.



*Bauska Castle, Bauska,
Bauska Municipality*

GPS 56.403701, 24.174340



www.bauskaspils.lv



22. BAUSKA MUSEUM



In Bauska Museum, visitors can familiarise themselves with the history of the Bauska region, the city and Semigallians from the 1st-13th century. Historical, artistic and other exhibitions are regularly viewed in the spacious exhibition halls. Over many decades, the museum has accumulated an impressive collection

of archaeological objects that testify to the material culture of the ancient Semigallians. Antiquities were found both in the archaeological excavations on Mežotne Hillfort and in the ancient town, in many burial grounds, and also accidentally found throughout the territory of the former Bauska region. The collection of Bauska Museum consists of more than 56 thousand items, grouped according to their use – work tools, weapons, household items and jewellery. The range of weapons is dominated by spearheads, which are found in almost every grave of an adult Semigallian man; there are also fighting knives widely used in the Middle Iron Age, both narrow-bladed and broad-bladed, and single-bladed swords used in the Late Iron Age (early Middle Ages), which are also recognised to be the creations of local blacksmiths. Various types of brooches, pins, neck rings, bracelets, rings, chain ornaments and charm necklaces are also widely represented in the museum. Among the imported items, a rare find is on display at the exhibition – a weight box with weights that were used for weighing precious metals. Objects of this type can be found in the graves of the society's elite and merchants of that time. The weavers of the Folk Applied Art Studio "Bauska" also work in the museum, and they provide consultations on the production of folk costumes of Semigallians.



23. FARM "VAIDELOTES"



Agriculture and the Latvian way of life – concepts that coexist well in the farm, which has been awarded the culture mark "Latvian Heritage" for nurturing Latvian traditions, as well as the mark "Latvian Kitchen" for the preparation of traditional dishes. At the farm, visitors can view the herb and medicinal plant collections, taste herbal teas, get to know the ancient Latvian cuisine, as well as relax under the big oak tree. The hostess can show how to bake pierogi, karasha from roughly ground whole-wheat flour and make cheese, as well as explain the bread-making process and how to make whole-wheat boiled pies (*virtēni*), how to live happily and in harmony with nature. Visitors can also buy teas, spices and farm goods. One of the oldest methods of traditional healing and treatment, including in Semigallia, has always been the use of various herbal teas. That is why "Vaidelotes" also tries to maintain the popularity of ancient medicinal herbal teas in society, preserving and nurturing ancient traditions.



6 Kalna Street, Bauska, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.410305, 24.184326



www.bauskasmuzejs.lv



"Vaidelotes", Code Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.427483, 24.226406



www.vaidelotes.lv





Above:
Bauska Museum

Below:
Farm "Vaidelotes"





Above: Farm "Vaidelotes"

Below: God's Garden (Dievdārziņš)



24. GOD'S GARDEN (DIEVDĀRZIŅŠ)



God's Garden is an ancient place on the bank of the River Iecava, which offers a picturesque view of the River Iecava and the Lutheran church. It is considered to be the burial place of the Napoleonic army officers who fell in the battles near Iecava during the war of 1812, but along with it, the legend of the first church of Iecava and the story of the Semigallian sacred place and the hollow stone have also been preserved. The name of the place is also often explained by the fact that it was an ancient place of worship. The tale says that there was a plan to build the first church in Iecava in this place, but the logs were brought to the other side of the river, where the church is now. This happened several times, until the Holy Fathers declared that this was a place possessed by the devil, where the church could not be built. So the church was built in another place, where, after several reconstructions, it still serves the local congregation. People tell the story about a sacrificial stone that supposedly stood in God's garden until the First World War, but then disappeared. It is difficult to find out nowadays whether it was a stone of the Semigallian cult, or a memorial stone for some soldiers who died in the war or for victims of the plague.



3 Pārupes Street, Iecava, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.596971, 24.188345

↔ 500 m



Wooden foot-bridges, paved trail



1 km



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Route: Castles around Bauska (No. 401)
Available at: www.visit.bauska.lv

The cycling route leads to three castles in the vicinity of Bauska and moves along the River Lielupe in the territory of the "Bauska" Nature Park. Riding along this route should be performed between May and October, because the pontoon bridge over the River Lielupe near Mežotne Castle is winterised for the winter season. The route is rich in sightseeing spots, so it can be planned as a full-day trip.

Route: "Iekustini Lielupi" ("Rock the Lielupe") Bauska – Mežotne
Available at: www.visit.bauska.lv

The favourite river for boating in the Bauska region is the River Mēmele. A popular boating route is from Bauska to Mežotne, as well as from Lielmēmele to Skaistkalne and from Skaistkalne to Bauska.

Holidays in Bauska region
Available at: www.visit.bauska.lv

The Tourism Information Centre of Bauska region has created a map that summarises sightseeing spots, cafes, playgrounds, attractions, picnic areas, play and party rooms in the entire Bauska region, providing ideas for family holidays.

Audiovisualisations in Mežotne Hillfort Rundāle Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality

Audiovisualisations about Mežotne hillfort archaeological complex. Available elements of augmented reality – using the SAN app, it is possible to see the ancient inhabitants of the hillfort – Made, Mari and Zile.

CRAFTS AND BUILDINGS

IN TERRITORIES

INHABITED BY

SEMIGALLIANS



Similar to the rest of the Balts peoples, in the Late Iron Age, Semigallians mostly built the houses with projecting ends of logs and used coniferous and deciduous trees for it. In Semigallia, in the Late Iron Age, defensive structures and residential buildings were sometimes plastered with clay. Most of the buildings were one-roomed, although two-roomed and even four-roomed buildings were discovered in Tērvete Castle. The sizes of residential buildings were not large; in Tērvete Hillfort their size varied from 3.4 x 2.5 m to 4.3 x 6.5 m, in Mežotne Hillfort – 8 x 6 m, and 5 x 4 m. The foundations of the buildings were usually made of stones, but the floor was made of both clay and peeled or roughly squared wood. One of the buildings on Tērvete Hillfort had a floor made of oak boards, secured with iron nails. In the 12th-13th century, forged iron nails were widely used in the construction of Tērvete Castle. The total number of nails discovered during archaeological research is around 4,000. Less combustible materials, reeds and wooden shingles could also be used for roofing without thatch. Clay adobe stoves with a stone foundation, a clay vault and repeatedly renewed furnaces were used for heating the premises. In the Late Iron Age, the stone ovens or hearth heating known from the previous period continued to exist in some places. Researchers also found cellars under some residential buildings located on the hillforts. It is possible that one of the discovered buildings on Tērvete Hillfort was a two-storey building with a cellar. According to the findings, it seems that it was a craftsman's workshop on the first floor and the second floor was probably used as a living space. In addition to the buildings with projecting ends of logs, there were also lighter types of buildings, built as mud-brick buildings. Until now, there is little evidence of ancient ships and their constructive solutions on the territory of Latvia. It is not known what the ancient ships in Semigallia looked like, but it is assumed that they were structurally similar to those built in Scandinavia. The level of craftsmanship of jewellery forgers and blacksmiths can be judged by iron and non-ferrous metal products found by archaeologists during archaeological research. The iron weapons and jewellery decorated with silver in the damascening technique found in Semigallia testify to the high level of craftsmanship of the craftsmen, and the jewellery forgers and blacksmiths of Semigallia can be counted among the best Eastern Balts craftsmen of that time.





VECUMNIEKI AND SURROUNDINGS

VECUMNIEKI

Tourism Information Centre homepage:
www.visit.bauska.lv

ANCIENT LAND - PLĀNE





25. BĀRBELE SULPHUR SPRING

Bārbele sulphur spring is an ancient worship site, which is also described in legends. According to written sources, it was one of the most impressive mineral water springs in Latvia. As a healing place it was already mentioned in writings in the 18th century, although there is no doubt that the spring was already known in ancient times. Coming to the spring for treatment, people left their clothes on site, since they believed that in this way they would get rid of all their diseases, pain and suffering. Bārbele might be among the oldest spas in Latvia, known since the reign of Duke Jacob of Courland. The history of Bārbele's ancient existence suggests that ancient Semigallians were also treated here and used this spring as a source of health improvement. The source of hydrogen sulphide in Bārbele is a natural outlet of groundwater containing hydrogen sulphide, which is quite rare in Latvia, where the precipitation of sulphur compounds and a film formed by sulphur



bacteria can also be observed in the source stream. The waters are rich in sulphate ions and contain hydrogen sulphide, albeit in a relatively low concentration – 5.6 mg/l. The discharge volume of the spring is 24 litres per second. The spring is located 60 metres from the bank of the River Iecava.

 *Bārbele Rural Territory,
Bauska Municipality*

GPS 56.43447, 24.59137



4 km

26. BEE APIARY "DZINTARLĀSE"



Bee-keeping, along with agriculture, is one of the oldest sectors of the Semigallia economy, and in a sense also a source of wealth and prosperity. In ancient times, beeswax was one of the main trade products in Semigallia and Latvia. Bee apiary "Dzintarlāse" offers the opportunity to get acquainted with the life of bees, to take a walk on the bee trail, and to taste bee products, home wine, "Bites bučas" beverage, as well as to buy the products produced here. "Dzintarlāse" organises excursions and tastings, walks through the bee apiary, familiarisation with the production of strong alcoholic beverages and wine, honey processing for groups of travellers.



"Bīrzemnieki", Vecumnieki Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.649981, 24.549046



www.facebook.com/dzintarlase



27. OPEN-AIR MUSEUM "AUSEKĻU DZIRNAVAS"



"Ausekļu dzirnavas" is designed like a Latvian farm, where you can familiarise yourself with the collection of ancient tools and equipment, the household of your ancestors, and relax with your family. A place with a long history, where in 1896 the Ausekļu water mill was started for the first time on the River Iecava, which operated until 1950. The farm has been awarded the culture mark "Latvian Heritage" for maintaining Latvian traditions in a modern tourism offer. Every spring and autumn, the



museum traditionally hosts the Sowing and Reaping Festival with demonstrations of ancient farm work and crafts, in which visitors are also involved. The main working tools of farmers – ploughs, harrows and all horse harness accessories are arranged in one place, but the tools of the Latvian woman are kept in the so-called grandmother's room. There is also a blacksmith's forge – a self-built workplace with an anvil, bellows, a shed – with threshing machines and other tools. The water mill building has regained its stately appearance and is included in the overall ensemble of buildings. The "Lazdu" windmill (Anno 1926), which was transferred from Īslīce Parish to Ādzūnri,

Open-Air Museum "Ausekļu dzirnavas"



has also been restored. In ancient Semigallia, the mill as a building for grinding grain is already mentioned in the sources of the 13th century referring to Tērvete Hillfort, where, as it is described in the Chronicle of Rhymes, the mill was located at the foot of the hillfort, near the River Tērvete.

 "Ausekļu dzirnavas", Bārbele Rural Territory, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.440633, 24.579770

 www.ausekludzirnavas.lv





28. "SIDRABCERAMICS"

In the "Sidrabceramics" workshop, it is possible to not only view and buy ready-made dishes, but also to create your own dish using one of the offered techniques – rolling or coiling, or working on a lathe. In the workshop, it is possible to make, for example, clay earrings or a magnet according to individual wishes. The vessels are made from stoneware, which is a material that is fired at a higher temperature than clay. Depending on the glaze used, the vessels are kept in the oven at a temperature of approximately 1250 °C. During firing, the material becomes non-porous, non-absorbent of water and other substances.

 4b Skolas Street, Vecumnieki, Bauska Municipality

GPS 56.60780, 24.51597

 www.sidrabceramics.lv



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Route: *Bagātā Zemgale (Rich Semigallia) (No. 402)*

Available at: www.visit.bauska.lv

The route is rich in sightseeing spots that allow you to get to know Semigallia and its people. From Bauska to Skaistkalne, the road winds along the River Mēmele, but the presence of the river can only be felt behind the grain fields and meadows. The route is more suitable for a two-day trip. It is also worth going through Brukna, to visit the farm "Vaidelotes" and taste real Semigallian peasant food.

WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Cafe "Bārbelīte"
2 Liepu Alley, Bārbele, Bauska Municipality
+371 28632375

Simple but cosy canteen-type interior, friendly, responsive personnel. Traditional Latvian and Lithuanian cuisine, a wide range of dishes, but the special dish – zeppelins!

SEMIGALLIAN LANGUAGE



Not a single document written in the Semigallian language has been preserved to this day, so we can only judge this language based on the scarce onomastic materials and the Lithuanian and Latvian dialects used in the Semigallia territories today. Regarding this Balts dialect, the opinion has been expressed several times that it was assimilated by the Lithuanian language in the south, and by the Latvian language in the north, and that it disappeared in the second half of the 15th century. Semigallic subdialects in the middle dialect of the Latvian language are the basis of the Latvian literary language.



