



TRIP GUIDE

CONTEMPORARY KAUNAS

Author V. Jakas. Kaunas street art festival NYKOKA.




















WELCOME TO KAUNAS,
*the second city of Lithuania, where you will be welcomed by wonderful
sights, unique architecture, a wide range of entertainment, and the unique
atmosphere of a student-esque city!*

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1 Kaunas Castle *

(Pilies g. 17) www.kaunomuziejus.lt

The castle at the confluence of the Nemunas and Neris rivers was built in the 14th century to defend against the onslaught of crusaders. This is not only one of the first stone castles Lithuania, but also the only one that has two rows of defensive walls. A settlement that grew into the current city was created around the Gothic defences. It is the oldest stone castle in Lithuania, first mentioned in written sources in 1361. According to legend, Queen Bona Sforza's troops mysteriously disappeared in the tunnels underneath. Although it was restored multiple times, the castle lost its importance in 1408 when Kaunas was granted Magdeburg rights and the life of the whole city moved to the then Market (Town Hall) Square. The castle was home to a prison in the 16th century and the souls of the prison's inmates have not found peace to this very day, haunting the castle still by night. At present, the castle houses the Museum of Kaunas and annual cultural events are held in and around it.



2 Santaka Park

(Papilio g.)

What we call the heart of Kaunas. Walking around it you can see how the Nemunas and the Neris rivers converge. Santaka Park has plenty of tourist attractions: the altar that was used to perform pagan rituals, Pope Hill, where Pope John Paul II visited and held holy mass in 1993, a statue of John Paul II, St. George's church and the Bernardine monastery ensemble, and the Kaunas Castle.



3 St. George the Martyr Church and Bernardine Monastery *

(Papilio g. 7, 9)

This is one of the oldest churches in Kaunas, open since 1503. St. George the Martyr Church was given to the Bernardine monks settled in the city. The church was destroyed by fire and war many times and had to be rebuilt. In 1812 Napoleon's army turned it into a flour warehouse. The last great reconstruction took place in 1936. Later, the Soviet government closed the church and turned it into a warehouse. The Church was returned to the Bernardine monks in 2005. The church was decorated with baroque wooden installations in the 18th century: a pulpit, organ choir with wooden galleries, and 8 altars. Some of them have survived to this day. The church interior is dominated by Gothic elements and Baroque features. There is an operating monastery on the south side of the church and next to it is the Domus Pacis guest house.



4 Kaunas Town Hall and Square *

(Rotušės a. 15)

Kaunas was granted the Magdeburg rights in 1408, which meant the city could have self-government and control of trade. The marketplace and elected government (magistrate) headquarters comprised the nucleus of the city. The main trade route went through the current Town Hall Square; there was a market there, too. Merchants' families stayed around this square, building houses and setting up shop. When the city joined the Hanseatic League, the square became even more important because it operated as a commercial centre for the city and the surrounding area. The square is where trade took place, but also served as the venue for publication of magistrate rulings and the pillory to punish offenders.

Artwork combining three stylistic periods – Gothic, Renaissance, and Classicism – stands at 29 Town Hall Square. There have been various premises in the building: a pharmacy, post office, small workshops, shops, and residential houses.

The most important building in the Town Hall Square is Town Hall. Construction began in 1542. The stately building is filled with a Gothic, Baroque, and early Classicist spirit; a tall, slender tower like a swan's neck sprouts in the sky the main facade. Town Hall is often referred to as the White Swan because of its shape and colour. Its 53-meter-high tower is the tallest in the Old Town. The current Town Hall is not the first in Kaunas. The preceding one was destroyed by fire and then rebuilt. Through various centuries, the purpose of the Town Hall changed: this is where the city's markets, fairs, and trials took place; 9 wax melting furnaces, a prison, and warehouses were operated under the Town Hall building cobblestones. Currently, the Town Hall holds ceremonies and official events.

At the town hall entrance you can see a unique 15th century wax melting furnace. Kaunas City Museum is located in the Town Hall (www.kaunomuziejus.lt). Its departments accumulate works of city history, science and industry, culture and the arts, and archaeology, as well as audiovisual materials.

It is symbolic that the museum unveiled a commemorative plaque to Władysław Starewicz, a puppet animation pioneer, often called the European Walt Disney. Starewicz worked in the building for a while. A memorial plaque to him called is held by insect sculptures depicting the director's three main cartoon characters: a stag-beetle, an ant, and a grasshopper. He was the first artist in the world to make puppet films, and he achieved a level that his contemporaries never could.

5 The Kaunas St. Peter and St. Paul Cathedral *

(Vilniaus g. 1) www.kaunoarkikatedra.lt

This was established by Duke Vytautas the Great in about 1413. In 1430 Vytautas granted funding to the church, providing it with income. Other Grand Dukes of Lithuania also cared for the parish Church: Aleksandras, Žygimantas Senasis, Zigmantas Vaza, Jonas Kazimieras Vaza, and Stanislovas Augustas Poniatovskis. The church was one of the first and oldest brick buildings in Kaunas. Gothic and Renaissance styles dominate the architecture, and in the interior the most prominent is the Baroque layer with historicism



(neo-gothic, neo-baroque) and 20th-21st century complements. The Cathedral has nine altar. Especially valuable are the sacristy's first and second floor crystal vaults. This is a late Gothic decorative design, the building of which was the highest testament of mastery to each craftsman who worked on it. This is one of the most extensive vaults in Europe. The western wall contains the grave of Jonas Mačiulis Maironis, priest and poet. Also buried in the chatedral are Žemaitija bishop Motiejus Valančius, as well as the first cardinal of Lithuania, Vincentas Sladkevičius.

6 The Kaunas St. Francis Xavier Church (Jesuit)

(Rotušės a. 9)

The south side of Town Hall Square is dominated by a Baroque Jesuit church with a convent and school buildings on either side. Construction of this late Baroque style, rectangular, two-tower church began in 1666, but it was only consecrated in 1759. The Jesuit monastery terrace operates a viewing platform overlooking the Town Hall Square and the beauty of Old Town. Next to the school in the church in 1819-1823, romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz taught and lived. This is confirmed by a memorial plaque on the school building. At present, the school is a Jesuit Gymnasium.

7 The House of Perkūnas *

(Aleksoto g. 6) www.perkunonamas.lt

It is considered to be the only trading post in Lithuania that belonged to the Hanseatic merchants. This is an old monument to original Gothic architecture, built in the second half of the 15th century. It is a stone building with an ornate pediment and a spacious basement. The main facade of the building is decorated with rectangular niches and a decorative solar symbol composed of glazed stones. The real purpose of the house is unknown. Legend has it that a sculpture of the god Perkūnas was discovered in one of the walls here and that priestesses kept an eternal flame lit here. However, researchers have collected a number of items from the house and determined the bust to be purchased from Hanseatic merchants. Probably most homes were built for commercial affairs, and the name of the Perkūnas House was given to it later to point out Kaunas' independence from foreign merchants and pay homage to ancient Lithuanian religious – pagan – traditions. The Adam Mickiewicz Museum is also located here; he was one of the most famous romantic poets who lived in Kaunas.



