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Heritage Cities of the Baltic: Vilnius, Kaunas, Riga, Tartu & Tallinn 2026

30 JUN – 14 JUL 2026

Code: 22623

Tour Leaders Dr Uldis Ozolins, Juris Baltputnis

Fitness Level

Level 2 - Intermediate

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

Explore the beautifully preserved old towns of Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn (all UNESCO World Heritage sites), Tartu and Kaunas. Visit museums, medieval castles, cathedrals and Baroque palaces.

Overview

"The Baltics are an undiscovered jewel for anyone concerned with history, art, architecture and culture. Long the focus point of battles between East and West in Europe, their cities, heritage and large areas of countryside have remained remarkably intact despite a half-century of Soviet occupation." Dr Uldis Ozolins

- Enthusiastic advocates of Baltic culture, Dr Uldis Ozolins and Juris Baltputnis, unveil the dramatic histories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, from the Teutonic Knights to Glasnost and beyond.
- Explore the UNESCO World Heritage-listed capital cities of Baroque Vilnius, Art Nouveau Riga & medieval Tallinn, as well as lovely Kaunas and Tartu.
- In Vilnius, capital of a once-vast duchy stretching to the Black Sea, stroll through its Baroque streets; visit the richly-decorated library of its ancient university; and view the church of St Anne, a masterpiece of Late-Gothic architecture.
- Traverse Lithuania's unspoilt, picturesque meadows framed by deep forests and defended by formidable medieval citadels like Trakai Castle, home of an army of anti-rabbinical Karaite Jews.
- In Kaunas, the inter-war capital of Lithuania, enjoy a walking tour of the old city, centred on the Town Hall Square surrounded by 16th-century German merchant houses.
- In Riga encounter one of the finest Art Nouveau precincts in Europe and visit the Art Nouveau Museum, actually the apartment of the famous Latvian architect of this style, Konstantins Peksens.
- Riga and Tallinn are graced with soaring brick-and-stone Gothic churches whose tall towers served as beacons for medieval merchant shipping. Visit their richly-decorated guildhalls and merchant centres, with high-gabled Renaissance warehouses inflecting their colourful streetscapes.
- In Tartu, often considered the cultural capital of Estonia, visit the university founded in 1632, and the Estonian National Museum.
- Visit Latvia's reconstructed primitive floating-fortress village, Lithuania's extraordinary Hill of Crosses at Siauliai, and Estonia's Gauja National Park containing a genuine curiosity – an intact Soviet Army bunker used by the Baltic Area Command.
- Visit fine Estonian country estates. Rundale Palace, designed by famous St. Petersburg Baroque architect Rastrelli, rivals his masterpieces at Pushkin and Peterhof. Meanwhile, classical Palmse and Sagadi manors, built by Baltic German barons, match the best of Georgian England.

Overnight Vilnius (3 nights) • Kaunas (2 nights) • Riga (4 nights) • Tartu (1 night) • Tallinn (4 nights)

Testimonials

The Tour Leaders were both terrific and their combined knowledge of the history of the region was extensive. All three countries and their capital cities were delightful and the itinerary was varied and interesting. I now feel I have a much better understanding of some of the more recent history of the region and the impact that has had on the people. The accommodation was comfortable with standout hotels in both Riga and Tallinn, and the group was friendly and easy to spend 2 weeks with. Roberta, NSW.

My Baltic tour surpassed expectations and Uldis' lectures were very thought provoking. Both he and Juris worked so well together and were always ready to answer our questions. I feel I now have a very good understanding of this part of the world. Pat, NSW.

Leaders

Dr Uldis Ozolins

Uldis is dedicated to helping discover the hidden pearls of the Baltic cities, from Baroque to Jugendstil, from the Czars through the Soviet Union to today.

Dr Uldis Ozolins is an academic, researcher and poetical commentator on the Baltic States. He grew up in Australia after his family fled the Soviet Union, but has retained close ties with the Baltic and has led the 'Heritage Cities of the Baltic' tour since 2004. He has an academic background in political science, education, philosophy and translating/interpreting and has taught in several universities in Melbourne and Sydney. He is a past president of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies in Australia and researcher and writer on Baltic political issues. His interests also encompass the history, architecture and changing social life in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe more broadly. Uldis has a BA (Hons) and MA from the University of Melbourne, and a PhD from Monash University.