The phonetics of the Semigallian language are based on the features reflected by the toponymic materials. In the vocal system, it has been observed that the diphthong “ei” in the Semigallian language, unlike the Curonic language, sometimes has a reflexive use of “ie” as in Lithuanian and Latvian, for example “Blidenen” as opposed to the Latvian “Blīdiene”. Sometimes the reflexes of the Semigallian language coincide with Latvian (dental consonants), sometimes with Lithuanian (palatal). In order to

explain this contradictory situation, it is necessary to carry out wider studies of Lithuanian and Latvian subdialects in the ancient territory of Semigallia. It is likely that the reflex *š, ž > s, z* existed in the Semigallian language, as in the Latvian language, which is probably evidenced by the following toponyms: *Bersenene, Missa, Silene, Vester* or *Westhardas*. There is an opinion that the final *n* of the syllable has been lost in the case of *Blidenen*, however toponymy studies have shown that, just like in Western Balts languages, the diphthongs mentioned in the Semigallian language were preserved, e.g., *Bleñdiena, Puñkas, Skruñdu leja* etc. Some authors, speaking about the morphology of Semigallians, have recognised a formant typical of the Semigallian language – *ene*, e.g., *Blīdiene, Eglonene, Zebrene*, etc. similar to – *uve*. In the Semigallian language, the *ē* stem has been particularly productive. In terms of the substratum of the Semigallian language, some historical forms are observed, such as *Thervethene* and *Terevethene*. Some authors have concluded that a short vowel remained before the tautosyllabic *r*, and after these diphthongs another vowel of often uncertain quality was formed, e.g., *berizs*: lat. *bērzs* (birch); *darazs*: lat. *dārzs* (garden); *galads*: lat. *galds* (table); *varina*: lat. *vārna* (crow); *zirags*: lat. *zirgs* (horse).

LITHUANIA



[Watch the video -
In the Footprints of the
Semigallians](#)



SEMIGALLIA

What is Semigallia? What message have the people who lived here a few centuries ago left us about themselves? What can we see and experience in Semigallia today? What is the origin of the name Semigallia (lat. Zemgale)? Linguists have different opinions on this, some say it comes from the “end” (gale) of the north (ziem), in other words, the northern borderlands. This could have been the name given to the Semigallians by the tribe living further south, such as the Samogitians or Lithuanians. According to other linguists, the name could refer to a low-lying land – the Germans called these lands *Niederland*. There are those who believe that the name may derive from the name of a water body. The name Zemgale may have given rise to more names with the ending *-gala*, such as: *Gimbogala*, *Birjagala*, *Brazdigala*, etc. Or, according to still other linguists, were these places important centres of the old Balts faith and princely power, fortresses that signified power and solidity?

The Semigallians are one of the Balts tribes. The first unreliable information about the Semigallians and Semigallia comes from the Scandinavian chronicle *Annales Ryenses* (c. 870), which tells of how the Danes conquered all of Prussia, Semigallia



*Bird-shaped pendant,
Šiauliai “Aušros” Museum archive*

and Karelia. *Ingvar's Saga of the Far-Away Traveller* tells the story of a journey to Semigallia to collect corvée on behalf of the Swedish king Olof Skötkonung (c. 1021). From the middle of the 14th century onwards, the name of Semigallia is no longer mentioned. There are few written sources about Semigallia, so archaeological finds are the most important evidence of the people who lived there in the 5th–14th century. According to I. Vaškevičiūtė,

archaeological artefacts show that the Semigallian tribe evolved in around the 5th–6th century. The areas inhabited by the Semigallians cover the territory of the Mūša (Lielupé) basin. In the 14th century, most of Semigallia belonged to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, while the northern part belonged to Livonia. From the beginning of the 12th century, the Ruthenian chronicles, and from the 13th century onwards – the sources of the Livonian Order, begin to mention the Semigallians. Livonian sources divide the territory of the Semigallian tribe in the 13th century into 7 lands. It is believed that before the German invasion, the Semigallians did not form a more unified political unit. Small territories were governed by individual dukes. Of all the Livonian tribes, the Semigallians resisted the Germans the longest and most persistently. In 1290, the freedom struggles of the Semigallians ended with the burning of Sidabra Castle.

Continued on page 62.



Archaeological findings show that the local population did not abandon many of the settlements after the 13th century. From the 14th century onwards, the Crusaders built their castles and settlements in the vicinity of the most important hillforts in the region: In 1321, the Order rebuilt Mežotne Castle, in 1335 it built Dobele Castle, and in 1339 it built Tērvete Wooden Castle. Where were the lands of the Semigallians?

The available sources are not very informative, so the boundaries of the lands are still only approximate. According to traditional historiography, in the middle of the 13th century Semigallia consisted of 7 lands: Silenē, Žagarē, Duobē, Sparnenē, Tervetē, Duobelē and Upmalē. These areas are roughly defined by the concentration of burial sites around the central hillfort. Among the lands were sparsely populated intertribal areas or barren lands.



According to historian and archaeologist E. Vasiliauskas, in the 12th-13th century there were about 14 more or less densely or sparsely inhabited lands with centres on well-fortified hillforts with foot settlements, which consisted of castle districts with central villages and their associated fields. The areas inhabited by the Semigallians in the 14th and 15th centuries were divided between two states: the southern part belonged

to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the northern part to the Livonian Order. In the 1430s, the Lithuanian ruler Gediminas called himself the ruler of the Semigallians, apparently claiming to rule over the entire territory inhabited by the Semigallians (*princeps et dux Semigalle*). This political border, which crossed the areas inhabited by the Semigallians, lasted for several centuries and was re-established in 1921 as the border between Lithuania and Latvia. Interestingly, the border between the states, which was formed in the 14th-16th century, has remained almost unchanged until today.

According to archaeologist I. Vaškevičiūtė, the culture of the Semigallians has remained identical in both the northern and southern parts. It would be pointless to look for any differences between them, as they are a homogeneous tribe, only artificially divided into two parts in the last stage of its development, when the process of consolidation of all Balts tribes had already begun. If there are cultural differences between the southern and northern parts of the country, they are no greater than those between its western and eastern borders. And no tribe has escaped such differences.

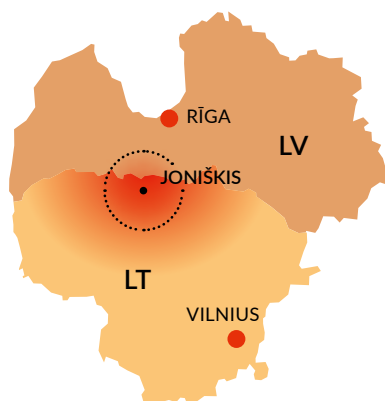




*Above: Žuvininkai Hillfort
(Salduvė Hill)*

*Below:
Semigallia landscape*





29. ŽAGARĖ ESKER AND ŽVELGAITIS HILLFORT

Žagarė Esker is a legacy of the last ice age: a long and narrow ridge from sand and gravel carried by meltwater into the crevasses and tunnels of the glacier. It is one of the longest eskers in Lithuania, and one of the most spectacular, as the plains around the ridge are flat. The 3.6 km Žagarė Esker Cognitive Path in Žagarė Regional Park offers a wonderful chance to admire the beautiful nature (a protected *Natura 2000 area*), to observe birds, animals or insects, and to camp.

JONIŠKIS AND SURROUNDINGS

ŽAGARĖ – JONIŠKIS DISTRICT – JONIŠKIS

Joniškis Tourism and Business

Information Centre: www.visitjoniskis.lt

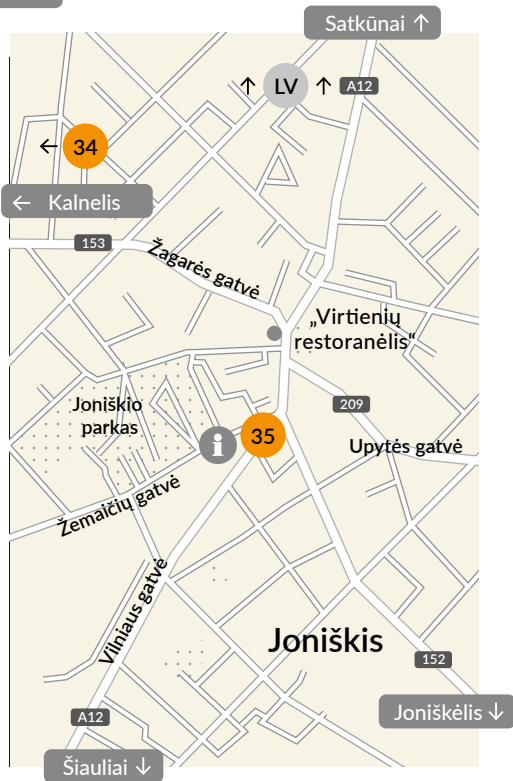
HISTORIC LANDS –

ŽAGARĖ AND SIDABRĖ



One of the stops on the Žagarė Esker Cognitive Path is the 2nd hillfort of Žagarė, known as Žvelgaitis Hillfort, Aukštadvaris, the Grey Hill, dating back to the 13th–14th century. During the excavations, the site of a 16th–18th century manor house, the remains of a burnt 13th century wooden building, 13th–17th century finds were discovered: brass horseshoe brooches, iron chisels, spears, brooches, plain and thrown pottery items, craquelure, a 17th century Riga coin.







Above: Žvelgaitis Hillfort

Below: Raktuvē Hillfort



According to archaeologists, it may have been the site of a wooden castle of the Archbishop of Riga, and later of the Livonian Order, in the 13th-15th century. In the 16th-18th century, the castle hillfort was the seat of the Old Žagarė manor, which belonged to the Syrevičius and Umiastauskis families.

 *P. Cvirkos Street, Žagarė, Joniškis District*

GPS 56.35555, 23.23268

 4 km



30. RAKTUVĖ HILLFORT WITH SETTLEMENT

Archaeologists have established that the Raktė or Raktuvė, hillfort dates back to two periods. The first human occupation (from the earliest finds of a bone pin sherd and striated pottery) dates back to the Late Brass Age and Early Stone Age (1000-1 BC). At that time, the hillfort had a settlement of cattle breeders. In the second period (throwing pottery, stone moulding plate), in the 10th century, it was

inhabited by the Semigallians. A castle was then built on the hill and in addition to defence it, crafts and other businesses flourished. The hillfort is about 95 m long and 43 m wide, the site is quadrangular, elongated, and the slopes are 6-7 m high. The hillfort has been badly disturbed since the mid-19th century by the burial of the dead and the construction of a wooden chapel in the centre of the site. Various archaeological finds have been discovered on the site. The most impressive are a stone mould for casting pewter jewellery (one of 11 sites in Lithuania) and a bone plate with inscribed circles and scored pits – perhaps the only find of such kind.

 *P. Cvirkos Street, Žagarė, Joniškis District*

GPS 56.35706, 23.23096



31. ŽAGARĖ REGIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTRE

The Žagarė Regional Park Visitor Centre's exposition *Mysteries of Dolomite* shows the uniqueness of this region. The exposition is symbolically linked, both in terms of colour and graphics, by the distinctive feature of the soil foundation of Žagarė region, i.e., dolomite. Sedimentary rocks – dolomites – formed on the bottom of the warm, salty sea (around 360 million years ago). As the last glacier retreated and melted, it was in Žagarė that boulders, sand and clay were deposited on the surface of the dolomites, leaving the dolomite at

a depth of 0.3–6 m. The structure of dolomite on display, intertwined with roots and branches, evolved into the motif of antlers, and the deer (the symbol of Žagarė Regional Park) accompanies visitors throughout the exposition. In addition to dolomite, it also tells the story of rare plants, Tyrelis Swamp, and hunting. There is a scarecrow room, a classroom of Žagarė dialect, where one can read stories and sayings written in the local language, and on the screen there are elderly people speaking to visitors in their own dialect.

 1 Malūno Street, Žagarė, Joniskis District

GPS 56.362231, 23.264298



Žagarė Regional Park Visitor Centre

32. MŪŠOS TYRELIS COGNITIVE WALKWAY



Our ancestors believed that mysterious spirits searched for victims in the swamps at night, and that such places were best left alone. Even today, most people still regard wetlands with reverential awe, even though it is in the wetlands that one can get to know unique nature



untouched by man. One of them is Mūša Tyrelis in Žagarė Regional Park, which has the longest boardwalk in Lithuania. The trail is included in the Lithuanian Book of Records and covers almost 8 km. It is a real discovery for those who are interested in the ecosystem of swamps, as it provides a chance to get acquainted with the flora and fauna of the moorland in an untouched environment, and to enjoy the silence of the swamp inhabitants, such as grouse, common cranes and geese. The site is protected at the European level.