8 The Kaunas Blessed Virgin Mary of the Assumption Church (aka the Vytautas the Great Church) *

(Aleksoto g. 3)

This is oldest church in Kaunas, built in 1400. It is the only Gothic-style church with a cross-shaped plan in Lithuania. According to historians, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas was beaten up in battle with the Tatars at Vorskla and almost drowned in the river. Upon his rescue, to show his gratitude, Vytautas promised the Virgin Mary to build a church on the bank of the river. The church first referred to in documents in 1439, belonged to the Franciscans. The waterfront at the Vytautas church was equipped with a marina so that sailboats could moor, and later steamers. In 1877 a Nemunas water level gauging station was established next to the church. The station meter is installed on a granite wall. Zero altitude is 20.8 meters above sea level.



9 Vilniaus Gatvė (Vilnius Steet) *

It is the central and most beautiful street of the Old Town. It is the oldest street in the city, part of the former medieval road to Vilnius. Following reconstruction it became exclusively pedestrian and continues to be the axis of the old town. Many of the buildings on the road were wooden. Later came the red-brick houses of wealthy citizens, some of which have survived to this day.



10 Benedictine monastery and St. Nicholas Church *

(Benediktinių g. 8)

The monastery complex is situated in the northern part of the Old Town in Kaunas, on the Antakalnis hillside. The building complex consists of the church, convent, and rectory. The Gothic church of St. Nicholas was built in the 15th century. In the beginning of the 17th century, nobleman Andriejus Skorulskis of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania appealed to King Zigmantas (Sigismund) III asking the church to donate to the yet-to-be Kulm Congregation Benedictine monastery. During the 18th century, the Holy Heart of Jesus Brotherhood was founded at the St. Nicholas Church and for some time the monastery operated a school for girls. Until the beginning of the 19th century the monastery was wooden; a stone monastery building was only built in the 19th century. There was a refectory on the first floor, as well as cells and various utility rooms; on the second floor there were more cells. After the closure of the monastery the church was used as a public library books repository in 1948-1990. In 1990 the church was repaired and returned to the faithful; the Congregation of Benedictine Sisters returned to the monastery. The altar of Saint Benedict and three 18th-19th century paintings have survived from the old church facilities.

11 Vytautas the Great Bridge

Aka the longest bridge in the world. In order to cross the bridge from one bank of the Nemunas to the other took 13 days, because Kaunas belonged to the Russian Empire and Aleksotas to the Prussian kingdom up to 1807. The different sides of the river had different calendars, which included a 13-day difference. During World War II the bridge was blown up twice, only to be reborn in 1948 (architect Levas Kazarinskis); the bridge retraction mechanism is still of use today. The bridge, long called the Aleksotas Bridge, now known as the Vytautas the Great Bridge, connects Aleksotas with the Old Town. Having crossed the Nemunas you can try the funicular and the climb to the Aleksotas area where you will see a breathtaking panorama of Kaunas.



12 The Aleksotas funicular and observation deck

(Amerikos Lietuvių g. 6)

Kaunas is the only city in the Baltics where you can use this type of transportation. It is one of the oldest funiculars in Europe, in operation since 1935, still used for transport, as well as an attraction. The Aleksotas funicular connects the old part of the city with the Aleksotas hillside overlooking the beautiful panorama of Kaunas Old Town.



13 Historical Presidential Palace

(Vilniaus g. 33) www.istorineprezidentura.lt

Construction of the Presidential building began in 1846. When Kaunas became the provisional capital (1919-1939), all the political, economic, and cultural life moved here. All three of the then-presidents of the Republic of Lithuania worked and lived in the Presidential Palace: Antanas Smetona, Aleksandras Stulginskis, and Kazys Grinius. In 1923-1924, during Aleksandras Stulginskis' presidency, the building was renovated. The first floor was turned into a residence for the President's family, central heating was put in, and the second-floor gallery was encased in glass. During the presidency of Antanas Smetona, the territory of the Presidential Palace was enclosed with a new fence, which remains to this day. The first floor premises at the Presidential Palace had been designated for work, and the second floor had two drawing rooms for official receptions. Official government delegation receptions took place in the larger one, such as foreign diplomats presenting letters of credence to the President. Nowadays the Museum of the Historical Presidential Palace in Kaunas is located in this building. Sculptures of the Presidents of the Republic of Lithuania who there worked can be seen in the courtyard of the Presidential Palace.



14 Kaunas St. Gertrude Church *

(Laisvės al. 101A) www.svgertruda.lt

Built in the second half of the 15th century. This is one of the most exclusive Lithuanian Gothic monuments. The crucifix sculpture, which has long been famous for its graces, is the most valuable sacred thing at the Church of St. Gertrude. Next to the church in the candle shrine donors can light candles that burn for 7 days, during which people pray for each other. It teaches compassion even to complete strangers.



* The architectural masterpieces constructed during the governance period of the Gediminaičiai dynasty (13th-16th centuries).

For more information about the Road of the Gediminaičiai www.gediminids.eu



Road of the Gediminaičiai audio tour



15 Laisvės Alėja (Freedom Avenue)

When you visit Kaunas, you must walk down this important street in Naujamiestis (*New Town*), Kaunas, which is one of the longest pedestrian streets in Europe. The street is nearly 1.7 kilometers long and points exactly east and west. Walking down Laisvės Alėja you will have the unique opportunity to learn about the unique and plentiful Kaunas interwar modernist architectural heritage, which is a reflection of the intelligentsia, industry, government, and diplomatic institutions that once moved here. To this day, Kaunas remains probably the only city in the world where so many modernist, German Bauhaus style buildings were built and still stand: the Lithuanian Post, Kaunas State Musical Theatre, Bank of Lithuania, and many others. Also on Laisvės Alėja you will see the monument of Vytautas the Great, as well as a sculpture standing near the fountain of Danielius Dolskis, pop song pioneer of the Lithuanian interwar period. The avenue is full of restaurants, cafés, and cosy shops. It is a favourite place for taking walks and meeting people.

16 Kaunas Choral Synagogue

(E. Ožėskienės g. 13) www.kaunasjews.lt

This is the only surviving synagogue and Jewish prayer house still in operation in Kaunas, built in 1872. The synagogue is called choral, because ceremonies are carried out there accompanied by the choir singing. The reformed choral synagogue is a neo-Baroque building. The interior is decorated in typical Jewish art plant and animal motifs. Kaunas synagogue is one of three currently operating synagogues in Lithuania (the others are in Vilnius and Klaipėda).

17 Kaunas State Philharmonic

(L. Sapiegos g. 5) www.kaunofilharmonija.lt

The place was built in 1928. It was designed by the architect Edmundas Frykas. The building is four stories high and is neoclassical style with Art Deco elements. Initially, the building was intended only for the Ministry of Justice, but later they decided to house the Seimas there too. Currently, national professional music culture and traditions are nurtured and developed at the Philharmonic, Lithuanian and foreign music is performed, and the world of musical culture is conveyed creatively.