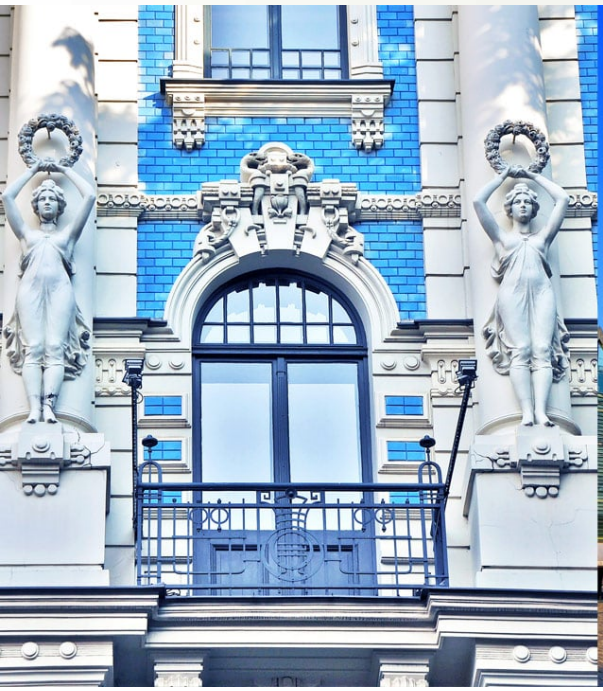
Juris Baltputnis

Born in Western Germany to Latvian parents, Juris now resides in Riga. He studied Slavonic languages and Eastern European history, and completed a master's degree in Russian philology at the University of Hamburg.

Juris was born in West Germany in 1949. His parents are Latvians who fled their home country, when it was occupied by the Soviets in 1945. After finishing school, he studied English and History to become a secondary-school teacher. Because of his growing interest in the countries behind the Iron Curtain he studied Slavonic languages and Eastern European history. In 1988 he completed a master's degree in Russian philology at the University of Hamburg. Following Latvia's reestablishment of independence in 1991, Juris decided to move to Riga where he became a certified guide for Riga and various other places in the Baltic States. Currently Juris guides foreign tourists and journalists not only through the Baltic States but also through the Western parts of Russia, including the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.

Combine this tour with

Iceland, Land of Ice and Fire: Myths, Legends & Landscapes 2026
13 JUN – 30 JUN 2026



Itinerary

The detailed itinerary provides an outline of the proposed daily program. Participants should note that the daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in museum opening hours, flight schedules & road conditions. Meals included in the tour price and are indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=Lunch and D=dinner.

Vilnius, Lithuania - 3 nights

Day 1: Tuesday 30 June, Arrive Vilnius

- Tour commences at 6.00pm in the foyer of the Artagonist Art Hotel
- Welcome Meeting
- Short Orientation
- Welcome Dinner

Meeting Point: The tour commences at 6.00pm in the foyer of the Artagonist Art Hotel located in the historic centre of Vilnius. Please contact ASA if you require assistance with an airport transfer.

Following a short welcome meeting there will be a short orientation walk around the hotel precinct. This evening we dine together at the hotel's restaurant where a light three-course meal will be served. (Overnight Vilnius) D

Day 2: Wednesday 1 July, Vilnius

- Gediminas Castle Tower
- Vilnius Cathedral
- Bishop's Palace (exterior only)
- Vilnius University
- St John's Church

We begin our exploration of Vilnius with a climb by funicular to the Gediminas Castle Tower which looks over the old city as a lasting symbol of the strength of Vilnius' founder. It offers a majestic perspective over the billowing curves of the Baroque centre of the city. The tower houses a small museum which includes models of Vilnius castles from the 14th to the 17th centuries.

From there we descend into the heart of the city, beginning with the Cathedral – originally built on ancient pagan grounds by Mindaugas, the first Grand Duke to convert to Christianity. The present neo-classical Cathedral, with its Doric columns and Baroque statues of Abraham, Moses and the four evangelists, was built by architect Laurynas Stuoka-Gucevicius in the late 18th century. Next to the Cathedral stands the somewhat controversially reconstructed Duke's Palace, which was leveled in the 19th century to make way for a marketplace.

After lunch we pass the Bishop's Palace, where Napoleon stayed on his way to Moscow in 1812. We tour the courtyards of Vilnius University, cultural and intellectual heart of the city and an important centre of learning in eastern Europe, founded by the Jesuits in 1570. The University's beautiful St John's Church was built in 1387, soon after Lithuania's conversion to Catholicism. While celebrating its 440th anniversary, Vilnius University will be arranging a special opening of the Rectors Hall which is decorated with frescoes by Antanas Kmieliauskas. (Overnight Vilnius) B

Day 3: Thursday 2 July, Vilnius

- Gates of Dawn & Church of St Theresa
- Walking tour of the Old Town & the Amber Museum
- Afternoon at leisure

Today we continue our exploration of the cosmopolitan capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at its height. We begin with an early morning walk to the Gates of Dawn, the only remains of fortifications built against the invading Tartars and transformed in 1671 into a beautiful Carmelite Chapel. The interior was refurbished in neo-classical style in the 19th century.