 Jankūnai, Joniškis District

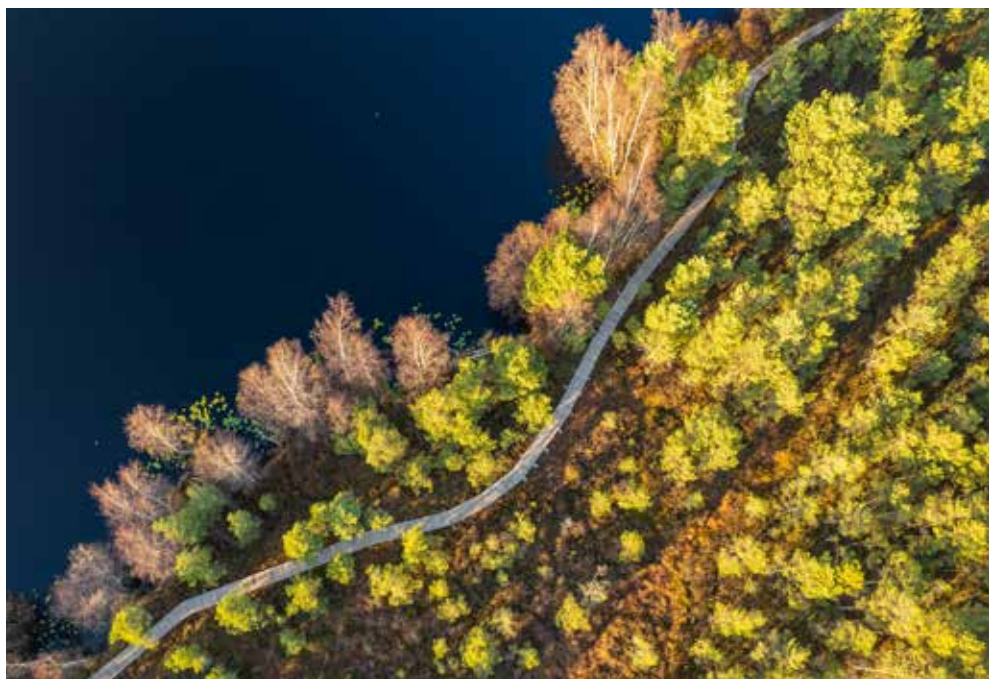
GPS 56.21894, 23.26144

 6–8 km





Mūšos Tyrelis Cognitive Walkway



33. MATAS SLANČIAUSKAS HOMESTEAD- MUSEUM



Matas Jonas Slančiauskas was a well-known Lithuanian public figure of the late 19th to early 20th century, an editor of the first national Lithuanian newspaper Aušra, a book smuggler, a publicist, a collector of folklore. Together with his comrades, the social activist founded the secret society Atgaja in 1889, the aim of which was to revive the Lithuanian spirit, disseminate books, and collect materials for local history. He collected, created and bequeathed more than 70 unique handwritten collections of folklore to future generations. Most of the tales written by M.J. Slančiauskas consist of magical tales, which contain

many remnants of the old Balts religion and mythology, typical of the plots of traditional tales. There are many mythical creatures (God, the Devil, fairies, witches, wizards) with whom people come into contact. Visit the museum and feel the living texts, the unique breath of time through fairy tales, fables, anecdotes, beliefs and spells, proverbs and sayings. The museum also has an ethnographic exposition of the Aukštaitians.

 *Reibiniai, Joniškis District*

GPS 56.18129, 23.3644

 <https://joniskiomuziejus.lt>



34. KALNELIS HILLFORT WITH SETTLEMENT



The hillfort is located on a separate hill, the site is oval, the slopes are 4–6 m high, and there is a castle foot with a plaza on the other side of the ditch, on a hill about 3 m high. The 3 ha area has a foothill settlement (explored in 1990 and 2003–2004), where a cultural layer up to 90 cm thick has formed, dating back to the 9th–13th century. It is a place of discovery of coarse and thrown pottery, pieces of silver alloy, fragments of brass sword scabbard sheaths, a horseshoe shaped brooch fragment, iron knives, a spur, an awl, jeweller's hammers and other items. On the hillfort stood the





Joniškis Museum of History and Culture

castle of the Semigallians called Sidabra. It was the last fortress to be occupied by the Crusaders. In 1289, the Teutonic Order attacked the castle, and in 1290, after its inhabitants fled, it was burnt down. Sidabra Castle is a symbol of the unrelenting struggle of the Semigallian tribe against the Livonian Order. The castle was first mentioned in the sources in 1288, the same year Joniškis was founded, which is now called the capital of the Lithuanian part of Semigallia.

35. JONIŠKIS MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE



It exhibits unique and valuable archaeological finds that tell of the history, archaeology, ethnic culture and folk art heritage of the Semigallia region. The museum houses relics of the old Semigallian way of life and warfare, reconstructions of Semigallian clothing (archaeological costumes from the 9th and 12th centuries by the author D. Steponavičienė), and teach interesting historical facts from the earliest times to the present day. This is the only museum to show the exceptional finds of an 11th century tomb from the rich Semigallian burial site of Kurmaičiai-Linksmėnai, where the deceased were buried with a large number of grave goods, including five collars, wrap-around bracelets, and cross-studs covered with silver plaques. Next to the exhibition are the tombs of 11th century male soldiers, with the characteristic broad-bladed fighting knives, swords and thrusting spears, a single-bladed sword and knife, a bow-shaped poppy pin and a silver collar. Educational programmes: "Lithuania in our hearts", "Wax painting of Easter eggs", "More", "Christmas candle", "What the sources of history tell us".



Kalnelis, Joniškis District

GPS 556.2433254, 23.5428216



6 Vilnius Street, Joniškis

GPS 56.239084, 23.614578



<https://joniskiomuziejus.lt>





WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Restaurant Virtienų Restoranėlis
Miesto square 11, Joniškis
+370 68081101

The dumpling restaurant offers a wide range of cooked dumplings in different flavours. It is a traditional dish of the Semigallia region, which used to be loved by many, even nobility. There is a choice of other Semigallian dishes, such as smoked bacon with rye bread and homemade cottage cheese.



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Skaistgirys Barefoot Trail
Skaistgirys, Joniškis District
56.3034973,23.3823371



WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

Joniškis Tourism and Business Information Centre
9 Žemaičių Street, Joniškis
+370 42652388
www.visitjoniskis.lt



RECIPE FOR A TRADITIONAL DISH

DUMPLINGS WITH COTTAGE CHEESE AND BACON

Dalia Motik, Joniškis

Ingredients.

Dough: 500 g wheat flour, 200 ml water, 1 egg, salt.

Stuffing: 300 g cottage cheese, 100 g smoked bacon, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon poppy seeds.

Knead the dough with all the ingredients, cover it with a damp cloth and leave it to rise for half an hour. In the meantime, the stuffing can be prepared by mashing the cottage cheese with the egg and finely chopped bacon, and adding the poppy seeds. Then knead the dough again. The kneaded dough is pinched into pieces, formed into a ball, rolled in flour and the dough is rolled out thinly with a rolling pin into a circle. Add a teaspoon of filling, fold in half, pinch the edges and roll up with your fingers. Boil in salted water for about 10 minutes. Dumplings are served with sour cream.

WHAT IS THE LANDSCAPE LIKE IN SEMIGALLIA?

Semigallia opens out onto vast plains, with a gradual decrease in altitude from south to north, from 30-40 m at the Linkuva ridge to 5-10 m at the Lielupé lowlands. The Lithuanian and Latvian sides of Semigallia are connected by the tranquil River Mūša (Lielupe), an ancient trade waterway. These lands are extremely fertile. The region is dominated by clayey carbonate soils, with an average annual rainfall of around 550 mm. It is not surprising that Semigallia has some of the richest lands. The shallow plains allowed arable farming to flourish, and settlements developed alongside cultivated fields. Rivers and streams, like colourful ribbons, stretching across the plains, nourished the land and facilitated human communication and settlement. The area is famous for its dolomite deposits, outcrops and sinkholes. Semigallia is rich in deciduous forests. The beautiful and orderly plains of Mūša, uneven, exciting because of the many rivers and streams, with galleries of trees, meadows, lush grasses. The land was created by ploughmen, forcing spruce, birch and aspen forests away from the river valleys, leaving only wooded patches of plain. Lakes make up a large part of the landscape, with springs and springheads making up a smaller part. Water was one of the main means of transportation in Semigallia.

Semigallia landscape





36. PAVIRVYTĖ MANOR



One of Lithuania's cultural heritage sites is Pavirvytė manor. The history of the manor, located near the Svirkančiai outcrop, on the right bank of the River Virvytė, dates back to the beginning of the 19th century. Until 1840, Pavirvytė manor belonged to Ilinčius. A mobile Polish reading room was set up in the manor, which was available to the owners of surrounding manors and intellectuals from Vieکشniai. The famous Lithuanian writers Povilas Višinskis and Marija Lastauskienė (Lazdynų Pelėda), who paid a lot of attention to Balts culture, were visitors of the former library here.



14 Pavirvytės Street, Pavirvytė,
Mažeikiai District

GPS 56.174273, 22.531773



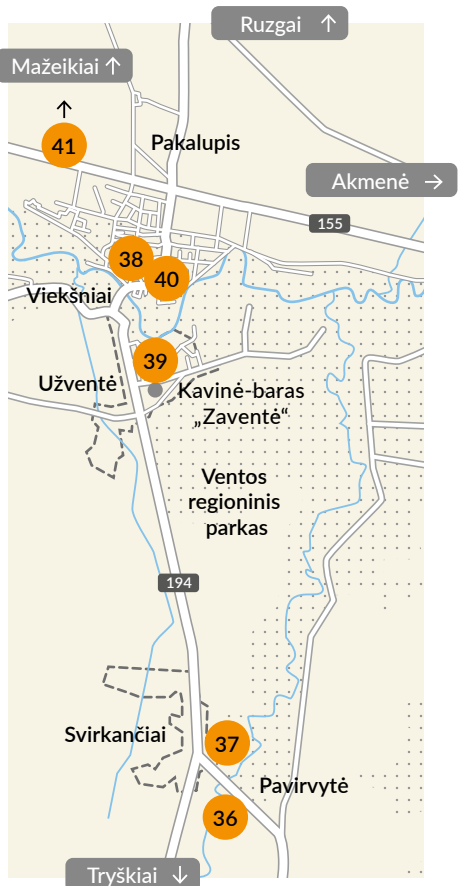
www.ventosparkas.lt



MAŽEIKIAI AND SURROUNDINGS

MAŽEIKIAI DISTRICT – MAŽEIKIAI
Mažeikiai Tourism and Business
Information Centre:
www.visit.mazeikiai.lt

SEMIGALLIA, KURŠAS
HISTORIC LAND – ŠILINĖ





37. SVIRKANČIAI OUTCROP



Svirkančiai outcrop is located on the left bank of the River Virvytė, in the Svirkančiai recreational area, in the village of Svirkančiai, Vieکشniai Eldership. It is about 14.5 m high and 50 m long. The high slope of the outcrop offers views of the Virvytė valley, and the valley's characteristic elements, which are the loop of the river, the floodplain and the first terraces, and the island in the bed of the River Virvytė. The geological section of the outcrop provides convincing evidence that at the end of the middle period of the Nemunas, around 30,000 years ago, before the last glacier reached the region, there was a large lake.

The lake was discovered and its contours were determined during geological mapping of the surrounding area. The palaeolake was large, about 77 square kilometres, and its existence is important for the reconstruction of the climato-stratigraphic events of the entire Nordic-Baltic region, as the palaeogeography of the Middle Rhine period has been interpreted in many different ways and by different scholars. For example, the continental ice sheet is said to have covered parts of Poland and Denmark during this period, with tongues reaching into western Lithuania and Latvia. Research on the Svirkančiai and Purviai outcrops shows that the Venta area and adjacent lands were covered by a lake-rich forest tundra, which could not have been near a glacier.



Svirkančiai, Mažeikiai District

GPS 56.180576, 22.52929



www.ventosparkas.lt



Pavirvytė Manor



Above: Svirkančiai Outcrop

Below: Herb Plant Farm of
Jadvyga Balvočiūtė



38. HERB PLANT FARM OF JADVYGA BALVOČIŪTĖ



Farm is an open-air plant exhibition that allows you to feel, hear and try the power of plants. Jadvyga Balvočiūtė will invite you to take a walk around the organic herb farm, let you smell the various plants of Lithuanian meadows, reveal the secrets of the ancients about collecting and preparing herbs, and serve you fresh tea filled with the strength of nature. Jadvyga Balvočiūtė founded her herbal farm in Žemaitija, in the village of Gyvoliai. The woman has amassed a rich collection of plants spread over an area of almost 15 hectares and more than 100 types of plants are grown here.

 27 Virvytės street, Gyvoliai,
Mažeikiai District

GPS 56.2230677, 22.5178564

 www.jadvyga.lt



39. SACRED PINES OF SANTEKLIAI FOREST



Ancestors believed in the power of trees. The holy pines of Santekliai are a botanical natural heritage object protected by the state, a significant part of the ancient sacred places of Vieکشniai and the surrounding areas. Pines are associated with the belief that these mighty trees are the Sun's resting place and mythical throne. Santekliai pine is a majestic tree that has reached natural maturity with the remains of hanging chapels. The pine tree is 26 m tall, the trunk girth at a height of 1.3 m is 2.81 m, the height of the crown is 12 m, the width is 9 m, the shape is vertically oval, irregular, the projection area is 100 square meters. Santekliai pine is a mythological tree that once grew in the territory of the Balts sanctuary.

 Gyvoliai, Mažeikiai District

GPS 56.227401, 22.573682

 www.ventosparkas.lt



40. VIEKŠNIAI PHARMACY MUSEUM



Viekšniai Pharmacy Museum is an unparalleled village-type pharmacy museum in Lithuania, with preserved living quarters of the pharmacist family as well as the entire history of the pharmacy handwritten by the pharmacist himself. The pharmaceutical exposition features not only 19th century pharmacy furniture and tools for the production of medicines, but also utensils and pharmaceutical



raw materials (parts of crayfish, Siberian beaver glands). The museum has a restored herb garden of several acres, where various educational and practical activities take place, and medicinal and herbal plants are grown. The uniqueness of the garden is revealed through herbs of all sizes—from the smallest herbs to bushes, and even large lime trees.