18 Monument to Vytautas the Great

(Laisvės al.)

In 1930, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the death of Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas, a monument was created by sculptor Vincas Grybas. The original soviet era sculpture disappeared. It was never found, so a copy was made. It was erected in 1990. The history of Vytautas the Great is a stunning example of a political career. By the 14th century, Lithuania had already been at war with the Teutonic Order with the support of the whole of Western Europe for one hundred and fifty years; the Crusades were isolating Lithuania from the rest of the Western countries. Jogaila introduced Christianity in Aukštaitija (*the Highlands*) and began to eliminate the isolation, but turned control of the Lithuanian state over to Poland. In the year 1409, Vytautas the Great finally took back Žemaitija (*the Lowlands*) from the Teutonic Order, which he later christened. The greatest of Vytautas' merits is considered to be routing the Teutonic Order at the Battle of Žalgiris (Battle of Grunwald) in 1410. Vytautas won global fame as the greatest military leader of a late medieval battle. After the Battle of Žalgiris, the risk of Crusaders to Lithuania was vanquished, and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania took the opportunity to establish normal relations with many European countries.

19 Kaunas State Musical Theatre and the City Garden

(Laisvės al. 91) www.muzikinisteatras.lt

Lithuanian professional theater arts – theatre, opera, and ballet – were born in the hall of the theater and survived there throughout the entire period of independent interwar Lithuania. The first ballet was performed there in 1948 and the first opera in 1951. Next to the musical theatre is the city garden, which is decorated with busts of Lithuanian composers, artists, and singers. There is a monument built in the garden near Laisvės Alėja in honor of Romas Kalanta, known for his public self-immolation protesting Soviet regime in this spot. This act led to demonstrations in the city, people demanded freedom for Lithuania. The monument was unveiled in 2002 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of this event.

20 Kaunas State Drama Theatre

(Laisvės al. 71) www.dramosteatras.lt

The first professional stationary drama theatre in Lithuania, called the *Drama Vaidykla* in 1920-1922. The theatre building became one of the most prominent examples of 20th century socialist realism architecture in Lithuania. It is represented by a monumental and theatrical decorative facade. There are 6 different creative spaces for events at Kaunas Drama Theatre.



21 Chambers of the Bank of Lithuania

(Maironio g. 25) www.lb.lt

Designed by the architect Michael Songaila in 1924, it is one of the most luxurious and presentable buildings of interwar Lithuania. Classical elements of architecture, expensive materials, and works of art testify to the independent Lithuania's rising ambitions in the young state's economic strength and faith in the country's future. The third floor of the building was Prime Minister Augustinas Voldemaras' apartment with a library, office, formal reception hall, and bank keepers' apartments. The purpose of the chambers of the Bank of Lithuania has not changed since their construction to the present day. Banks have always been located in the building. The chambers also house a functioning monetary museum whose collection consists of exhibits related to the history of money and banking.

22 Devil Museum

(V. Putvinskio g. 64) www.ciurlionis.lt

Kaunas is home to the world's only Devil Museum. A collection of more than 3,000 devils is kept here. Museum exhibits come from Armenia, Yakutia, Mexico, Cuba, Ukraine, Japan, and other countries.



23 M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art

(V. Putvinskio g. 55) www.ciurlionis.lt

M. K. Čiurlionis was a globally recognized Lithuanian painter and composer. His creative period lasted only a little more than a decade, but during this time he managed to create more than 400 works of music and painted more than 300 pictures. The artistic ideas of romanticism, symbolism, and Art Nouveau are interlaced in the

works of M. K. Čiurlionis. The museum contains the creative legacy of the most famous Lithuanian composer and painter, M. K. Čiurlionis, Lithuanian folk art and artistic life in Lithuania archives, 15th-20th century Lithuanian fine and applied art, foreign fine and applied art, arts of the ancient world, as well as numismatics. Today, together with M. K. Čiurlionis museum, the Military Museum is located in the same building, only on the opposite side.





24 The Vytautas the Great War Museum

(K. Donelaičio g. 64) www.kariuomene.kam.lt

The Military Museum collection consists of archaeological finds, weapons and firearms, ammunition sets, a collection of foreign army uniforms, as well as belongings and documents from the Lituanica flight across the Atlantic. The continuously updated expositions and exhibitions will enable you to get acquainted with Lithuanian and global warfare from ancient times by noting the most important events in history. Construction of the museum began in 1919. At the same time the small garden was planted honouring those who died for Lithuanian independence. You will find a fieldstone monument to those who died for the freedom of Lithuania in this garden. Here stands the altar holding lit the eternal flame, the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, as well as the famous Bernardas Bučas “Sėjikas” (“*Seeder*”) sculpture, which seeds the night sky with stars. The “Laisvės” (“*Freedom*”) monument is the focal point of the garden and a symbol of the city. In the garden of the museum you can hear belfry carillon bells playing thirty-five different concerts and admire the wooden crosses memorializing those who died for the independence of Lithuania (Lithuanian cross crafting is a traditional Lithuanian branch of folk art entered into the UNESCO Humanity’s Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2001). It features a small book smugglers’ garden, the “Knygnešys” (“*Book Smuggler*”) monument and wall in honour of the famous book smugglers. Today the War Museum Garden is a representative town square, hosting a number of important national and city celebrations.

25 Žaliakalnis Funicular

(Aušros g. 6) www.kaunoliftai.lt

The funicular is a unique vehicle still used today with working traction, authentic pre-war wagons, wooden benches, and station houses. Even today chairlift funicular raises people up onto the mountain to see best views of the city skyline. You can reach the monumental Resurrection Church from the city centre by taking the Žaliakalnis funicular. This is a sort of short railway with cables equipped on the steep hillside of Žaliakalnis. The funicular railway has been running since 1931, accommodates 36 passengers, and moves 2 m/s. The trip takes 1 minute 38 seconds.

26 Monumental Christ’s Resurrection Church

(Žemaičių g. 31B)

www.prisikelimas.lt

When Lithuania regained its independence in 1922, the people of the temporary capital decided to build a church as a symbol of giving thanks to God for the regained freedom. The architect Karolis Reisonas designed the church, and construction began in 1932 funded by donations; but in 1940 the church building was seized. Work was already coming to an end when Lithuania lost its independence, only the interior was yet to be installed and the outside was not plastered. A radio factory mechanical workshop was installed there in 1952. The building was returned to the religious community in 1989. The church was consecrated in 2004, 70 years after the beginning of construction.



27 Kaunas Picture Gallery

(K. Donelaičio g. 16) www.ciurlionis.lt

Established in 1979. This place hosts Lithuanian and foreign artists’ exhibitions, educational programs, and a variety of artistic projects. Most of the art and iconography exhibition was donated to the city by Prof. Algimantas Miškinis. An interesting highlight of the main hall galleries is the “Juodoji skylė” (“*Black Hole*”) installation by Ay-O, the famous Japanese artist, who dedicated it to his associate Jurgis Mačiūnas (Kaunas-born pioneer of the avant-garde movement).