From there we walk through the old town, passing the oldest Baroque church in Vilnius, named after the city's patron saint, Casimir. Exquisitely beautiful, it was ironically used by the Soviets as a museum of atheism. Numerous Orthodox Churches scattered throughout the city testify to a strong eastern cultural heritage. We also pass the oldest surviving church in Vilnius, the Gothic St Nicholas', built by German merchants before Lithuania's conversion to Catholicism, and explore Vilnius' civic buildings including the Town Hall, a stately baroque edifice that was designed by Stuoka Gucevicius, architect of the Vilnius Cathedral, after the 16th-century original was destroyed by fire. We end our tour of the old town with a visit to the Amber Museum. Of the many varieties of amber found in the Old World, the most plentiful today, as in antiquity, is Baltic amber which comes mainly from around the shores of the Baltic Sea.

The afternoon will be at leisure. You may wish to visit the State Jewish Museum Holocaust Centre or the Museum of Genocide Victims (in the former KGB building). (Overnight Vilnius) B

Kaunas, Lithuania - 2 nights

Day 4: Friday 3 July, Vilnius – Trakai – Kaunas

- Church of St Peter and St Paul
- S. Shapshal Museum of Karaim Nation
- Island Castle and Trakai History Museum

We begin the day with a visit to the Baroque church of St Peter and St Paul, commissioned in 1668 by Michael Casimir Pac, Grand Hetman of the Lithuanian armies. The interior is spectacularly decorated with over two thousand stucco mythological and biblical figures and Lithuanian battle scenes.

As we drive out of Vilnius we pass the former KGB headquarters, and the Parliament building, where evidence still remains of the 1991 barricades when Lithuanians civilians defending strategic objects were attacked by Soviet troops as Moscow tried unsuccessfully to quell the Baltic independence movements.

Before Vilnius became the capital of Lithuania in 1323 under Gediminas, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was centred at Trakai, 27km to the west. We depart Vilnius in the late morning for its medieval forebear, which currently stands within a National Park overlooking Lake Galve, and visit the famous red brick Island Castle built by Vytautus the Great to celebrate his defeat of the German Crusaders of the Teutonic Order in 1410. The present castle houses a museum on the history of the Grand Duchy. Trakai also contains the ruins of two further castles, and is notable for the continuing presence of a small group of Turkic Karaite Old Testament believers. Originally invited to Lithuania by Vytautas as bodyguards because of their massive stature, the Karaites trace their history to an 8th-century Persian named Anan ben David, who founded an anti-rabbinical sect that rejected both oral tradition and the Talmud. Only a few hundred Karaites remain in Lithuania, and their Kenesa and distinctive wooden houses are a notable feature of Trakai. The S. Shapshal Museum of Karaim Nation contains illuminating material on the history and life and applied arts of the Karaites, one of Lithuania's ethnic minorities. After visiting Trakai, we continue on to Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city and a major rival to Vilnius. (Overnight Kaunas) B

Day 5: Saturday 4 July, Kaunas

- Guided Tour of Officers Club Ramove
- Laisves Aleja
- Resurrection Church
- M.K. Ciurlionis State Art Museum
- Walking Tour: Kaunas Old Town

Just a short walk from the hotel, we begin today with a guided tour of the Officers Club Ramov, which is one of the most luxurious buildings built in Kaunas in the inter-war period. This building, adorned with decorative motifs, has a fantastic largely art deco and national romantic interior. Inside we will find a restaurant, a ballroom and theatre, representation rooms and even a small museum. A notable feature to look out for is the unique hand-crafted furniture in the Presidential Chamber, a representative example of Lithuanian furniture.

Kaunas, the inter-war capital of Lithuania, combines a well-preserved old town with a decidedly modernist outlook from the 1920s. We begin the day with a walk along the Laisves Aleja, Freedom Avenue, the leafy main thoroughfare of the new town. At one end stands a Monument to Vytautas the Great. Standing over four defeated soldiers: a Russian, a Pole, a Tartar and a German crusader with a broken sword, he symbolises the might of the 14th-century Grand Duchy. At the far end of the avenue stands the formerly Orthodox Church and now Catholic Church of St Michael, a perfectly symmetrical, blue, neo-Byzantine church. Built at the end of the 19th century, it presents us with a contrasting symbol of Russian domination. Between them, the bustling Freedom Avenue serves as a reminder of Lithuania's current independence and growing prosperity.

Next we climb the stairs to the astonishing functionalist Resurrection Church, begun in the 1930s but only recently completed. From its promenade roof we gain a spectacular view of the region.

The morning ends with a visit to the M.K. Ciurlionis Art Gallery, which contains almost all the surviving works by the Lithuanian mystic and modernist painter and composer. His legacy, both in music and in painting, is a remarkable expression of Lithuanian culture.