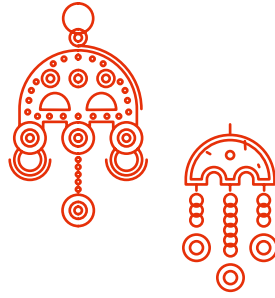


3 Tiltos Street, Viekšniai,
Mažeikiai District

GPS 56.2320453, 22.5161504



www.mazeikiumuziejus.lt



41. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPOSITION OF THE MAŽEIKIAI MUSEUM



The museum brings together a historical mix, where unique archaeological treasures of the Curonian, Semigallian and Samogitian tribes (found only in the Mažeikiai region) are displayed in a modern way. Here one will be able to unravel the mysteries of the development of the cultures of the Balts tribes and their interactions. The exhibition includes not only artefacts (Curonian, Semigallian and Samogitian jewellery, weapons), but also unique finds: zoomorphic figurines, amber articles, amulets, a wrought horn, a special helmet, and maps of the territories of the Balts tribes, burial sites, hillforts, and battle sites. This museum takes you back in time: replicas of artefacts enhance the knowledge of history and culture. Educational activities: “Getting to know the craft of bark craft”, “Balts tribes and archaeological finds”, “Balts jewellery”, “Creating metal jewellery and metal archaeology”.



9 V. Burbos Street, Mažeikiai

GPS 556.316048, 22.34664



www.mazeikiumuziejus.lt





Archaeological Exposition of the Mažeikiai Museum



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Café-bar "Zaventė"
1 Virvytės Street, Užventė, Mažeikiai District
+370 61611422
www.zaventesbaras.lt



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Sunstone in Ruzgai
5 Mokyklos Street, Ruzgai, Mažeikiai District
56.345126, 22.185622

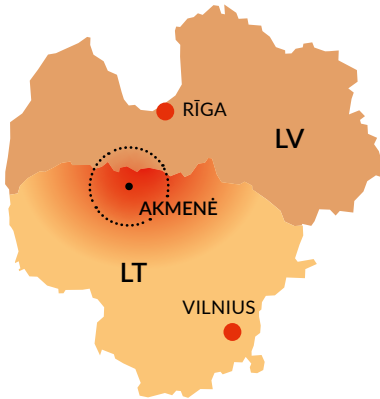
The stone is known by several names: Dapšiai Mythological Stone, Brasta Stone, Ruzgai Stone, but it is also called the Sunstone because of the four 38-50 cm wide circles that resemble plates and could have symbolised the sun. This is a mystery for archaeologists, as no other stones in Lithuania have such marks.



WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

"Žiogės Keramika"
6 Vingio Street, Žiogaičiai, Mažeikiai District
+370 67637147
www.zioge.lt

Here one will find a wide selection of festive souvenirs, crockery, medals, interior details, clay moulding education, ceramic firing services and individual orders.



AKMENĒ AND SURROUNDINGS

PAPILĒ – AKMENĒ – AKMENĒ
DISTRICT – AKMENĒ

Akmenė District Tourism and Business
Information Centre: www.akmene.lt

HISTORIC LANDS – DUOBENĒ
AND ŠILINĒ



42.

THE FIRST HILLFORT
OF PAPILĒ. TOMB OF
SIMONAS DAUKANTAS

The first hillfort of Papilė in one of the oldest towns in Samogitia, is located on the left bank of the River Venta, on the high ground, at the confluence with an unnamed stream. It is believed that the hillfort was used from the end of the 10th century to the 14th century. The site is almost quadrangular, elongated, 55x25 m in size. The slopes are



steep and up to 20 m high. The site and the ditch are occupied by a 19th century cemetery, the graves of which destroyed the cultural layer and buried the embankment. Papilė Castle and its surroundings were attacked by the Crusaders in 1339 and 1359. To the north and west is the former settlement of Papilys. Simonas Daukantas – Lithuanian historian, writer and educator, one of the first ideologists of the national revival – was buried in the hillfort cemetery in 1864. S. Daukantas was the first to write the history of Lithuania in Lithuanian.



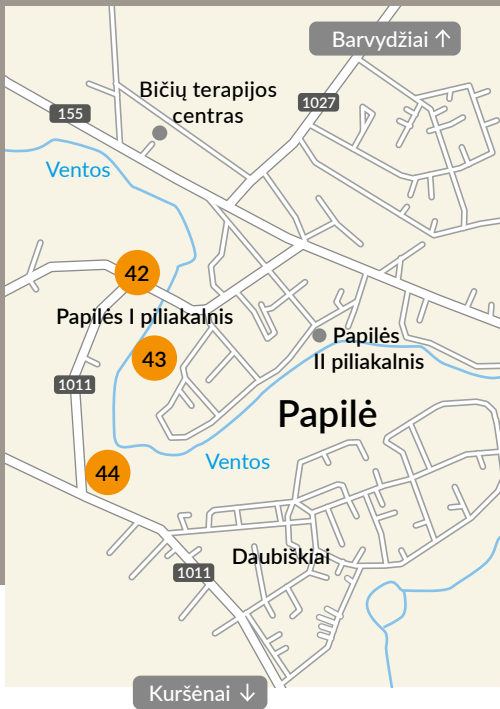
Papilė, Akmenė District

GPS 56.149594, 22.78421



www.akmenesmuziejus.lt







Above: the First Hillfort of Papilē

Below: Jurakalnis Geological Cognitive Trail



43. PAPILĖ MULTI-TRUNK LIME TREE



The Papilė multi-trunk small-leaved lime tree (*Tilia cordata* Mill.) is a state-protected botanical natural heritage site. The former 16-trunked lime tree now has thirteen trunks, and one more that has fallen. The trunks are 0.3 m thick and about 23 m high. The lime is more than 150 years old.



Liepų Street, Papilė,
Akmenė District

GPS 56.147459, 22.785033



44. JURAKALNIS GEOLOGICAL COGNITIVE TRAIL



The Jurakalnis Geological Cognitive Trail is a geological nature trail in the vicinity of Papilė, almost 2 km long, where one can get a change to try out different surfaces: natural surface trails, pavements, and the wooden board trail along the River Venta. The trail overlooks the Jurakalnis ravine outcrop and headland, the first Papilė hillfort, a lookout point and a lookout tower, which are unique in the Baltic region. The Jurakalnis Geological Cognitive Trail allows visitors to imagine what nature looked like in the times when the ancient Semigallians lived here. Back then, during the Crusades, the River Venta and its tributaries were an important trade route and a communication artery. The nearby Papilė Hillfort was one of the most famous Semigallians settlements in Lithuania.



Sodų Street, Papilė,
Akmenė District

GPS 56.143477, 22.782623



www.ventosparkas.lt



2 km



Wooden/gravel





Kamanos Educational Trail



45. KAMANOS EDUCATIONAL TRAIL

It is one of the most protected and most explored nature (wetland) spots in Lithuania, where the Kamanos Educational Trail has been established. It can only be accessed with a guide. S. Daukantas wrote that the old lands of the Balts had sunk in this forest. Almost 4 km along the trail, one can see how the thicket of the mixed forest rests on the marsh, how the rising slope of the high marsh is gradually covered with a continuous layer of moss, where only the most observant will be able to see the



insectivorous little sundew. One will have the opportunity to admire the Kamanos old lake, which dates back to the melting of the ice age, and hear and listen to the sounds of birds, wind and water. Please note that it is forbidden to visit the reserve without a staff member from the Directorate.

 2 Pušų Street, Akmenės 2-asis Village, Akmenė District

GPS 56.25016, 22.731523

 www.kamanos.lt

 3,6 km



Akmenė Regional Museum

46. AKMENĖ REGIONAL MUSEUM

Akmenė Regional Museum will surprise you with its rich and colourful exposition. Here you will see the remains of the world's oldest phytosaur found in the Šaltiškiai quarry, an exceptional collection of butterflies, which is the largest in Lithuania with as many as 5,000 of them with almost all of the world's most beautiful butterflies, and the unique finds of the Papilė burial ground from the 7th and 13th centuries. During the visit to the museum, one will be able to see how the ancestors of the Semigallians, buried in the Papilė cemetery, used to dress up, with about 500 archaeological artefacts and weapons found: iron axes, knives, awls, spearheads, men's and women's jewellery.

 17 K. Kasakauskos Street, Akmenė

GPS 56.2450244, 22.7505226

 www.akmenesmuziejus.lt



47. STUD FARM
"DELTA"

Lithuania has centuries of horse breeding traditions. The breed of Žemaitukas horses, which was bred and nurtured by the Lithuanians and which has made Lithuania famous, has been known



to the world since the 6th and 7th centuries. Horses are an inseparable part of Lithuania's historical and cultural heritage. Aušra Girdenienė, the founder of the "Delta" Stud Farm, talks about her hobby: "For me, horses are like wings for a bird. Riding a horse gives me the opportunity to rise above the mundane." A sightseeing trip on a Žemaitukas horse or a crossbreed not only leaves a lasting impression, but is also a colourful experience while visiting hillforts and enjoying the landscapes of the Venta valleys.



*Beržyno Street, Barvydžiai,
Akmenė District*

GPS 55.9323665,23.3129485



*www.facebook.com/pg/
zirgynasDelta*

WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE
SOMETHING SPECIAL?WHERE CAN I TASTE
SOMETHING SPECIAL?

*Café-hotel "Naujoji Akmenė"
11A Respublikos Street, Naujoji Akmenė
+370 68578635
www.akmenehotel.lt*

*Café-homestead "Viliošiai"
Viliošiai, Akmenė District
+370 68317339
www.viliošiai.lt*

*Bee Therapy Centre
14 Nepriklausomybės Street, Papilė,
Akmenė District
+370 69875982
www.biciuterapija.lt*

The Bee Therapy Centre is the most comprehensive complex for the recovery of health disorders, located in the beautiful town of Papilė. Here one can relax by sleeping "on the bees", while biofield therapy will help strengthen the immune system and improve one's well-being.

ABOUT BEES AND TREE HOLLOW



The tradition of beekeeping is particularly characteristic of the Semigallian region, with finds dating back to the 5th and 18th centuries testifying to a highly developed hollow-beekeeping system. According to the researchers, special hollows or cavities were cut out in oak, pine and other trees for the bee colonies, which were then covered with hewn planks of wood. To climb the tree to reach the high hollow, one used a special tool (vedega), which one leant against the tree to prop oneself up, thus freeing the hands. Vedegas were used not only for beekeeping, but also for fishing, as they could be used to cut out an ice hole in winter. From the 11th century onwards, the business of hollow beekeeping grew, influenced by international trade relations: honey was the only sweet product suitable for food and medicine, while wax was needed by craftsmen and was also used to light rooms.

ŠIAULIAI LANDS

Šiauliai is a particularly distinctive centre of the Balts culture, where the boundaries of the three Balts tribes – the Semigallians, the Samogitians and the Aukštaitians – converge, where road crossings that have been important for centuries are still functioning, and where hillforts that bear witness to the glorious Balts past still stand among the forests. The poor knowledge of Šiauliai lands in the 13th-14th century written sources has been repeatedly discussed by historians and linguists when explaining the origin of Šiauliai and the place of the Battle of the Sun in 1236. Almost 20 former burial hillforts or sites are known in the upper basin of the River Dubysa and the Dubysa-Mūša trail, or in the eastern part of the present-day Šiauliai District, where jewellery and other artefacts characteristic of 1st-14th century graves have been found. This means that at that time the Šiauliai area was more densely populated, with small communities. There were also homesteads in the present-day territory of Šiauliai City. It is likely that in around the 4th-5th century, a wooden castle and a settlement on the hill of Salduvė, partly surrounded by marshes and difficult to reach, became the centre of Šiauliai and the neighbouring area. Perhaps the settlement eventually grew to become the political centre of the time, and the entire north-eastern Samogitian



Žuvininkai Hillfort (Salduvė Hill)

Continued on page 89.



land was named after it. Šiauliai was a strong centre of resistance to the invasion of the Brothers of the Sword advancing inward of Lithuania. Žuvininkai Hillfort served as a hiding place where the inhabitants of the surrounding area would run for cover in the case of danger. There were 3 dirt roads leading up the hill through the puddles: from Alexandria (i.e., from the south), from the village of Malavėnai (from the north-east) and somewhere between Ginkūnai and Lake Talkša (from the north-west). The first hidden defence trail (kūlgrinda) is made of logs stacked side by side and packed with stones (4-5 m wide, about 200 m long), and there is a second, much longer one. The importance of the defensive function is evidenced by the hillfort's equipment, which is distinguished by a large defensive rampart at the foot. Šiauliai Castle was the defence centre of the surrounding area in the 5th and 6th centuries. The northern edge of Šiauliai was defended by the large Luponiai Castle, which probably stood on the road to the Žagarė land inhabited by the Semigallians. The shards of moulded potsherds with a rough surface and shards of thrown potsherds found near the hillfort indicate that a settlement and probably a castle existed here at least from the middle of the 1st millennium to the 12th-13th century. This road led to the centre of Žemgalė,