28 Mykolas Žilinskas Art Gallery

(Nepriklausomybės a. 12) www.ciurlionis.lt

The gallery was built in 1989. The gallery was named after Mykolas Žilinskas, honoring the significant art collector who enriched many Lithuanian art collections. The gallery

houses the donated collection of Mykolas Žilinskas, the art he gifted to Kaunas: Ancient Egyptian art, 17th-20th century European decorative-applied art, 17th-18th century Italian paintings, second half of 19th century and 20th century Western European paintings, first half of the 20th century Baltic paintings and sculptures. Petras Mazūras' famous sculpture, "Man", depicting a naked man stands in the gallery courtyard. "Man" is clothed during playful promotions and in particular to keep from freezing in winter.



29 The Kaunas Sobor, St. Michael the Archangel (Garrison) Church (Nepriklausomybės a. 14)

A neo-byzantine-style building, standing in the eastern part Laisvės Alėja, was specially designed for the centre of the square. In 1895 Russian Czar Alexander III ordered construction of the Orthodox Cathedral for the Kaunas fortress garrison, as a representational structure, expressing luxury and official status. The Sobor was designed by Russian architects and decorated by Petersburg artists. In 1919 it was transformed into a Catholic St. Michael the Archangel church garrison. In 1965 the church became a stained glass and sculpture gallery. After the restoration of independence, the St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church is now operating again, and once again the once removed crosses are raised high. Church music concerts and performances by actors are often held, and exhibitions are continually on display.

30 Kaunas Mosque

(Totorių g. 6) www.musulmonai.lt

It is the only stone mosque in Lithuania. Historicist forms and oriental motifs highlighting the structure's purpose intertwine in the compact, low-volume mosque. The silhouette of the building forms typical architectural features of mosques, i.e. an elliptical dome and tall slimming square tower, or minaret. The Kaunas mosque has only one entrance, but two floors, the second of which is a spacious balcony for women. Men pray on the first floor.

31 Sugihara House

(Vaižganto g. 30. It is 3.2 km from the city centre) www.sugiharahouse.com

Established in 1999. This was set up through the efforts of Lithuanian and Belgian intellectuals and businessmen to commemorate the Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara. The Japanese Consulate operated in the building in 1939-1940. Chiune Sugihara became famous when he saved the lives of ten thousand Lithuanian, Polish, and German Jews during World War II. He issued them lifelong visas to Japan without official Japanese government approval.

32 Oak Grove

(Sporto g. It is 3.6 km from the city centre)

The Kaunas Oak Grove is the largest in Europe. Its total area is 84.42 ha. Here you can see the "Stumbras" ("Bison") sculpture, walk through the valley of the poet Adam Mickiewicz, admire the monument to the legendary flight of the Lithuanian pilots Darius Steponas and Stasys Girėnas, as well as visit the "Dainų slėnis" ("Valley of Songs"). The Oak Grove is a popular place for walks and athletics.

33 Stumbras Museum

(K. Būgos g. 7. It is 3.2 km from the city centre) www.stumbras.eu

This is a unique opportunity for you to get acquainted with the history and evolution of the emergence of Lithuanian alcohol production, as well as the subtleties of tasting and the rules. The equipment used for the production process, the labels, packaging, and the process of how Stumbras is produced and bottled today are all presented here.

34 Botanical Garden

(Ž. E. Žilibero g. 6. It is 5 km from the city centre) botanika.vdu.lt

You can see the most diverse plant collections set up in the garden first planted in 1923. Lithuania's largest conservatory, a unique beauty of a mature park with ponds and romantic bridges, the historic High Freda estate environment provides an excellent space for recreation.



35 Kaunas Forts

(Ninth fort address: Žemaičių pl. 73, Seventh fort address: Archyvo g. 61. It is 3 km from the city centre to the Seventh fort and 7 km to the Ninth fort)

www.9fortomuziejus.lt / www.septintasfortas.lt / www.karopaveldas.lt

On the eve of the First World War, Kaunas was surrounded by nine forts, batteries, and other defensive fortifications there. The Kaunas fortress reflects the era's engineering solutions and building opportunities. The Seventh and Ninth forts have been adapted for visitors. They feature museums that present the history of the fortifications.

36 Pažaislis (St. Virgin Mary's visit to Elizabeth Church and Abbey Buildings) ensemble

(T. Masiulio g. 31. It is 11 km from the city centre) www.pazaislis.org

This is one of the most beautiful baroque ensembles in Lithuania. It was built in the 17th century for the Camaldolese Monastery under the supervision of craftsmen from Florence (Michelangelo Palloni, Joan Merli, Pietro Perti). The beauty of the monastery was well-known in Europe. Swedish king Charles XII, as well as the Russian Emperors Alexander I and Nicholas I visited the monastery. International Pažaislis music festivals take place here every summer since 1996. In the southern part of the complex is a monastery officina where you will find an open sacred Pažaislis monastery ensemble museum, and next to it a unique hospitality complex is situated in Monte Pacis, where you can taste historic monastic dishes with modern interpretations.

**37 Lithuanian Folk Museum**

(L. Lekavičiaus g. 2, Rumšiškės, Kaišiadorių r. It is 27 km from the city centre) www.llbm.lt

At the Lithuanian Folk Museum, located in the open air Rumsiskes, you will find an exposition of 17th-20th century villages, towns, and estates buildings. Typical residential and outbuilding materials have been carried over from all regions of the country to the 174 hectare territory to rebuild historically based farmsteads and village facilities with their characteristic small architecture, as well as plantations. The buildings reveal typical stylistic features, planning, construction, and decor items of different periods and social strata. Farmsteads are grouped into five sectors according to ethnic region: Žemaitija, Aukštaitija, Dzūkija, Suvalkija, and Mažoji Lietuva (Lithuania Minor). The most typical regional villages and farmstead types have been rebuilt. That is all of Lithuania in one place. From May to September you can even reach the museum by boat.



When traveling in Kaunas, visit at least a few museums. Besides the permanent expositions you will also see continually changing exhibitions. History, art, memorial, and other sorts of museums all make it possible to get acquainted with the city and region's culture and history, broaden your horizons, and have a good time!