We devote the afternoon to a walking tour of the old city of Kaunas, centred on the Town Hall Square surrounded by 16th-century German merchant houses. The Kaunas Town Hall itself is known as 'The White Swan' for the elegance of its late Baroque and early classical architecture and its graceful tower. We visit the Cathedral – the only Gothic church of basilican design in Lithuania, the Gothic Vytautas Church – built by Franciscan monks in the early 15th century, and the warehouses and merchant houses of the old town. The most impressive of these is the Perkunas House, a 15th-century Gothic building which historians argue was either a Jesuit chapel or the Hansa office of Kaunas, and romantics believe was a temple to Perkunas, god of thunder. (Overnight Kaunas) B

Riga, Latvia - 4 nights

Day 6: Sunday 5 July, Kaunas – Hill of Crosses – Rundale – Jurmala Coast – Riga

- Hill of Crosses, Siauliai
- Rundale Palace
- Jurmala Coast

In the early morning we drive to the Hill of Crosses just north of Siauliai, a spontaneous and moving religious shrine of folk art believed first mentioned in the 15th century. Tens of thousands of wooden crosses fill the hillside with a testimony to the symbolic power of Lithuanian Catholicism.

We then drive the short distance across the Latvian border to Rundale Palace, considered by many to be the most important architectural monument in the Baltics. Construction began on the palace in 1736 for Ernst Johann von Buhren, Duke of Courland, under the direction of Italian architect Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli. In 1738 Rastrelli began work on another palace for Buhren, at Jelgava, the seat of the Duchy of Courland. Although work on the two palaces was halted with Buhren's exile to Siberia in 1740, and not taken up again until he returned to favour under Russian Empress Catherine II in 1763, the structural work had been completed and offers an impressive example of early St Petersburg Baroque architecture on a grand scale. Over forty rooms of the Rundale Palace have been restored to their original 18th-century interiors, and we take a guided tour of the palace, with its Golden Hall with beautifully decorated ceilings and chandeliers, Grand Gallery, intricately stuccoed White Hall, Room of Roses and private apartments. We take lunch at the palace café.

Next, we drive past the second of the two palaces in Jelgava, now the Latvian Agricultural University. The nearby Orthodox Church of St Simeon and St Anna, magnificently restored, was also designed by Rastrelli and contains an altar piece by Riga artist Janis Rozentals.

In the afternoon we drive to the port of Riga via the Jurmala Coast. The Jurmala coast offers an unspoilt stretch of beaches giving us our first view of the Baltic Sea. (Overnight Riga) BL

Day 7: Monday 6 July, Riga

- Walking Tour: Riga Old Town
- Mentzendorff House
- Brothers' War Cemetery
- Ethnographic Open Air Museum

Riga was founded by Bishop Albert in 1201, and joined the Hanseatic League in 1282, thriving on trade across the Baltic Sea. Riga has been an important city ever since its founding as a major Hanseatic port, once the third largest city in the Swedish Empire, and a Russian outpost. Our exploration of the old city begins with the 13th-century city walls, including the well preserved Powder Tower and Riga Castle. During our stay we walk through medieval streets filled with Hanseatic warehouses, guildhalls and Gothic and Baroque churches such as the Dome cathedral. Our morning's program concludes with a visit to the beautifully restored Mentzendorff House. Once belonging to a wealthy Riga merchant, it now offers a reconstruction of life in the 17th and 18th centuries.

After a lunch break, we depart by coach and travel to the outskirts of Riga where we briefly visit the striking Brothers' Cemetery, constructed to commemorate those who fell in World War I and the ensuing War of Independence. We then continue to the Ethnographic Open Air Museum, opened in 1932 and now covering 100 hectares with a vast heritage collection of Latvian rural villages, farmhouses, windmills, pubs, equipment and domestic material, including complete homesteads from various regions. (Overnight Riga) B

Day 8: Tuesday 7 July, Riga

- Walking Tour: Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) Architecture
- Riga Art Nouveau Museum
- Latvian National Museum of Art
- Occupation Museum

This morning we commence a walking tour of Riga's magnificent and distinctive Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) architecture. Almost a third of the surviving buildings of central Riga were built in Art Nouveau style between 1896 and 1913, many incorporating traditional Latvian folk elements into a variation that became known as National Romanticism. The most extravagant buildings are found in Albert Street, a number of them designed by Mikhail Eisenstein, father of film-maker Sergei. It is here that we visit Riga's new Art Nouveau Museum, actually the apartment of the famous Latvian architect of this style Konstantins Peksens (1859-1928). In a period of vigorous creativity, architects like Peksens and Eisenstein, father of the great film-maker, experimented freely with a wide variety of forms, marrying figurative sculpture to architecture in new, highly innovative ways. Leading to the rooms of Peksen's apartment is one of Europe's most fascinating and aesthetically successful spiral staircases. Within the apartment, you'll enjoy a wonderfully restored interior with its original fittings and furniture. It will provide insights not only into the aesthetics of Rigan art nouveau, but also into the lifestyles of the city's *fin de siècle* innovators.