*Women's wrap-around bracelet,
Šiauliai "Aušros" Museum archive*

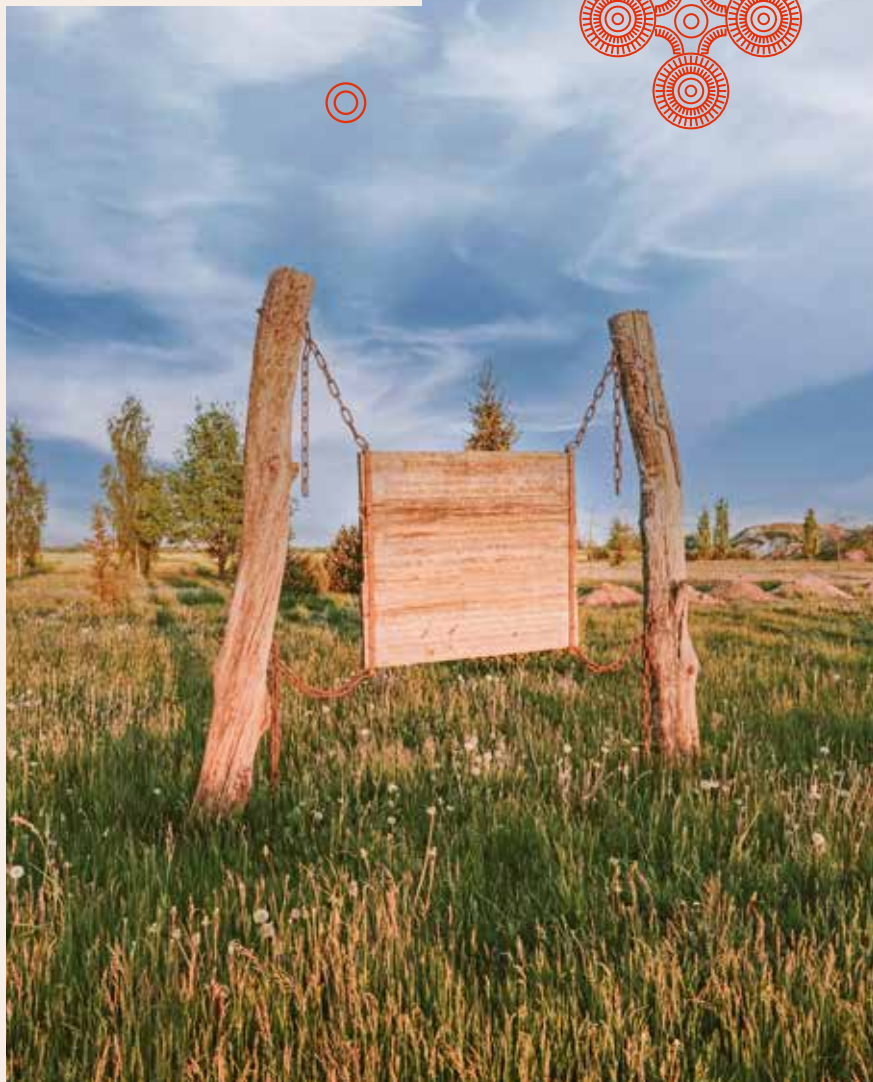
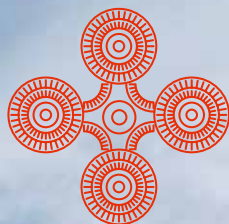
Mežotne, and the River Lielupe, so the castle defended the north-eastern border of Šiauliai land. The largest castle in Šiauliai stood on a hillfort on the bank of the River Dubysa, near Bubiai. It is believed that the German chronicler Herman of Wartberg called this castle "Dubysa Castle in the land of Šiauliai". According to him, the castle was burnt down by the Brothers of the Sword in 1348, rebuilt by the Samogitians shortly afterwards, and then burnt down again on 24 January 1358, after a fierce battle. Most likely, a slightly smaller castle, corresponding to the 10th-14th

century in terms of fortifications, stood on the Kudinai Hillfort near Šiaulėnai, on the southeastern edge of Šiauliai land. Two other less fortified hillforts (shelters) from the 1st millennium to the beginning of the 2nd millennium stood on Normančiai Hillfort near Pakapė and on Velžiai Hillfort near Lake Arimaičiai. Archaeological monuments show that Šiauliai was home to at least 6 or 7 castles of various sizes and dozens of larger or smaller homesteads. At least 4 of them are located in the present territory of Šiauliai.

Continued on page 91.



Watch the video –
[Šiauliai Lands](#)



Place of Memory of the Victory of the Battle of the Sun (Jauniūnai, Joniškis District)

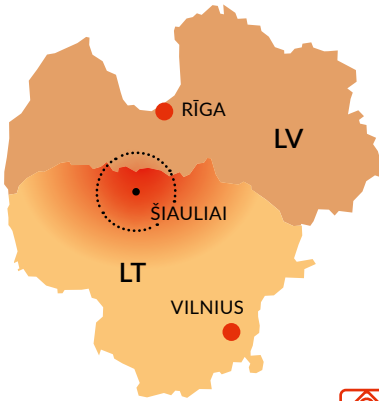
The first one could have been Salduvė Castle and the settlement next to it, and the 6th-16th century Lepšiai burial mounds on the south eastern outskirts of the town. The second settlement was located in the current city centre. This is evidenced by the 7th-15th century ancient burial mounds located about 300 metres north of the city centre. The village grew at the crossroads of the most important roads in Šiauliai. In 1983, a V-VIII century cemetery and two settlements of the same period were discovered in Lieporiai. According to the archaeologist B. Salatkienė, unique finds have been found here: a special burial and commemorative ritual site in the burial ground, with about 70 pillar sites and 45 hearths; a well-preserved site of the iron smelting business, from extracting the ore to working tools and weapons, and the attributes of this business, such as wooden wells and linden-bark buckets. No detailed archaeological investigations have been carried out on Šiauliai Žuvininkai Hillfort and its surroundings, only exploratory investigations. According to the external signs, the hillfort dates back to the 11th-14th century. Pottery shards, an iron spear, a bridle breaker and a brass wrap-around bracelet were found. The former settlement next to Salduvė Castle was called Šiauliai, and eventually the whole surrounding area inhabited by the Samogitians – the land of Šiauliai – came to be named after it. At the end of the 13th century, after subjugating the Semigallians and destroying their last castles in Sidabrė and Žagarė, the Crusaders in the 14th century devastated the regions of Šiauliai and Upytė especially often, trying to push southwards and cut off Samogitia from the rest of Lithuania. The attacks involved the sacking and burning of castles and villages, and the killing or taking into captivity of their inhabitants. Salduvė Castle was destroyed in the 14th century. In 1410, after the defeat of the Crusaders, the fighting with the Livonian Brothers of the Sword also subsided, but Salduvė Castle was not rebuilt, and the Šiauliai settlement that grew at the crossroads of the old roads, in a more convenient and important location, in the centre of the present town, overshadowed the one that existed near Salduvė. In the first half of the 15th century, it became a town and eventually a city.



*Pair of pins with chains,
Šiauliai "Aušros" Museum archive*



*Three pendants and a ring brooch,
Šiauliai "Aušros" Museum archive*

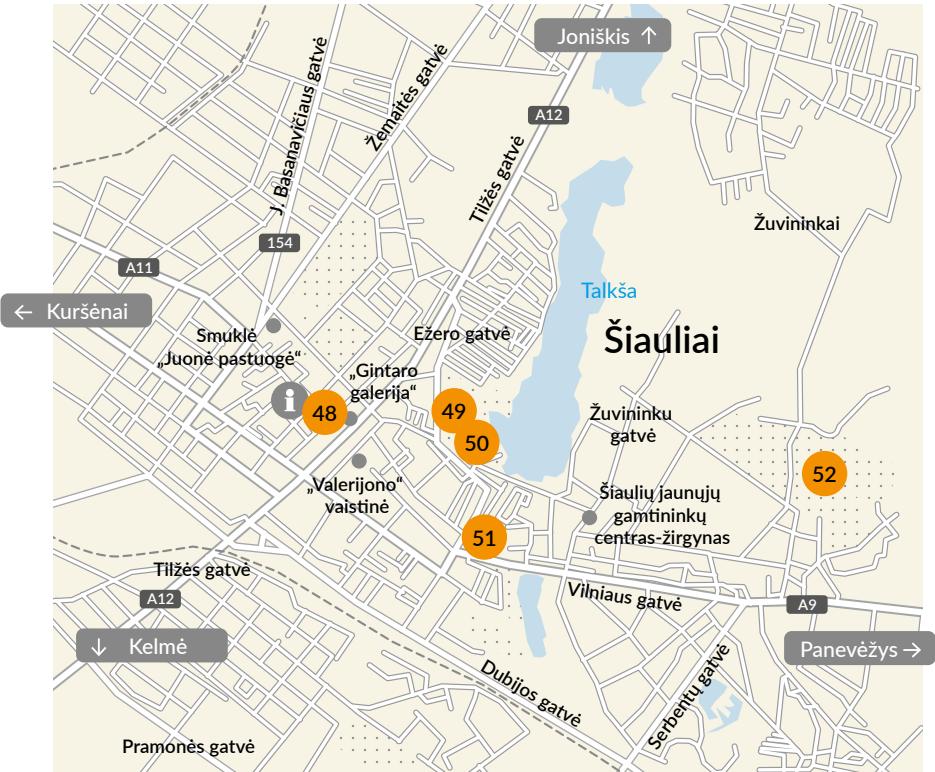
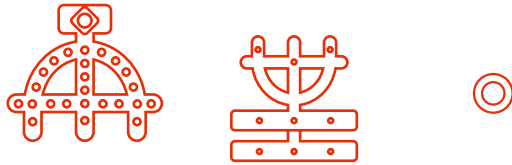


ŠIAULIAI

Šiauliai Tourism Information Centre:
www.visitsiauliai.lt

SEMIGALLIA, SAMOGITIA

HISTORIC LAND - UNKNOWN





48. **BALTS CULTURE EDUCATION CENTRE “BALTS’ ROAD”**



[Watch the video – Get to know the Balts’ culture](#)

The aim of the unique and interactive Balts Culture Education Centre “Balts’ Road” is to encourage individual travel and discover the cultural, natural and culinary heritage of the Balts. Here, modern technologies, replicas of exhibits and educational activities are used to present the history, culture and lifestyle of the Balts, and to create an opportunity to develop knowledge of heritage. Modern contemporary solutions will allow one to “try on” a Balts profession or get a glimpse of Balts’ life. The universally designed centre has an audio guide (on ceramics, metalworking, weaving, multipart songs, food, beekeeping) and the names of the stands are in Braille.

The information in the exhibition aims to stimulate visitors’ curiosity, active participation, knowledge and assimilation of information through the senses of hearing, smell, sight and touch. All information is available in Lithuanian, Latvian and English.

 **213-90 Vilniaus Street, Šiauliai**

GPS 55.932543, 23.313065

 **www.baltukelias.lt**





49. SUNDIAL SQUARE



It is one of the main places in Šiauliai, symbolising the three most important symbols of the city: the sun, the bowman and time. The Sun symbolises the Battle of the Sun that took place in Šiauliai.



The hours 12, 3 and 6, marked on the paving stones, make it easy to remember the date of the battle, i.e., 1236. The golden sculpture "The Bowman" (often referred to as "The Golden Boy" by the townspeople), which is almost four metres high, is linked to the origin of the town's name, and the clock counts the time from the day the town's name was first mentioned.

 Ežero Street, Šiauliai

GPS 55.930723, 23.325164



50. TALKŠA ECO TRAIL



The length of the trail is about 5 km and it is located on the eastern shore of Lake Talkša, in the parks of Talkša and Salduvė. The specialists of the Institute of Botany have drawn up a map of the eco trail with 23 stops, where information boards with detailed descriptions of the nearby objects (on the topics of flora, fauna, landscape diversity) are placed. Walking along this eco trail, one will get to know the nature of the eastern shore of Lake Talkša, admire the landscape of the lake and its surroundings, and the panorama of Šiauliai City. If you pay attention, you will be able to find and identify habitats that are characteristic of the area.

 34 Žvyro Street, Šiauliai

GPS 55.93008,23.32739

 5 km



Gravel/asphalt



51. ŠIAULIAI HISTORY MUSEUM. EDUCATION “ARCHAEOLOGICAL JEWELLERY”



Jewellery is the greatest ancestral legacy. This educational activity tells and demonstrates how jewellery has evolved over time, how its forms have become more complex and varied, how most items of clothing have been transformed into elements of decoration



(pins, brooches, headdress decoration, belt buckles). You will hear the story of how jewellery unrelated to clothing came to replace amulets, no longer worn as a symbol of faith, but rather as a symbol of beauty (collars, temple jewellery, bracelets and rings). Explore replicas of Iron Age jewellery made of brass and try your hand at making a spiral pendant and a wrap-around ring with twisted ends using brass wire.

 47 Aušros Avenue, Šiauliai

GPS 55.9314582,23.2975904

 www.ausrosmuziejus.lt





52. ŽUVININKAI HILLFORT (SALDUVĖ HILL) H

Žuvininkai Hillfort, which stands on the outskirts of Šiauliai, is called Salduvė Hill by the Šiauliai people, and dates back to the 10th-14th century. In the older literature, Salduvė is also called Salda, and one of the earliest explorers of Lithuanian hillforts, Liudvikas Kšivickis, wrote that the actual name of the forgotten hillfort was Kareivių Hill. The site is circular, 20 m in diameter, surrounded on all sides by a rampart, a 1-4 m deep ditch, behind which is a 185 m long rampart with an

outer slope. There is a 10 m wide terrace at the northern and eastern foot of the ditch and rampart with the steep slopes that are 10-15 m high. The 1 ha site includes a foothill settlement.