The National M. K. Čiurlionis Art Museum and its subdivisions:

- 1 M. K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery (V. Putvinskio g. 55);
- 2 Mykolas Žilinskas Art Gallery (Nepriklausomybės a. 12);
- 3 Kaunas Picture Gallery (K. Donelaičio g. 16);
- 4 Devil Museum (V. Putvinskio g. 64);
- 5 Historical Presidential Palace (Vilniaus g. 33);
- 6 Ceramics Museum (Rotušės a. 15);
- 7 The home of Adelė and Paulius Galauniai (Vydūno al. 2);
- 8 Liudas Truikys and Marijona Rakauskaitė Museum (E. Fryko g. 14);
- 9 Juozas Zikaras' House and Museum (J. Zikaro g. 3).
www.ciurlionis.lt
- 10 Seventh Fort of the Kaunas Fortress (Archyvo g. 61) *www.septintasfortas.lt*
- 11 Kaunas Ninth Fort Museum (Žemaičių pl. 73) *www.9fortomuziejus.lt*
- 12 Kaunas Tadas Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology (Laisvės alėja 106) *www.zoomuziejus.lt*
- 13 Lithuanian Aviation Museum (Veiverių g. 132) *www.lam.lt*
- 14 Museum of the History of Lithuanian Education (Vytauto pr. 52) *www.lsim.lt*
- 15 **Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum** (Rotušės a. 13) **and its subdivisions:**
- 16 Balys and Vanda Sruogos House-Museum (B. Sruogos g. 21);
- 17 Juozas Grušas Memorial Museum (Kalniečių g. 93);
- 18 Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas Memorial Museum (Aleksoto g. 10-4);
- 19 Salomėja Nėris Memorial Museum (S. Nėries g. 7);
- 20 Museum of Children's Literature (K. Donelaičio g. 13).
www.mairioniomuziejus.lt

- 21 **Vytautas the Great War Museum** (K. Donelaičio g. 64) **and its subdivisions:**
- 22 The modern times in military history department of the underground AB Printing House (Salių kaimas, Domeikavos seniūnija).
www.kariuomene.kam.lt
- 23 **Kaunas City Museum** (Rotušės a. 15) **and its subdivisions:**
- 24 Kaunas Castle (Pilies g. 17);
- 25 The Brothers Petrauskai Lithuanian Music Museum (K. Petrausko g. 31);
- 26 Juozas Gruodis Memorial Museum (Salako g. 18);
- 27 Povilas Stulga Museum of Lithuanian Folk Instruments (L. Zamenhofo g. 12);
- 28 Exile and Resistance Exposition (Vytauto pr. 46).
www.kaunomuziejus.lt
- 29 The House of Perkūnas (Aleksoto g. 6) *www.perkunonamas.lt*
- 30 Pažaislis Monastery Museum Exposition (T. Masiulio g. 31) *www.pazaislis.org*
- 31 Sugihara House (Vaižganto g. 30) *www.sugiharahouse.com*
- 32 Stumbras Museum (K. Būgos g. 7) *www.stumbras.eu*
- 33 Atomic Bunker (Raudondvario pl. 164A pihalla) *www.atominisbunkeris.lt*
- 34 Gemstones (L. Zamenhofo / Kurpių g. 13) *www.dusafyrai.com*
- 35 Museum of the History of Lithuanian Medicine and Pharmacy (Rotušės a. 28) *www.lsmuni.lt*
- 36 History of Lithuanian Money and the Bank of Lithuania Exposition (Maironio g. 25) *www.pinigumuziejus.lt*
- 37 Historical, Military Equipment Exhibition (S. Dariaus ir S. Girėno g. 29A) *www.transportomuziejus.lt*
- 38 Valdas Adamkus Presidential Library-Museum (S. Daukanto g. 25) *www.adamkuslibrary.lt*
- 39 The Kaunas Archdiocese Museum (Vilniaus g. 29) *www.kaunoarkivyskupija.lt*
- 40 The Kaunas Puppet Theatre Museum (Laisvės al. 87A) *www.kaunoleles.lt*
- 41 Lithuanian Sports Museum (Muziejaus g. 7, 9) *www.lietuvosportomuziejus.lt*
- 42 Lithuanian Riflemen's Union Museum (Laisvės al. 34) *www.sauliusajunga.lt*

The settlement of the Nemunas and Neris rivers, from which Kaunas arose, was first mentioned in 1361.

Then they built the castle here to defend against the attacks of the Teutonic Order, which turned out to be vital not only for the city but also for all of Lithuania.

Historians believe that early as 1408 Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas granted Kaunas Magdeburg rights. It was on the basis of these rights that the city formed its first council, a privilege which was later confirmed by all of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania. A favourable geographical location played a significant role in the growth of Kaunas, as well as the waterways, Nemunas and Neris, which allowed the city merchants to gradually enter into trade with Danzig, Toruń, and Königsberg. From the 15th century Kaunas had customs authorities that regulated all national trade over water and land routes with neighbouring Prussia.

Kaunas experienced an economic boom in the 16th century. The first school, hospital-shelter and a pharmacy, and craftsmen workshops were launched here. An abundance of brick buildings in Kaunas distinguished it from most of the other cities in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the end of century. In the first half of the 17th century it was surrounded by a stone wall.

Still, there were the mid-17th century wars and the six-year Russian czarist military occupation (1655-1661), because of which many of the townspeople were forced to flee to Prussia, and during which a fever epidemic struck a huge blow to the welfare of Kaunas.

The recovering Kaunas was once again smacked down by the Northern War (1700-1721).

In 1732 a great fire ravaged the city. Urban development was slowed by political turmoil in the state and the frequent presence of the Russian imperial army crew (1734, 1735, 1748, and 1767-1775).

You could see signs of the city's recovery seen in the second half of the 18th century. It continued through the 1732 fire that severely affected the parish church reconstruction, complete Town Hall reconstruction in 1781, Guest house was built in 1786, which can be called and the first hotel in the city, the city buildings were numbered in 1792, and bridges were built over the Nemunas and Neris in 1794.

Kaunas fell to Czarist Russia after the third division of Lithuania and Poland in 1795.

In 1801 another great fire ravaged the city.

Kaunas found itself in the midst of the Franco-Russian War of 1812. The French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte himself moved his hundreds-of-thousands-strong Grand Army over the Nemunas near the city. Kaunas was the first city occupied by the French imperial army in this war. It was devastated twice during the war when the Grand Army marched into town and during their retreat.



In 1843 Kaunas became the centre of the newly established province.

Nicholas Avenue started to turn into a boulevard in 1847 (what is now Laisvės Alėja).

A railway line built, as well as the first modern railway bridge over the Nemunas in 1862, and the first power plant was launched in 1898.

The Czarist government resolution regarding transfer of the Žemaičiai (Telsiai) Bishopric centre from Varniai to Kaunas in 1864 brightened the city's cultural life. Kaunas amateur Reading Society was founded in 1870, which established the first public library in the city, but any proactive cultural expression was affected by Russian policies, which inhibited any national activities.

Kaunas was awarded Class I fortress status by the Russian imperial border military in 1879. From 1882 until the First World War Kaunas was surrounded by fortifications, forts, and a ring of batteries (an orthodox church and military garrison sobor devoted to the Russian soldiers in Kaunas was built in 1895).

The Könke horse-drawn tram began operating under contract with Swiss engineer Diuonu in Kaunas in 1892, a line stretching from the Town Hall Square to the railway station. A 500 person occupancy city theatre was also built that same year.

During the First World War, Kaunas was occupied by Germans in 1915-1918.