This afternoon we visit the Latvian National Museum of Art, one of the most beautiful architectural monuments in Riga and the largest depository of professional art in Latvia. The museum has recently been entirely renovated, restored and enlarged. The Museum's new permanent collection offers a comprehensive exposé on Latvian art in both the 19th and 20th centuries, with emphasis on the various stylistic periods and the artists who were instrumental.

We then proceed to the Occupation Museum, which was established as the Soviet Union crumbled and Latvia regained its independence in 1991. The Occupation Museum has taken over the ugly Communist era museum, from Red Army soldiers previously ensconced there. The Museum displays strong material on the effects of Soviet policies from 1940 to 1991, including mass deportations, executions and long-term suppression of Latvian political and cultural life. (Overnight Riga) B

Day 9: Wednesday 8 July, Riga

- House of the Blackheads

- Afternoon at leisure

In the morning we continue our walking tour through parts of Riga's Old Town. We visit the House of the Blackheads, dating from 1334. The Blackheads were an association of bachelor merchants in Riga and Tallinn who became a powerful trading force in the Baltic States. The current building is a restoration of the original, destroyed in the Second World War, and now houses a small museum.

The afternoon is at leisure. (Overnight Riga) B

Tartu, Estonia - 1 night

Day 10: Thursday 9 July, Riga – Gauja National Park – Araisi – Cesis – Tartu

- Ligatne Soviet Army command centre bunker
- Araisi floating fortress
- Cesis
- Evening meal at the Hotel Antonius A La Carte Restaurant

We drive from Riga through the picturesque, undulating Gauja National Park to visit a genuine curiosity – an intact Soviet Army bunker used by the Baltic Area Command when this region was heavily militarised and one of the closest points of the Soviet Union to the west. This bunker remained intact when the Soviet Army rapidly withdrew in the 1990s, and has recently been opened to the public.

We then proceed to Araisi, a reconstructed fortress that floats on logs in the middle of a lake. Archaeologists discovered this fortress submerged but recognisable, and the original is believed to have dated from the 10th century, giving a glimpse of life of the Latvian tribes here before Western European invasion of this region. We continue our drive a short distance to Cesis, where we will take lunch, and enjoy a walk around one of Latvia's most beautiful towns. Cesis is known as a favourite spot for painters, and is incidentally also the beer capital of Latvia. After lunch we drive 300 kilometres north-east to the university town of Tartu.

Tonight we dine at the cellar restaurant of Hotel Antonius. The Antonius restaurant's vaulted arch ceilings are adorned with rare frescoes and its atrium recreates the elegant atmosphere of a rose garden. (Overnight Tartu) BD

Tallinn, Estonia - 4 nights

Day 11: Friday 10 July, Tartu – Tallinn

- Walking Tour: Town Hall Square & St John's Church, Tartu
- University of Tartu
- Estonian National Museum

Tartu's quiet charm reveals a distinctively Estonian city, centred on Tartu University, the cultural and intellectual heart of the nation since its foundation as the second university of the Swedish Empire. We begin the morning with a walk around the town centre, beginning with the Town Hall Square, and the Gothic St John's Church.

Within the University we visit Tartu Art Gallery, including the beautiful Assembly Hall and student lockups – where a student would have spent two days for returning a library book late.

After lunch, we visit the Estonian National Museum. Located on the grounds of what was once a Soviet military airfield, the museum traces the history, life and traditions of the Estonian people and presents the culture and history of other Finno-Ugric peoples and minorities in Estonia. The 34,000-square-metre museum is the largest in the Baltic States and its collections chart Estonia's history and culture from the Stone Age to the present day.

In the late afternoon we continue north to the capital, Tallinn, on the shores of the Baltic Sea. (Overnight Tallinn) B

Day 12: Saturday 11 July, Tallinn

- Walking Tour of Old Tallinn: City Walls and Towers, Toompea: Tallinn Cathedral, Parliament Building, (Tallinn Castle), Alexander Nevsky Cathedral
- Church of St Nicholas and Niguliste Museum
- Walking tour of Lower City: Town Hall & Apothecary, Pikk

Like Riga, Tallinn joined the Hanseatic League towards the end of the thirteenth century and flourished on Baltic trade. Largely built by foreign interests, it looks outwards towards the waters of the Baltic Sea. 17th- and 18th-century Swedish and German merchant houses embellish its medieval foundations, and Russian summer palaces lend a touch of grandeur. In the morning we take a walking tour of the old city, exploring its medieval streets, the surviving towers and gates of the city walls, and the warehouses and merchant houses of the lower town.

We begin our walking tour by climbing the Toompea to visit the Cathedral and Tallinn Castle. Nearby the neo-classical (and pink!) Estonian Parliament House provides a striking counterpoint to the Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral facing it across the street. The Cathedral was built at the end of the 19th century as a symbol of Russia's domination of Tallinn, and named after Nevsky, who conquered much of Estonia in the 13th century. We also visit the St Nicholas Church, now a concert hall and home to the Niguliste Museum, which contains a small but valuable art collection preserved from the destruction of the Second World War.