Salduvė, like many other Lithuanian hillforts, is shrouded in legend. According to one of them, once upon a time, the Duke of the castle and his darling began to live unmarried on this hill. For this, the god Perkūnas caused a huge storm and struck

the mountain with lightning. It is said that the name of the hillfort – Salduvė – is the name of the sweet love that ended so tragically. It is possible that the place name originated from the personal name Saldus. Another legend says that where Salduvė is now, there used to be a very rich town, but its inhabitants lost morality, so a terrible whirlwind came and blew everything away, covering everything with dirt...



There are also stories about a sacred fire burning on the hill, about sacrifices of animals and people, about giants living on the mountain, about the castle of the ruler of the country, and about a church that used to stand on the hillfort. Farmers have allegedly found the bones of giants and ancient artefacts while ploughing and excavating the foot of the hillfort.



 Aleksandrijos Street, Šiauliai

GPS 55.929491, 23.358916



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Valerijonas Pharmacy
173 Vilniaus Street, Šiauliai
+370 41520738
www.valerijonas.lt

Valerijonas Pharmacy is one of the oldest pharmacies in Lithuania that has been operating and upholding the values of traditional pharmacy since its establishment. Today Valerijonas is not just a pharmacy. The place also houses a Provence-style tea room, a favourite of Šiauliai residents and visitors, serving high-quality, healthy plant-based dishes and drinks.

Tavern “Juonė Pastuogė”
31A Aušros Avenue, Šiauliai
+370 41524926
www.jonis.lt

The tavern can offer guests a tasting of Samogitian dishes (cibulynė, kastynys with hot potatoes, spirgūtis with hot potatoes, homemade caraway kvass, etc.). These are authentic dishes from the Samogitia region, as served by our parents and grandparents.



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Stud Farm of Šiauliai Young Naturalists Centre
30 Žuvininkų Street, Šiauliai
+370 61332064
www.gamtininkucentras.lt

One can ride a horse on their own at the Šiauliai Young Naturalists Centre. The horse is readied and saddled after the visitor arrives at the agreed time. The place offers the chance to go for a ride in the surrounding area. Carriage rides in the parks of Talkša and Salduvė are also available.



WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

Šiauliai Tourism Information Centre
213 Vilniaus Street, Šiauliai
+370 41523110
www.visitsiauliai.lt

Amber Gallery
146 Vilniaus Street, Šiauliai
+370 41426537





ŠIAULIAI

SURROUNDINGS

ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT

Šiauliai District Tourism and Business
Information Centre:
www.siauliurajonas.lt

SEMIGALLIA, SAMOGITIA

HISTORIC LAND - UNKNOWN

53. REKČIAI HILLFORT



Rekčiai Hillfort/Vinava Hill is located on a highland promontory, on the right bank of the River Venta, at the confluence with an unnamed stream. The site is almost circular, 7x6 m, surrounded on all sides by a rampart. On the outer side of the northern rampart, 4 m below the site, a trench 25 m long, 13 m wide and 1 m deep has been dug. There is a triangular terrace on the southern slope and there are steep and 8-12 m high. People lived and fought here from the middle of the 1st millennium AD to the 14th century.

The hillfort, which was located away from other ancient defence centres, was a source of fascination and interest for everyone.

Even before World War II, there were rumours that a church stood on the hill, which was later burnt down. And there was a cave that would make a mysterious sound when a stone was thrown into it. Once a shepherdess found a priest's cope, a book and a woollen shawl on a fallen hillside. It was also said that once a year, in the evening, a child's mournful voice would come from the hill, calling for pigs.

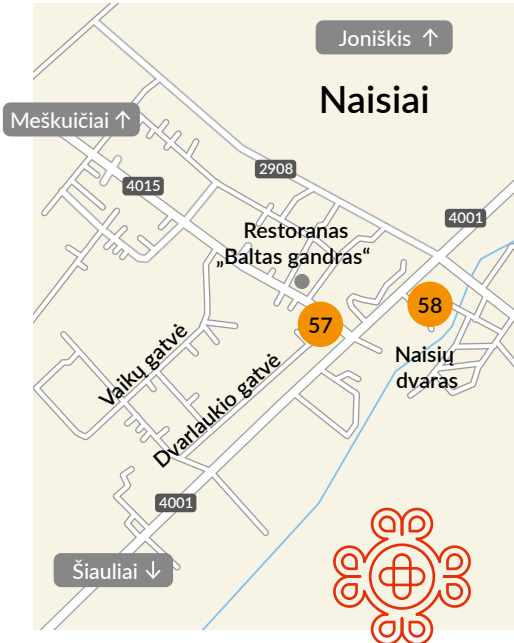
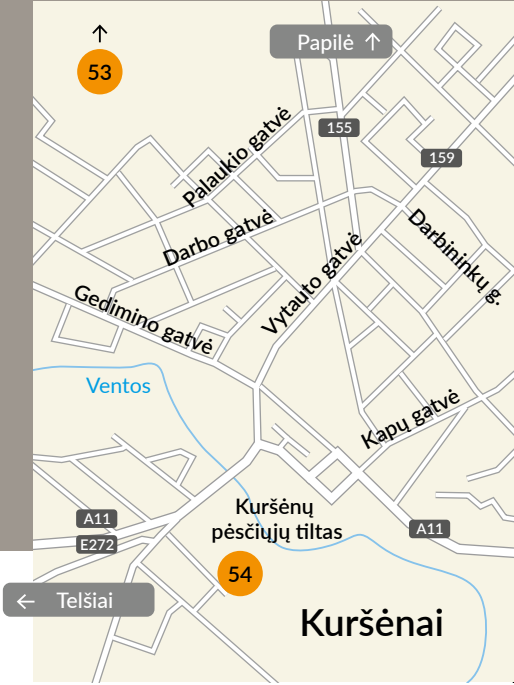


 Rekčiai, Šiauliai District

GPS 56.077543, 22.853721

 www.ventosparkas.lt







Rekčiai Hillfort



54.

**CENTRE OF ETHNIC
CULTURE AND
TRADITIONAL CRAFTS
OF ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITY**

The Centre of Ethnic Culture and Traditional Crafts of Šiauliai District Municipality is located in the Kuršėnai Manor Servants' Quarters. In 2012, the premises were renovated. The premises of the servants' quarters are now used for educational activities in ceramics, wool spinning, ribbon weaving, egg dyeing, and making straw decorations for the Christmas tree. The centre has permanent exhibitions of works and ethnographic exhibitions of folk art of Šiauliai region. In the educational activity "Clay Master Workshop", participants will create their own clay items, learn



about clay making, its properties, use, and pottery firing processes. While making their own clay items, they will be able to imagine how the ancestors used to throw white crockery.



7A Ventos Street, Kuršėnai,
Šiauliai District

GPS

55.999096, 22.934641



www.kursenuamatucentras.lt



55. LUPONIAI HILLFORT



Luponiai Hillfort (Perkūnkalnis, Perkūno kalnas, Raganų kalnas) dates back to the second half of the 1st millennium to the 14th century. The site is oval, elongated and 40x33 m. At its NW end is a 22 m long, 3 m high and 13 m rampart. Slopes are up to 10 m high. Below the site is the triangular forecourt that is 30x35 m. Below the site is also a 5 m wide terrace with a 2 m high external slope. The slopes are medium steep and 4-5 m high. On the 3 ha area there is a foothill settlement (excavated in 1997), where a cultural layer of the 10th-13th century was found, up to 50 cm thick, with an iron lance, an awl, a stone whetstone, a brass coupling, coarse and thrown pottery.



On the south-west side of the hill, the dungeons could be entered through a secret door that only opened at 12:00 at night. At night, the fairies that lived inside would come out of the hill's crypts and dance at the top of the mountain until the roosters crowed. They would party and make circles so loudly that even the ground would shake. Then the hill would calm down, and become silent, as if nothing had happened... And how beautifully they sang – it was heart wrenching. In the woods, by the campfires

we used to listen to them while shepherding the horses and would fall asleep listening. The fairy would wake us up in our sleep: "Come on, boys, let's go to the wedding on the hill up there, let's dance and have a party..." If you went, you wouldn't come back alive... Fairies would dance or tickle you to death. There was no way the boys would go up that hill at night...



Luponiai, Šiauliai District

GPS 56.006158, 23.191581



56. JURGAIČIAI HILLFORT (HILL OF CROSSES)



The Jurgaičiai/Domantai Hillfort, more often known as the Hill of Crosses, is located on the left bank of the River Kulpė and dates back to the 10th-14th century. The site is oval, 17x25 m. At the eastern end, a 13 m long, 2.5 m high, 14 m wide rampart has been built with an outer slope of 7 m descending to the ditch at the foot of the hill, beyond which another rampart has been built from outside. The slopes are steep, 6-8 m high. There is a foothill settlement on an area of 3 ha (excavated in 1990, 1991 and 1993). A 13th-14th century cultural layer up to 1 m thick has been found there, with hearths, a silver brooch, iron knives, chisels, an arrowhead, a



Jurgaičiai Hillfort



glass bead, a stone whetstone, plain and thrown pottery, animal bones, and clay plaster. 200 m to the south-east is a 9th-12th century old burial site. It is believed that the castle of Kuljiai, which was burnt down by the Livonian Order in 1348, stood on the Jurgaičiai/Domantai Hillfort on the historical road leading from Salduvė to Mežotne. The hillfort is a monument of history and architecture, a unique folk art ensemble. There are thousands of crosses on the hillfort, brought from Lithuania and various countries around the world (giving it the name of the Hill of Crosses). The Hill of Crosses is mentioned in written sources for the first time in the mid-19th century (crosses have been found since 1850), it is possible that the crosses were erected after the 1831 uprising.

Legends say that a wooden church used to be there. Every Sunday, people from all the surrounding villages would gather and pray. One fine Sunday, when the church was full of people, there was a knocking sound during the ascent. People were terribly scared. Before they knew what had happened, the church was sinking into the ground. After a few minutes, only the ends of the towers were visible, but they quickly disappeared. The hill where the church stood became flat. Every year, the centre of the hill sinks a little more. People say that the church is decaying and the hill is hollowing out. Years from now, the hill will split.



57. MUSEUM OF BALTS GOD SCULPTURES



It is an open-air museum where the Northern Lithuanian folk artists have created more than 50 oak sculptures of gods, which decorate the museum's 1.4-kilometre-long cognitive trail. Based on Lithuanian, Latvian and Prussian mythology, archaeological research and folklore, the creators of the trail tell of Balts culture, myths, and the values of the old religion: happiness, fate, friendship, love, loyalty and beauty. The Sun and Fire Squares and Alka Hill are the highlights of this route.



Piliakalnio Street, Domantai, Šiauliai District

GPS 56.015188, 23.415352



Parko Street, Naisiai, Šiauliai District

GPS 56.02105, 23.50336



www.naisiai.lt





Above: Naisiai Stud Farm Žemaitukas

Below: Museum of Balts Gods Sculptures



58. NAISIAI STUD FARM ŽEMAITUKAS



It is the largest private breeding facility participating in the Rare Breeds Conservation Programme, breeding, training and preserving the reflections of the Lithuanian historical nature and one of the oldest breeds of horses in Lithuania and Europe – the Žemaitukas breed. Although the species has been threatened with extinction four times, it has been restored. In the 6th-18th century, the Žemaitukas became especially famous in Lithuanian battles against the Crusaders. They are horses with the spirit of a fighter, unique for their history, genetics, endurance, versatility and extraordinary Samogitian character.



They are small, 128-142 cm tall and weigh only 350-420 kg, but they are extremely lively and strong. The Žemaitukas is included in the World Databank on Agricultural Animal Diversity.

 9B Plento Street, Naisiai,
Šiauliai District

GPS 56.01993, 23.522557

 www.naisiai.lt



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Restaurant "Baltas Gandras"

6 Gėlės Street, Naisiai

+370 61237896

www.baltasgandras.lt

The restaurant uses as much produce as possible from farmers and producers in the surrounding area to ensure that each dish reflects its true flavour. In addition, a special menu with the most delicious dishes is available for the little ones.

Restaurant "Angelos Svetainė"

Domantai, Šiauliai District

+370 61251367



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Agailiai Chapel

Agailiai Forest, Šiauliai District

56.119991, 22.954859

The first wooden chapel in Agailiai Forest was built during the serfdom. The church is included on the list of cultural values of the Kuršėnai Rural Eldership. The chapel has a footpath leading to the spring, the water of which is considered miraculous and to have healing powers.