After the First World War, Lithuania began to build the Republic and because Vilnius was occupied by the Russians (1919), the State Council and the Cabinet of Ministers were established in Kaunas.

When Vilnius was occupied by Poland, Kaunas became the temporary capital and most important city of Lithuania in 1920. The same year came the Constituent Assembly met and laid the legal foundations for restored state. Kaunas remained the temporary capital until 1939. Having become the political, cultural, and economic centre of the country, Kaunas came to life a little, taking on modernity and Europeanism in the interwar period. The city was decorated by new buildings (Kaunas interwar architecture), the old ones were renovated, and bridges were built.

Buses started running in 1929. The city began to operate the Žaliakalnis and Aleksotas funiculars improving transportation connections in 1931 and 1935. The opera theatre opened in 1920. Two years later the national theatre opened. Also in 1922 the University of Lithuania was established, which was renamed Vytautas Magnus University in 1930. The first national Olympiad took place in Kaunas in 1938, and the European basketball championship was organized

in 1939, for which a sports hall accommodating five thousand people was built.

The Russian army occupied Lithuania in June 1940. During the Second World War, the Soviet army occupied Kaunas in 1944. The second Soviet occupation began.

After the restoration of Lithuania's independence in 1990, Kaunas opened up for development and cooperation opportunities with foreign cities.

At present, Kaunas is Lithuania's second largest city and aspires to become the European Capital of Culture in 2022.

Two of the largest Lithuanian rivers are situated in Kaunas; they have long played an important role in defence. The exceptional strategic position of this place was appreciated by Russians taking over Lithuanian lands as far back as 1795. Ever deteriorating relations with neighbours forced us to consider strengthening our western border. Czar Alexander II signed a decree on the construction of the Kaunas fortress in 1879, and by February 1880 long-term fortification plans were drawn up. The city was surrounded by 7 forts and a stationary ring of 12 batteries. Two years later, 24 April 1882, Kaunas fortress construction officially began.

The forts were built in several stages: first a road was laid to the fortification the location where the work was to be carried out, including building barracks, gunpowder warehouses, and other facilities. Construction of one fort took about 3-5 years. In addition to the forts and batteries, construction of central fortifications and the central warehouses on both banks of the Nemunas began in 1885. Outside the ring of forts, the fortress infrastructure was built: commandant headquarters, intendant office, main headquarters, board of engineers and engineering headquarters, residential houses of officials and construction workers, telephone-telegraph, electricity, water supply stations, military, railway stations, elevators, mill, grain storage, war pigeons



station, fire station, and harbours. Military towns grew in Žemieji Šančiai and Aukštoji Panemunė. Soldiers' spiritual affairs were not forgotten: the Saints Peter and Paul Sobor was built in 1891-1895.

Construction of the eighth fort began the right bank of the Neris River in 1889. The newest and most modern ninth fort arose in the highlands northwest of Kaunas in 1903-1913. This is the first and only surviving fort of the Kaunas Fortress; they used masonry concrete for its construction. The plan to reinforce the fortress was approved 23 April 1913. It provides for the construction of an additional 12 forts and 12 base stations forming a second, larger, 47.17 km long fortification ring around the city. All work stopped on 28 July 1914, with the beginning of the First World War. Before the war, there was enough time to fully complete the construction of nine forts and ten batteries.

The Russian Empire's 1st class terrestrial Kaunas Fortress was occupied by Germany on 18 August 1915. Since the end of the

war and the restoration of Lithuania's independence, Kaunas Fortress has never again been used for its original purpose. The administrative buildings of Kaunas Fortress were taken over by Lithuanian state institutions and used for various other purposes: a prison, warehouses, archives, residents of apartments, etc. During World War II Lithuania was occupied by Nazi Germany, and the fourth, seventh, and ninth forts were used for the mass murder of civilians.

Today Kaunas residents and guests are invited to get acquainted with these massive objects of defence – the Kaunas Fortress – as well as the history of the seventh and ninth forts and the museums operating there.



Seventh Fort Museum

Archyvo g. 61
www.septintasfortas.lt

Ninth Fort Museum

Žemaičių pl. 73
www.9fortomuziejus.lt

THE ERA OF DIPLOMACY IN KAUNAS

Historical circumstances led to the 1919-1940 period being named the era of diplomacy in Kaunas.

Thanks to historical circumstances, Kaunas became the temporary capital of the reborn State of Lithuania (1918). Lithuania took the first steps to nationhood there: the country's most important institutions and foreign diplomatic missions were founded.

Kaunas was never officially ratified in writing as the temporary capital. In diplomatic terms, Kaunas became the de facto capital of Lithuania when the provisional government moved there from Vilnius on 2 January 1919. That same year, the central street of the town was renamed Laisvės Alėja (*Liberty Avenue*), and a street abutting it in honor of February 16th. And the streets still have those names today. The first president in the history of Lithuania was elected in Kaunas. On 4 April 1919, in Kaunas, the Council of Lithuania elected Antanas Smetona. The Constituent Assembly of Lithuania gathered in the capital, Kaunas, for its first meeting on 15 May 1920, in the the State Theatre, the current Musical Theater.

The country's most important institutions operated in Kaunas, among them the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had a critical challenge to establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries and represent Lithuania in the international arena. Diplomatic missions gradually began to settle here. First of all the diplomatic missions of the great powers visited Kaunas – the US, Britain, and France – and later permanent embassies and consulates of these and other countries settled in. These government agencies and foreign representative offices operated in Kaunas in 1939:



- 1 Lithuania Presidential Palace (Vilniaus g. 33);
- 2 Lithuanian Seimas Chambers (Gimnazijos g. 3);
- 3 Chambers of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Lithuania and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Maironio g. 27);
- 4 United States Consulate and Embassy (V. Putvinskio g. 68);
- 5 Czechoslovak Embassy and the Argentine Consulate (V. Putvinskio g. 60);
- 6 Papal Nunciature Building (V. Putvinskio g. 56);
- 7 Honorary Consulate of Hungary (V. Putvinskio g. 54);
- 8 Honorary Consulate of Hungary (V. Putvinskio g. 42);
- 9 Swedish Consul General (V. Putvinskio g. 40);
- 10 French Embassy (V. Putvinskio g. 14);
- 11 Honorary Consulate of Norway (Nepriklausomybės a. 7);
- 12 Metropolis Hotel (S. Daukanto g. 21);
- 13 Polish Embassy (Kęstučio g. 38);
- 14 British Embassy and Consulate (Kęstučio g. 29);
- 15 German Embassy (Gedimino g. 19);
- 16 Danish Embassy (Vytauto pr. 55/Griunvaldo g. 2);
- 17 Latvian Embassy (Vytauto pr./Kęstučio g.);
- 18 Finnish Consulate (Kęstučio g. 8);
- 19 Italian Embassy (Vydūno al. 13);
- 20 Japanese Consulate (Vaižganto g. 30).