In the afternoon we explore the lower town, including the Town Hall Square and Europe's oldest apothecary, dating from 1422, and walk along streets of the lower town including Pikk with its mix of architecture from medieval to Jugendstil. (Overnight Tallinn) B

Day 13: Sunday 12 July, Tallinn – Lahemaa National Park – Tallinn

- Lahemaa National Park: Palmse Manor, Sagadi Manor, Altja

Today we travel by coach through Lahemaa National Park, an unspoilt coastal region of forests and farmland, preserved by the Soviets as a buffer to the Baltic Sea, and home to a number of classical 18th-century manor houses built by German nobles and merchants from Tallinn. The most impressive and best restored is at Palmse, a memorial to the von der Pahlen family. The manor and surrounding gardens were begun in the late 17th century, but not finished until 1740 because of the intervening war between Sweden and Russia. We take lunch in Altja, a small fishing village on the shores of the Baltic with traditional wooden architecture and a fine inn. We then visit the Sagadi Manor, built in quite a different style to Palmse, to see the diversity of German settlement and industry in this region. Sagadi also houses a small but valuable forestry museum. (Overnight Tallinn) BL

Day 14: Monday 13 July, Tallinn

- Pirita harbour – Song Festival Amphitheatre, Russalka Memorial, Forest Cemetery & Kadriorg Park
- St Birgitta's Convent
- Afternoon at leisure in Old Town
- Farewell Dinner: MEKK Restaurant

We spend the morning in the Pirita harbour area, 7 kilometres to the east of the old town, which is a green band of beaches, parks, palaces (some dating back to the time of Peter the Great), museums and monuments. We visit the Song Festival Amphitheatre, site of the huge song festivals held regularly in Estonia, the 'Russalka' memorial in the form of an angel pointing out to sea to mark the loss with many lives of a Russian ship, and the beautiful Forest Cemetery, where Estonian notables are buried. We stroll through Kadriorg Park, whose centrepiece is Kadriorg Palace, built following Peter the Great's visit to Tallinn in 1718 by Italian architect Niccolo Michetti. It is now home to the Estonian President.

After briefly visiting the beach and boat harbour, we take a guided tour of the ruined convent of St Birgitta, destroyed in a siege in 1577 but still with one massive end-wall standing, and its extensive layout retraced. We return to the old town around lunchtime for a free afternoon.

Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner together at the new MEKK Restaurant, offering modern Estonian dishes and located in the Old Town. (Overnight Tallinn) BD

Day 15: Tuesday 14 July, Tallinn. Tour Ends.

- Tour concludes in the morning
- At leisure/Check out

Our tour ends in Tallinn after breakfast. In the morning you will be required to check out of the hotel. Please contact ASA if you require assistance with a transfer to the Lennart Meri Tallinn Airport. If you wish to extend your stay in the Baltic Region, you may wish to consider taking the morning ferry across to Helsinki (contact ASA for further information). B

Accommodation

Accommodation is in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom in 4- and 5-star hotels. Each hotel is centrally located within the cities that we visit. Further information on hotels will be provided in the 'Tour Hotel List' given to tour members prior to their departure.