Alpaca Farm-Zoo

Dargaičiai, Šiauliai District

+370 60096968

www.minizoo.lt



WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

Šiauliai District Tourism and Business Information Centre

7 Piliakalnio Street, Domantai,

Šiauliai District

+370 41370860



RADVILIŠKIS AND SURROUNDINGS

RADVILIŠKIS DISTRICT

Radviliškis Tourism Information Centre:
www.inforadviliskis.lt

SEMIGALLIA, AUKŠTAITIJA
HISTORIC LAND - UNKNOWN

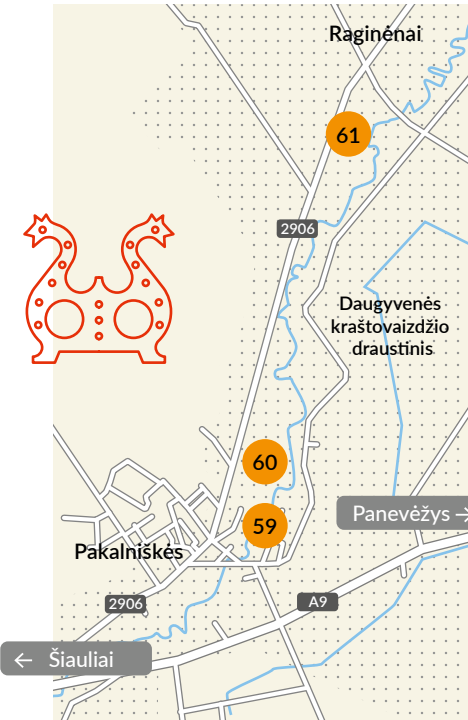
59. KLEBONIŠKIAI RURAL HOUSEHOLD EXHIBITION



The Kleboniškiei Rural Household Exhibition is an open-air museum covering 18 ha. Here one will see the typical buildings of 28 villages from the 19th and 20th century, moved from the surrounding area. Three farmhouses



with ten buildings are owned by the villagers, while the rest belong to the Museum of Rural Life. Expositions are set up in the farmhouses, storehouses, bathhouses, granaries and barns, where the mode of life of the late 19th century farmers has been recreated, and a large





Klebonišiai Rural Household Exhibition

collection of antique machinery and household utensils (jugs, steelyards, butter churns, oven peels, flax brushes, motors, scales, and planers) is presented. In 2010, the Klebonišiai homestead was included on the List of Cultural Heritage and was given the level of regional significance. Educational activity "The Linen Road". Flax is believed to have been cultivated in Lithuania for around 4000 years. The educational activity, using ancient flax processing tools, provides a visual presentation of flax processing, introduces flax cultivation, pulling, head removal, braking, scutching and hackling.



*Kleboniškės, Pakalniškiai,
Radviliškis District*

GPS 55.8646389, 23.4608646



www.daugyvenesmuziejus.lt



60. KLEBONIŠKIAI MOUND WITH ANCIENT SETTLEMENT H

Right next to the village of Pakalniškės lies a piece of millennium-old Lithuanian history, i.e., Pakalniškės Mound (Klebonišiai Hill or Klebonišiai Mound). It stands on a separate hill and dates back to the 1st millennium BC. The mound site is irregularly triangular, elongated, 25 m long and 15 m wide, with steep slopes 6-8 m high. There is a settlement at the foot of the 0.2 ha site. Smooth pottery and clay plaster were found in the 1st millennium BC cultural layer, only 30 cm thick. On the western slope there is a burial mound from the 1st millennium.





Šiauliai Observation Tower



Raginėnai Mound



According to the stories of the people of the Radviliškis region, collected by the members of the Lithuanian Archaeological Society, strange things used to happen on Kleboniškių Mound and its vicinity. Once a man was riding home late at night. They reached Kleboniškių Hill. They rode on and on until the dawn came, but they couldn't get home. In the morning, they saw they had been going in circles all the time. Perhaps the wicked one confused them.

61. RAGINĖNAI MOUND WITH ANCIENT SETTLEMENT

H

Raginėnai Mound/Hill of Witches is one of the most mysterious mounds in north-central Lithuania, dating back to the 1st-2nd millennium BC. It is situated on a high hill, surrounded by Daugyvenė, a ravine, a ditch and a rampart. The site is square, elongated, 20x10 m. Below the top of the rampart is a 5 m wide terrace, and below the terrace is a 5 m wide ditch with a 5 m wide bottom, beyond which is a second rampart, 2 m high and 12 m wide. The slopes are steep, around 9 m high. The 3.74 ha area has a foothill settlement (excavated in 1996), where a cultural layer up to 20 cm thick has been found, including a hearth, a pillar site, a clay weight, coarse, plain, and thrown pottery, as well as bones of animals. The legends tell of goddesses, fairies and witches who lived on Raginėnai Mound. It is believed that at some point, witches used to be burnt here.

Once, a woman was pulling flax and forgot her child. In the evening, she came back to see the fairies surrounding the child, cradling him. Scared, she ran away without her child. In the morning, she went again and found the child beautifully dressed. Another woman deliberately took the child. The fairies began to sway the child, soothing him. But when the mother came, she found the child dead. This is what the goddesses used to do. The goddesses went to the mound because it was a sacred place.



Pakalniškiai, Radviliškis District

GPS 55.8646389, 23.4608646



www.daugyvenesmuziejus.lt



Daukonys, Radviliškis District

GPS 55.792934, 23.86489



www.daugyvenesmuziejus.lt





WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Tavern "Žarija"
2 Ežero Street, Velžiai, Radviliškis District
+370 61427461
www.smuklezarija.lt

"Žarija" is located by Lake Arimaičiai. It not only offers delicious and filling traditional dishes and homemade kvass, but also unique wind chime therapy. The outdoor space features a pyramid-shaped rest area with comfortable sun loungers topped with handmade wind chimes. To enjoy relaxation and peace, take a walk in the energy labyrinth or the barefoot trail.

"Skėmių Traktierius"
Kėdainių Street, Skėmiai, Radviliškis District
+370 610 08 417

It offers educational programmes and delicacies made by the owners. Marcelė, the hostess at "Skėmių Traktierius", will teach how to bake gingerbread according to all the ancient traditions. You will be able to make your own gingerbread, watch the hostess Ona baking them in the oven and learn to decorate gingerbread. Finally, you will be able to enjoy the gingerbread with tea.



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Šiauliai Observation Tower
Kalnai, Radviliškis District
55.645492,23.419565

On the western outskirts, in the hills between Šiaulėnai and Šaukotas, there is a 21-metre-high lookout tower. From the top, it offers a spectacular view of the surrounding countryside.

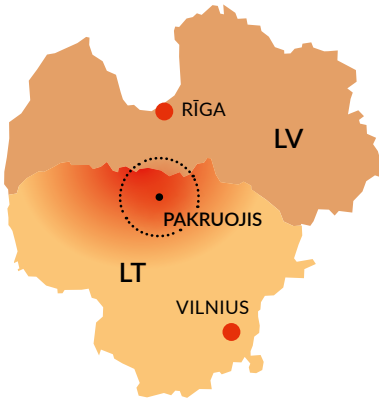


WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

Radviliškis Tourism Information Centre
3 Aušros Square, Radviliškis
+370 64039298
www.inforadviliskis.lt

Gift Shop "Kur Ta Dovana"
18 Maironio Street, Radviliškis
+370 60399164
www.ekurtadovana.lt

The shop offers exquisite handmade works by Lithuanian artists. Give these lovingly crafted creations to your loved ones!

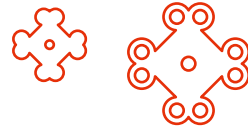


PAKRUOJIS AND SURROUNDINGS

Pakruojis Business Information Centre:
www.pakruojovic.lt

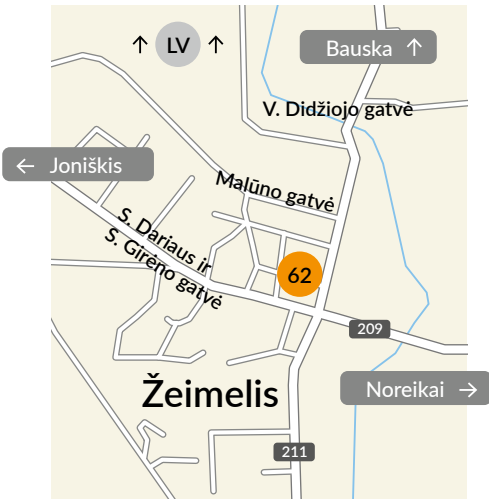
HISTORIC LAND – UPMALĖ
 (GUOSTAGALIS AND ŠIURPĖ
 DISTRICTS)

62. PAKRUOJIS REGIONAL MUSEUM “ŽIEMGALA”



The site was named after the first and, for a time, the only museum on the land inhabited by the old Semigallians. The museum has more than 6,000 exhibits, with one of the most numerous being

in the Archaeology section. It exhibits finds from Žeimelis, Kaireliai, and Diržiai old burial sites. It has flint and stone axes, spinning wheels, iron spears, stone grinders, jewellery, including cuff bracelets typical of the Semigallian people. The museum also offers information about the distributors of the press. The exhibition hall displays work and household goods, farming equipment and household items. Educational activity “Ornamentation of Semigallians” during which, participants will learn about the ornaments and colours of the Semigallia region, and will try to create and draw ornaments themselves.



 15 Vieniybės Square, Žeimelis,
 Pakruojis District

GPS 56.272630, 23.998877





WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Jovarai country beer
2 Alyvų Street, Jovarai, Pakruojis District
+370 68772908

This is the third time that the craft of brewing finds itself in A. Udrienė's family. Jovarai beer is brewed using barley malt and real hops. The product is semi-light, live (neither pasteurised nor filtered), and is prepared in the household as it was in the old days.



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Pakruojis Manor
9 Karčiamos Street, Pakruojis
+370 686 65 055
www.pakruojo-dvaras.lt

In this special place, one will be able to try out the manor's crafts with their own hands, unveil their secrets, try out the old techniques, and get to know the wildlife. The manor offers many activities that take you back to the real everyday life of the 19th century.



Pakruojis Manor



Akmenėliai Manor
6 Petrašiūnų Street, Akmenėliai,
Pakruojis District
+370 682 27 676

Akmenėliai manor is located in a stand of centuries-old trees on the banks of the River Kruoja. It hosts cultural afternoons and meetings with interesting people, actors and artists, as well as Pažaislis Music Festival concerts and exhibitions. One can stay in Akmenėliai manor for rest, relaxation, enjoying the beautiful nature.



WHERE CAN I BUY SOUVENIRS?

Pakruojis Business Information Centre Souvenir Shop
94 Vytauto Didžiojo Street, Pakruojis
+370 67327052
www.pakruojovic.lt

The Souvenir Shop is located in the central palace of Pakruojis manor. Here one will be able to buy souvenirs of the Pakruojis region and Lithuania, as well as cute little items and gifts.



RECIPE FOR A TRADITIONAL DISH

SOUR CREAM SOUP

Ingredients: rye flour, water, sour milk, curd, buttermilk.

Put a handful of coarse rye flour in 10 l of boiling water. After it has cooled, add 3 l of sour milk and 200 g of cottage cheese. It can also be whitened with buttermilk. Served cold. During the summer, it is stored in a well or in the fridge.

CULINARY HERITAGE



The main dishes that unite Lithuania and Latvia are rye bread, cottage cheese and beer. Lithuanian Semigallia is distinguished by its flour-based dumplings called *virtiniai*. Dumplings of all sizes, shapes and fillings are the pride of Semigallian cuisine. Favourite fillings for the dumplings are cottage cheese, meat, crackling and sometimes even mashed potato. The water used to cook the stew must be salted and seasoned with a dash of oil, and what else to season the water with depends on the filling: a piece of onion or onion skins, tansy, thyme, bay leaf, mugwort, yarrow, marjoram, tarragon. The dumplings are still loved and made today. The wheat crops in Semigallia were abundant, which may be the reason for the popularity of the dumplings. The necessary tools for making the dumplings are: a casserole (preferably a lime casserole, which is said to produce the softest dumplings when kneaded in a casserole), a *rolling pin*, a skimmer spoon, and a board on which the dumplings are

placed when they are removed from the pot. The bigger and richer the family, the bigger the board. When a girl would get married, she would take the board and the casserole to her husband's house as a dowry... No wedding, christening, etc. could happen without dumplings.

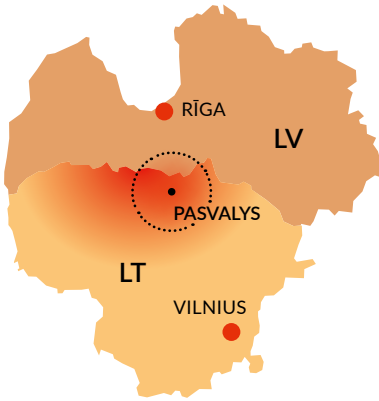
In these parts of Lithuania, people were so fond of dumplings that when they wanted to say something very nice about someone, they would compare them to a dumpling: "her little son is soft and handsome as a dumpling", "he is so good and cheerful today, as if he had just had a pack of dumplings", or "the maiden is so pleasant and beautiful, as if she had only been fed dumplings".

On normal days, everyone liked to eat meaty soups: *borsch*, barley groats, pearl



barley with beans, cabbage. Soups were also cooked without meat and then whitened with milk. *Borscht* soup was different from the soup we eat nowadays because it was made from fermented fodder beetroot. If the hostess did not have beetroot, she used boiled fodder beetroot, and she made sure to add sourdough starter to the *borsch*. Housewives always had *sourdough starter* or *acid* lying around. It was made from rye flour, boiled water and bread crust.