Diplomacy in Kaunas
audio tour



Diplomacy in Kaunas
virtual tour

KAUNAS – A CITY FAMOUS FOR ITS INTERWAR ARCHITECTURE

After the First World War, with the restoration of Lithuania's statehood, and due to other historical circumstances, namely the Polish army occupied the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius and the eastern part of the country, Kaunas became the most important city in Lithuania. Public authorities and the intelligentsia rallied in Kaunas. Industry began to develop. Kaunas took over the helm of the national capital and became a modern symbol of independent Lithuania. Thankful circumstances also contributed to this: society was ready for change; the city needed various buildings, but they could only be designed by talented, gifted, learned architects who had studied abroad and brought their knowledge back to Lithuania to put to work.

In carrying out the functions of the state capital in the first half of the 20th century, Kaunas suddenly acquired a unique significance on the map of Europe. The architects of our young state harmoniously integrated into the European context by developing an advanced city. Individual buildings, neighbourhoods, and complexes had a major impact on the entire city image emerging in the temporary capital. Kaunas became the centre of science, culture, and education: institutions such as the University of Lithuania, the Art School, higher education physical education courses, theatres, opera houses, the radio, the Military Museum, and the astronomical observatory were established. Industry developed rapidly in Kaunas, there was an active European lifestyle about, and great attention was paid to culture and sport. In this regard, the sports hall was built in 1939, where the Lithuanian men's basketball team won the European Championship title for the second time, as if hanging a wreath around the neck of Kaunas. This transformation of Kaunas into a European city left a significant mark in later Lithuanian

state development: due to the country's willingness to fight for freedom, break out of the Soviet occupation, the city formed a mental identity and a physical face. This is only the second architectural period (not counting baroque) when Lithuanian architecture went hand in hand with the whole of Europe. An abundant Kaunas interwar architecture accumulated over 20 years, its dense concentration in the city is a unique phenomenon in Europe; in the context of international modernism it reflects both the then Bauhaus style trends and unique style of Lithuanian nationalism which distinguishes a

modern, high-quality Kaunas interwar architecture from the European mainstream. Kaunas is the only city in the world where so much of the style of the buildings has survived to the present day.



- 21 Kaunas Central Post Office (Laisvės al. 102)
- 22 Kaunas State Musical Theatre (Laisvės al. 91)
- 23 Kaunas City Municipal Building (the former Savings Bank) (Laisvės al. 96)
- 24 Kaunas State Philharmonic (formerly the Ministry of Justice and Seimas (Parliament) Building) (L. Sapiegos g. 5)
- 25 Bank of Lithuania (Maironio g. 25)
- 26 The complex of buildings on V. Putvinskio g. (even house numbers from 52 to 72)
- 27 The Vytautas the Great War Museum and M. K. Čiurlionis National Art Museum (V. Putvinskio g. 55)
- 28 Žaliakalnis Funicular (Aušros g. 6)
- 29 Jesus Christ's Resurrection Church in Kaunas (Žemaičių g. 31)
- 30 Jonas Jablonskis High School (formerly an elementary school) (Aušros g. 3)
- 31 The Former Headquarters of the Pienocentras Company (Laisvės al. 55/S. Daukanto g. 18)
- 32 The Former Office of Pažanga AB (Laisvės al. 53)
- 33 Romuva Movie Theatre (Laisvės al. 54)
- 34 Soldier's Lounge (A. Mickevičiaus g. 19)
- 35 The Jonas and Gediminas Lapėnas Apartment Building (Kęstučio g. 38)
- 36 Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Medical Academy (A. Mickevičiaus g. 9)
- 37 Jonas Basanavičius, MD, Military Medical Service (Vytauto pr. 49)
- 38 The Kaunas Children's Rec Centre (formerly the Neo-Lithuania Centre) (Parodos g. 26)
- 39 Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education (Sporto g. 6)
- 40 Sports Hall (Perkūno al. 5)
- 41 The Brothers Petrauskai Lithuanian Music Museum (formerly the Brothers Petrauskai Residence) (K. Petrausko g. 31)



Audio tour



A film presenting interwar architecture

THE WOODEN ARCHITECTURE OF KAUNAS

"Lithuania has something to show to the world. One of the wonders is wooden architecture."
Gilles Vuillard

The tradition of wood construction was widespread in Lithuania. Many old rural homes and wooden church have been studied. Trees were a popular building material in interwar Kaunas because masonry construction costs were too high for many home owners.

Today the wooden architecture of the city is perceived as an aesthetic and ethical value. Wooden architecture experts see the value of the houses; they discover it on the educational tours of Žaliakalnis, Panemunė, Šančiai, and Vilijampolė as well. For heritage lovers, the intrinsic value of wooden houses is indisputable. Without these houses the city would lose a very important part of its cultural identity.

Unfortunately, only a small portion of the inter-war wooden houses passed the test of time and resisted the social and economic temptations, but they keep alive the interwar Kaunas suburban spirit.



- 42 Architect Antanas Jokimas' Villa (Minties Rato g. 2)
- 43 Soldier Antanas Gedmantas' House (Žemuogių g. 2)
- 44 Composer Juozas Gruodis' Villa (Salako g. 18)
- 45 Entrepreneur Pranas Urbonas' Villa (Žemaičių g. 20)
- 46 Construction technician Jonas Varneckis' Villa (Sietyno g. 17)
- 47 Juozas and Stasė Geniušas' Villa (Tulpių g. 21)
- 48 Barbora and Kazys Zukauskas' Villa (A. Smetonos al. 81)
- 49 Educator Jonas Dereškevičius' House (Minties Rato g. 24)



Kaunas is a city surrounded by an exclusive aura aspiring to become the European Capital of Culture in 2022.

Art and creativity are accompanying Kaunas on several levels: music, theatre, dance, design, and many others.

The city constantly encourages the development of both public and private spaces.

Explore the wide range of cultural facilities and projects, from works of art turned into buildings, to galleries, interior design, bohemian cafes, etc. A variety of events will also surprise you. If you just plan your visit you will have a good time!

Full of new sensations and discoveries, life in Kaunas is a modern and youthful generator of culture; so everyone who loves art in Kaunas will find his own corner.

Every year Kaunas adds to immense events spaces. We look forward to seeing you at our well-established and brand new festivals!

March–December

Art in Old Lithuanian Manors www.menasdvaruose.lt

It is a unique presentation of contemporary art in old architectural space.

April

Kaunas Jazz www.kaunasjazz.lt

The Kaunas Jazz Festival has been organized each spring for more than two decades inviting music fans to listen to the most prominent Lithuanian and foreign jazz stars. The majority of urban spaces are filled with the spirit of jazz, so spring is not only outside, but also in people's hearts. Every last weekend in April this celebrations break free from the city that seems unable to contain it; it is an international jazz scene at the Lithuanian jazz capital.



May

Design Week www.dizainoforumas.lt

Traditionally, on the first week of May five Lithuanian cities Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, and Telšiai, plunge into a design fiesta, during which guests are invited to take part in workshops, visit exhibitions, draw on expertise and share at international conferences; meanwhile developers present their latest work.