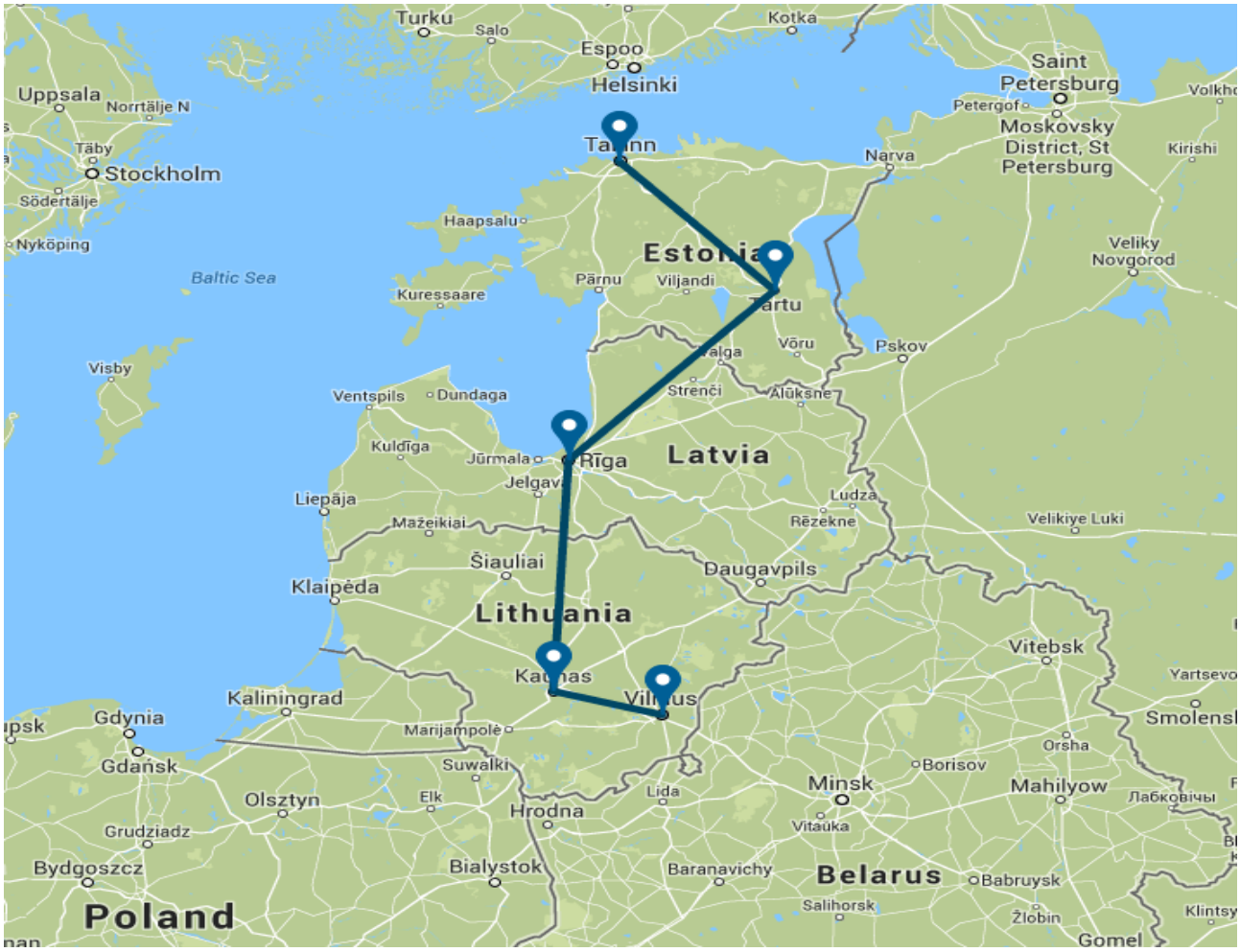
- Vilnius (3 nights): 4-star Artagonist Art Hotel – housed in a 15th century building in the historic centre. Rooms are decorated with artworks by Lithuanian artists.
- Kaunas (2 nights): 4-star Hotel Kaunas – located on the main pedestrian thoroughfare of downtown Kaunas.
- Riga (4 nights): 4-star Hotel Neiburgs – a modern apartment-hotel housed in an Art Nouveau building situated in a quiet and picturesque street in the heart of the Old Town.
- Tartu (1 night): 4-star Lydia Hotel – a charming boutique hotel located in the heart of the old town of Tartu.
- Tallinn (4 nights): 5-star Hotel Telegraaf – housed in the former 19th-century exchange station for the Estonian Telegraph company, and located in the medieval heart of Tallinn.

Note: *hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In most hotels, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map


Turku
Salo
Kotka
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Saint Petersburg
Petergof
Moskovsky District, St Petersburg
Uppsala
Norrtälje N
Täby
Stockholm
Södertälje
Nyköping
Narva
Kirishi
Haapsalu
Estonia
Veliky Novgorod
Baltic Sea
Pärnu
Viljandi
Kuressaare
Tartu
Võru
Pskov
Visby
Valga
Strenči
Ālūksne
Ventspils
Dundaga
Kuldīga
Jūrmala
Rīga
Latvia
Jelgava
Liepāja
Ludza
Rēzekne
Mažeikiai
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Olsztyn
Elk
Lida
Hrodna
Vitaŭka
Grudziadz
Bydgoszcz
Bialystok
Baranavichy
Belarus
Babruysk
Salihorsk
Žlobin
Poland
Gomel

Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD $8480.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 30 September 2025

AUD $8840.00 Land Content Only

AUD $1480.00 Single Supplement

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 4-5-star hotels
- Breakfast daily, lunches and dinners as indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Porterage (where available) of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (note: this is NOT available in Kaunas).
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour reference book
- Entrance fees
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Vilnius, Tallinn-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance

Fitness Criteria & Practical Information

Fitness Level

Level 2 - Intermediate

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

You must be able to:

- manage at least five to six hours of physical activity per day with ease.
- walk at a regular to moderate pace to explore the Baltic cities extensively on foot, walking at least 5-7km per day. Several walks include uneven terrain, cobbled streets and ascents/descents.
- keep up with the group at all times.
- negotiate challenging historic sites including some genuine medieval steps in old castles!
- stand for one to two hours during visits to galleries and museums without the need to sit.
- board/alight coaches, trams and funicular unassisted.
- contend with a shower over a bath; walk-in showers may not be available at all hotels
- manage your own luggage. Due to central location of hotels, access is only by foot. You need to be able to wheel your luggage up to 400m from the coach to the hotel in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn.