PASVALYS AND SURROUNDINGS

PASVALYS DISTRICT – PASVALYS

Pasvalys Museum Tourism

Information Centre:

www.pasvaliomuziejus.lt

HISTORIC LAND – UPMALĖ



63. JONIŠKĖLIŠ MANOR PARK



Joniškėlis Manor Park is a distinctive park, one of most iconic parks in Lithuania, established in the second half of the 18th century and expanded in the 19th century on both sides of the River Mažupė, a tributary of the Mūša. There are three

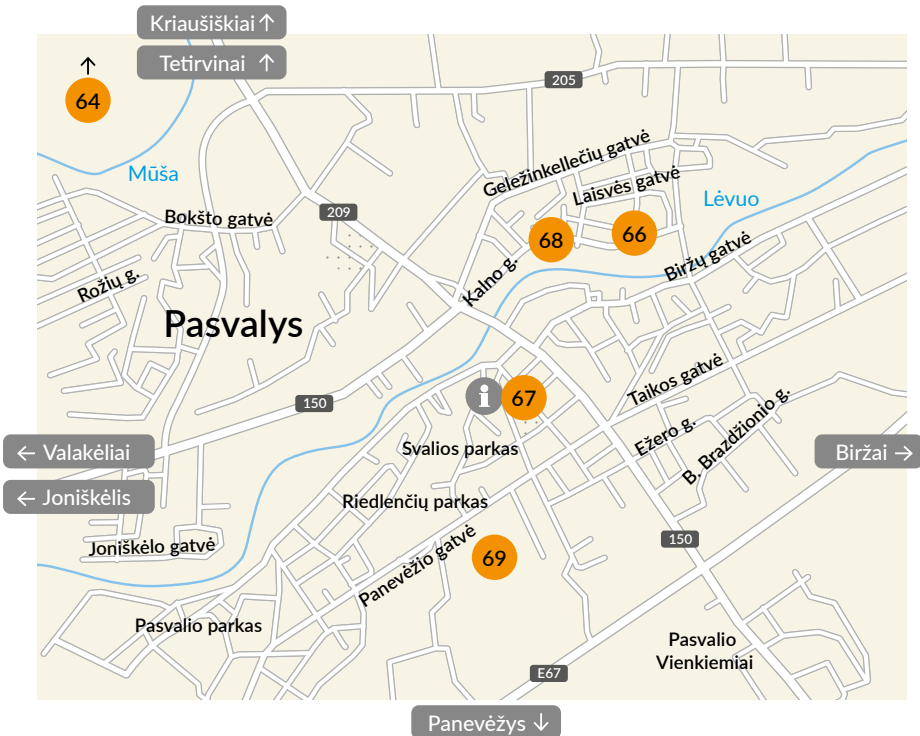
ponds, lime alleys, more than 20 species of native trees and shrubs, and over 30 species and forms of introduced plants. There is a large square in front of the palace. The park is a state protected site of national importance. Joniškėlis manor belonged to the Karpys family from the middle of the 18th century. The palace is now home to the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture's testing station and Joniškėlis Regional Museum, which houses books dating back to the period of the ban on Lithuanian printing and the book smugglers.



1 Karpų Street, Joniškėlis,
Pasvalys District

GPS 56.031833, 24.168629







Above: Joniškėlis Manor Park

Below: Ažuolpamūšė Hillfort



64. VELNIAKALNIS SUNDIAL



Velniakalnis Hill, surrounded by a myriad of legends, is a dual impasse, consisting of two hills. The unfortified hills of the sanctuary in the Mūša basin are known locally as the Velniakalniai. Here, next to the sanctuary, is the burial place or the cemetery. The hill is about 100 m in diameter, round, and about 10 m high.



On the occasion of the Balts' Unity Day in 2019, an object commemorating the Balts' traditions was erected in Velniakalnis, on the highest hill in Pasvalys District – a sundial included in the World Sundial Atlas (www.sundialatlas.net).

Kriaušiškiiai, Pasvalys District

GPS 56.11946, 24.20457



65. AŽUOLPAMUŠĖ HILLFORT



The Ažuolpamūšė/Dabužiai Hillfort dates to the 9th-13th century. It is situated on a highland promontory, facing the River Mūša, at the confluence of the two rivers, Tatula and Ūgė. The site used to be circular, about 50 m in diameter, with two ramparts. Due to significant edge erosion, it is now quadrangular (60x36 m), with a promontory 30 m long and 1.3-5 m wide. The slopes are steep and 7-10 m high. The 0.7 ha site includes a foothill settlement. A 50-130 cm thick cultural layer was found at the site, with stone furnaces, a hearth, pillar sites, part of an iron spear, awls, a brass pendant, parts of pins, chains, silver wire, coarse and smooth pottery, and animal bones. The finds of Ažuolpamūšė Hillfort can be viewed at Pasvalys Museum. Visiting the hillfort, you can feel the aura of almost a thousand years of history.

In pagan times there was a defensive castle here, the remains of which can still be seen on a high hill outside Pasvalys at the confluence of the Tatula and the Mūša (VUB, Fund A-3862. Inventories of Franciscan monasteries of the Province of Lithuania and Ukraine for the years 1664-1681 (Document No. 36467).

Ažuolpamūšė, Pasvalys District

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Pasvalys Museum

66.

COLLECTION OF
BOWL STONES AND
MILLSTONES



The exposition of Pasvalys boulders will surprise anyone interested in ancient culture. It was collected by Antanas Stapulionis and donated to Pasvalys Museum. The open-air collection of bowl stones and millstones contains some 321 accurately documented specimens:

214 millstones, 64 bowl stones, 7 foot stones, 2 boundary marking stones and an exhibition of mill gears. It is here that the religion of the ancient Balts and the gods and goddesses worshipped at home survived the longest. Some of the stones from the 15th and 16th centuries were later used for other purposes (grinding, pressing, wheels, etc.).



 2 Lēvens Street, Pasvalys

GPS 56.06520243889167,
24.40557697581122



67. PASVALYS MUSEUM



The museum was founded on the basis of the ethnographic and archaeological collections of local historian Antanas Stapulionis (1930-2011). Pasvalys Museum has a unique exposition of millstones and bowl stones. The geological exhibition presents exhibits that act as a link between ancient periods of history and the present day. The ancestors were adept at using the Earth's resources: tools, weapons and jewellery were made from flint, fieldstones, clay, amber, and, later, from limonite, the iron ore of the swamps. Minerals, rocks, animal and plant fossils are also on display in a wide variety of forms. The archaeological exhibition introduces and preserves the heritage of the Balts tribes – the Semigallians. The finds show the level of culture of the people who lived here, from everyday jewellery to military weaponry. The museum offers a wide range of educational programmes with more than 30 activities.

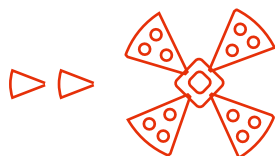


P. 6 Avižonio Street, Pasvalys

GPS 56.060378, 24.398844



www.pasvaliomuziejus.lt



68. GREEN SPRING. DEEPEST CAVE IN LITHUANIA



The unique mineral water spring and the deepest cave in Lithuania have been awarded the name Green Spring. The 20 m deep cave is officially the deepest cave in Lithuania and is included in the Lithuanian Book of Records. It is a state-protected natural heritage site. Green Spring is located on the left bank of the River Lėvuo in Pasvalys. The spring started flowing from the cave after the sinkhole opened. The erupting groundwater has carved out a floodplain channel several metres long, the bottom of which is covered with a light grey, slightly greenish sediment that gives the spring water a greenish tinge. The springhead in the underwater cave is about 5 m in diameter and 21 m deep, ending in a barrier of rocks and debris, beyond which the cave splits into two chambers: the “Sunny” and the “Aenigma” (Latin for secret). The water does not freeze at the surface because the source in the cave maintains a constant temperature. That’s why the temperature of the Green Spring is 8 °C in both the hottest and coldest seasons. The story goes that at the time of the spring’s opening, there was a small barn, and one night, water suddenly started flowing into it. People pushed stones into the hole to stop the water, but the hole could not be closed.



Kalno Street, Pasvalys

GPS 56.06452, 24.40086



69. SINKHOLE PARK



Sinkhole Park was established in 2004 in a unique karst landscape on an 8 ha area. As one walks through the park, they will see dozens of karst ravines of different sizes, shapes and ages. Locals say that many of them have several bottoms, so swimming is not advised here. The largest sinkhole, which is dry, houses a six-hundred-seat amphitheatre. It is said that there are even magical places in Sinkhole



Park: after crossing the wooden gate, wishes come true, and romantic feelings visit when one sits on the love bench. There are bicycle and pedestrian paths, platforms for skateboarders, playgrounds for games, sports and training, swings for the little ones, lanterns, wooden sculptures, and resting benches. Sinkhole Park even has a sculpture park, with six roof pillars.



J. Janonio Street, Pasvalys



56.055695923127,
24.397437572479



WHERE CAN I TASTE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Joalda Brewery
56 Vytauto Street, Joniškėlis,
Pasvalys District
+370 6841701
www.joalda.lt

It offers guided tours, beer tastings and private celebrations. Tastings and tours must be arranged in advance by phone.

Sigtės Koldūninė
50 Vytauto Street, Pasvalys District
+370 61382846



WHERE CAN I EXPERIENCE SOMETHING SPECIAL?

Partisan bunker
Žadeikiai Forest, Pasvalys District
56.015312, 24.454516

We invite you to visit a historical site in Pasvalys region, little known to the public – the partisan bunker in Žadeikiai Forest. Sitting on the wooden bunk beds, you will be able to stop in time, read the underground press, get acquainted with the partisan oath, and sing partisan songs.

Rauboniai Park
5A Taikos Street, Raubonys,
Pasvalys District
+370 67024814
www.rauboniuparkas.lt

Rauboniai Park is located next to the picturesque Rauboniai Hillfort. The park of dinosaur dragons and giant beetles features many life-size replicas of roaring dinosaurs and moving dragons. The Tarzan Trail is the only park of its kind where one can observe animal life from above.



WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN SEMIGALLIA NOW?

In the Lithuanian part, the majority now use Aukštaitian dialects: the eastern Aukštaitians, the northern Panevėžys residents and the north-western Aukštaitians speak the Šiauliai dialect. These dialects are characterised by the retraction of the strongest emphasis in the word, known as the universal retraction, shortened unstressed long vowels, and the discarding or reduction of short ending vowels.

HOW DID THE SEMIGALLIANS DRESS UP?



According to archaeologists, the predominant motif in the ornamentation of jewellery in the Semigallia region is the solitary symbolism of a circle or half-circle. There are also other tokens with symbolic meanings: crosses, swastikas, small triangles, etc. The uniqueness of the Semigallians is reflected in the fact that the long-used pins with heads in the shape of a ring or a circle or an eight-leaf cloverleaf became increasingly larger over time. From the 5th to the 9th century, silver, gold and pewter were used for jewellery, and all the new technologies known at that time were taken advantage of: inlay, silvering, pewtering, faceting, etc.



Authors: Zemgale Planning Region, Šiauliai Tourism Information Centre

Cover photo: Linda Miežīte

We express our sincere gratitude to all tourism information centres and museums, regional parks, municipal administrations in Zemgale and Northern Lithuania, which participated in the creation of the publication, for their cooperation. Deep gratitude to Mag.hist. Normunds Jērums, archaeologists Prof. Ilona Vaškevičiūte and Dr Ernestas Vasiliauskas, as well as the authors of the photographs.

The publication uses photos from Bauska and Dobele Tourism Information Centres, Jelgava Regional Tourism Centre, service providers, J. Kālis, N. Jērums, L. Miežīte, K. Līdaka, Zemgale Planning Region, "Simkala", Šiauliai "Aušros", Medžidovas, Joniškis TBIC, A. Jonaitis, Joniškis Museum of History and Culture, A. Kučas, D. Seibelienė, Venta Regional Park, pavirvītēsdvaras. It, K. Songailē, R. Leišē, A. Bartkus, Viešņiai Pharmacy Museum, Mažeikiai Museum, Akmenē Museum, Šiauliai TIC, R. Masiulienė, Kamanos State Nature Reserve, Delta Stud Farm, L. Vitkus, Centre of Ethnic Culture and Traditional Crafts of Šiauliai District Municipality archive, Ž. Budzinauskas, Daugyenē Cultural History Museum-Reserve, V. Kaupelis, A. Deikus, pakruojo-dvaras.It, G. Tumulis and Pasvalys Museum archives.

The guide was prepared with the support of the Interreg V-A Latvia–Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020 within the framework of project No. LLI-447 "Exploring Balts and Promoting Awareness of the International Cultural Route "Balts' Road"" (Explore Balts). The "Explore Balts" project continues the "Balts' Road" project, within the framework of which the route has been created, including the territories that were once inhabited by Semigallians, Selonians, Curonians and Samogitians in Lithuania and Latvia. The project is aimed at the further development of the established route "Balts' Road", promoting its recognition and availability of information. All information about the route can be found at www.baltsroad.eu. The project is implemented by the Šiauliai Tourism Information Centre in cooperation with 6 partners in Latvia and Lithuania: Zemgale Planning Region, Kurzeme Planning Region, Kuldīga Local Municipality, Bauska Local Municipality, National Regional Development Agency in Lithuania, Klaipėda District Tourism Information Centre.

The total cost of the project is EUR 869 688.98, including EUR 739 235.61 co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund. The authors are fully responsible for the content of this guide and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the official position of the European Union.

Publisher: Zemgale Planning Region, www.zemgale.lv, 2023.

ISBN: 978-9934-9172-9-5



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Latvija–Lietuva

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ALSO LOOK AT THE “SELONIANS” AND
“CURONIANS AND SAMOGITIANS” GUIDES!