Fitness Levels
Please also view the fitness criteria required for our tours, graded from Level 1 to Level 3, at www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/

All ASA tours are active programs suitable for people with a good level of mental and physical fitness and good mobility. They are not suitable for people who lack stamina, have difficulty walking at the group's pace or who have mobility issues. An unavoidable aspect of every tour is the need to manage walking, stair-climbing and standing for long periods of time.

It is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability

to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. Before enrolling on an ASA tour please read the fitness requirements carefully.

Visa Requirements

LATVIA, LITHUANIA & ESTONIA: Australian, New Zealand, and United Kingdom passport holders do not currently require a visa for one stay of up to 90 days. Travellers must have proof of valid travel insurance including cover for emergency medical evacuation. Note: visa conditions are subject to change. For updated information please refer to www.visalink.com.au

Booking Conditions

ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD $1000.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

Reservation Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) ( ) _____ TEL. (BH) ( ) _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth __/__/____ GENDER Male ☐ Female ☐

Passport

Number _____ Expiry date __/__/____ Nationality _____

☐ Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed ☐ I'm renewing my passport ☐ ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

Covid Certificate

☐ A copy of my current international certificate enclosed

Travel Plans

☐ I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date __/__/____

☐ I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: ☐ a twin-bedded room ☐ a double-bedded room ☐ a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: ☐ on my own ☐ with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

☐ I do not have any specific dietary requests

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

☐ fish ☐ poultry ☐ red meat ☐ dairy products

☐ eggs ☐ pork ☐ nuts

☐ Other _____

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence ☐ Postal Mail ☐ Email Address _____

Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person MUST be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name _____ Relationship to Traveller _____

Address _____

TEL. (AH) ( ) _____ TEL. (BH) ( ) _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

Medical Information

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at **www.asatours.com.au**
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. www.traveldoctor.com.au tel:1300 658 444; www.travelvax.com.au tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. **You must also be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.** If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

	YES	NO
1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions?	◯	◯
2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces?	◯	◯
3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted?	◯	◯
4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted?	◯	◯
5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage?	◯	◯
6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places?	◯	◯
7. Can you administer your own medication?	◯	◯
8. You do NOT have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour?	◯	◯

Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

	YES	NO
1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program?	◯	◯

If yes, please specify

_____

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

_____

Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

	YES	NO
1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances?	◯	◯

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything?	◯	◯

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

Do you carry an epipen?	◯	◯
3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs?	◯	◯

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

	YES	NO
1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour?	◯	◯

If yes, please specify

_____

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

_____

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine?	◯	◯

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

Diabetics: You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic?	◯	◯
Are you insulin dependent?	◯	◯
4. Do you suffer from travel sickness? Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.	◯	◯

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

Declaration, Liability and Booking Conditions

Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept the inherent dangers, risks and uncertainties in travel and those beyond ASA's control and understand they may occur before or during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but only for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services associated with the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of booking, preparing for, travelling to, on and from or cancelling any tour.

I release and indemnify ASA with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour;
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
   a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
   b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
   c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally; and
   d. any event or happening beyond ASA's control
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of any tour, part of a tour or of my continued participation on a tour for any reason (subject to ASA's refund conditions below).

Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products, services, terms and conditions. If a service provider cancels or does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, and does not give a refund, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (e.g. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, border closures, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any tour service provider or authority however caused (contingencies). You must take out such travel insurance as is available against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour cancelled or changed will be limited to the partial refund of amounts you have paid, less an administration fee of $500 and other costs and charges of third party service providers. No compensation will be payable to you by ASA where ASA cancels or changes a tour, or any part of a tour.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate and in the best interests of health, safety and wellbeing of tour participants. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

Booking Conditions

DEPOSITS

A non-refundable deposit of $1000.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

CANCELLATION FEES

If you cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: your initial deposit of $1000.00 is non-refundable.**

75-31 days prior 50% of total amount due

30-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

**$500.00 of this amount (ie 50% of your deposit) may be credited to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.

We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.

UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions or services of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

☐ I accept the conditions on this booking form

☐ I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

ASA CULTURAL TOURS

Payment Form

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of $ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- ☐ Intention to Travel
- ☐ Tour Deposit
- ☐ Balance of Payment
- ☐ Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
- ☐ Travel Insurance
- ☐ Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) _____

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- *via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate*
- *via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg.Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.*

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank	ANZ
Branch	420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code	ANZBAU3M
BSB	013-423
Account No	3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

_____

Date Money Transferred _____

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ)

_____

Cardholders Name _____

Cardholders Billing Address _____

_____

Postcode _____

State _____ Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cardholders Signature

_____

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