International Folklore Festival “Atataria Lamzdžiai”

www.ktkc.lt

Folk music, authentic culture, traditions, songs, music, and dances from Lithuanian and abroad intertwine into international folklore festival “Atataria Lamzdžiai” in May.



International Dancesport Competition “Amber Couple” www.tautosnamai.lt

A traditional event in Kaunas with several hundred pairs of dancers, dozens of prominent international class judges from around the world, and an impressive competition concert program.

Festival-Competition Cycle “Kaunas Cantat”

www.kaunascantat.lt

The largest choral festival where high professionalism of various styles of choral music is delivered to the audience.



International Smiling Puppets and Children

Puppet Theatre Festival www.kaunoleles.lt

The festival of professional Lithuanian and foreign ensemble performances, exhibitions, is already recognized by the townspeople as the Puppet and Mask Parade, craftsmanship exhibitions, and seminars.



Kaunas Hanseatic Days Celebration

www.tautosnamai.lt

More than 600 years ago Kaunas was granted the Magdeburg rights. Kaunas is the only city in Lithuania that is now a member of the New Hanseatic League, which gives the celebration a medieval identity and distinguishes this festival from all other Lithuanian city holidays. Spectators are invited to get acquainted with the culture of the time, music, dances, performances, games, crafts, and knights who fight in international tournament win a sword named for the Lithuanian Armed Forces.



Kaunas Schoolchildren Song Festival www.vmlr.lt

The festival features performances of various arts genres uniting children and youth choirs, instrumental ensembles, folk and modern dance groups, where as many as a few thousand students participate annually.



May–July

International Festival “Operetė Kauno pilyje”

(Operetta in Kaunas Castle) www.operetta.lt

This is the first operetta festival in Eastern Europe, with most beautiful performances by singers, musicians and orchestras from a variety of European countries.



May–August

Pažaislis Music Festival www.pazaislis.lt

The best world-renowned musicians from classical, old music, jazz, and plenty of other project-based music and even more excitement throughout the summer invite you to experience the Pažaislis Music Festival!



June

Bike Show Millennium www.bikeshow.lt

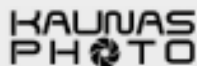
The entire city takes joy in the festival that brings together the world's greatest bikers and motor sports enthusiasts.



September

Kaunas Photo www.kaunasphoto.com

The Kaunas Photo Festival is the largest and most important photography event in the Baltics. The most frequented photography project takes place in a wide range of outdoor and indoor spaces. It is organized every year in Kaunas.

**International Traditional and Contemporary Folk Music Festival "Suklegos"** www.suklegos.lt

A contemporary glance at the folklore festival includes a variety of musical styles and projects based on ethnic culture.



September–October

Kaunas International Film Festival

www.kinofestivalis.lt

Film art development trends are reflected in the most interesting of recent international film successes all over the world and in Lithuania.



September–December

Kaunas Biennial www.bienale.lt

It is the largest international contemporary art event in the Baltic region consisting of exhibitions, artist residency program, workshops, educational programs, as well as public and community arts projects.



October

International Contemporary Dance Festival "Aura" www.aura.lt

Recognized foreign choreographers and troupe work, bringing together different art forms, techniques, and traditions are presented here.

**International Multimedia Art and Music Festival**

"Centras" (Centre) www.cntrs.lt

Lithuania's biggest modern media arts and music festival takes place in Kaunas.



November

Modern Music Festival "Iš Arti" (From Close)

www.isarti.lt

Presentation of the works of modern Lithuanian and foreign composers, and international exchange programs, lectures, workshops, and experiments.



November–December

Christmas Tree Lighting and a Christmas Village

www.tautosnamai.lt



www.manofestivalis.lt



To colour the city and improve public spaces, professional artists gave Kaunas large format drawings on the walls of buildings. The drawings created thinking about the local community and its life, concerns, and ideas. These works of art have become new attractions and are memorable and lively city markers.

A wall about 2,200 m² opened on the Nemunas waterfront beyond the Čiurlionis Bridge, which exposes people to experiments, training, workshops, and just a good time to spend near the river. This wall in Kaunas will always be public and space will always be open for creativity.

www.nykoka.lt

Art Galleries

Meno Parkas Gallery (*Art Park*)

Rotušės a. 27

www.menoparkas.lt

Kaunas Photo Gallery

Rotušės a.1/Vilniaus g. 2

www.kaunasgallery.lt

Gallery “Post”

Laisvės al. 51a

www.postgalerija.lt

VDU 101 Gallery

Muitinės g. 7

www.vdu.lt

Mykolas Žilinskas Art Gallery

Nepriklausomybės a. 12

www.ciurlionis.lt/zilinsko

Kaunas Picture Gallery

Donelaičio g. 16

www.ciurlionis.lt/paveikslu

Art Form

Savanorių pr. 166

www.menoforma.lt



Kaunas – the European Capital of Culture 2022

From country into country, from city to city, we expect the traveling European Capital of Culture project will stop and flourish in Kaunas in 2022, a the city that has both a great cultural infrastructure, as well as a well-developed international network of partnerships. The Contemporary Capital program reflects and investigates the history and modernity of the city. In the context of the temporary capital (1919 – 1940), this is the place where creative, civic, diplomatic, and academic powerhouses erupted to transform Kaunas into a modern city. In 2022, we will offer Europe and the world a perspective on the modern capital: extensive public events, active rest, community, scientific and artistic cooperation programs, residencies, festivals, music, cinema, and visual arts programs.



Cycling is becoming more widespread in Kaunas since the recent construction of bicycle paths. It is easy to reach the Lampėdžiai recreational area from the city centre by bicycle path. Go to Šilainiai through the Neris riverside park.

Cyclists particularly like recreational the bicycle trails in the Panemunė pinewood, Pažaislis forest park, Kleboniškis forest park, and by the Nemunas and Neris rivers. Bicycle paths also ensure comfortable travel connections from the city to the neighbouring (Kaunas District) municipality.



ACTIVE TOURISM MEANS MORE POSITIVE EMOTIONS!

Fritter away your everyday worries by dipping into a variety of adventures in Kaunas: climbing, adventure parks, bungee jumping, beach volleyball, the only race circuit in Lithuania, rope attractions, paintball, and many other outdoor opportunities!

The Confluence and Nemunas River Island parks are also tempting for Kaunas visitors. These parks are a great recreational area where you can not only walk, but also exercise, and participate in sports and other recreational activities. There is outdoor fitness equipment and playgrounds in the parks.

Nemunas Island park is open to all lovers of beach volleyball. It features as many as four volleyball courts. Confluence park is equipped with a new roller-skating, skateboarding, and BMX park.

So-called escape rooms are becoming increasingly popular, just one more great way to have a good time with friends, colleagues, and family. There, through logical thinking, imagination, and observation, team of people looks for various clues and solves the tasks to get out of a locked room as quickly as possible.



Bicycle path map



Kaunas recreation and leisure area map

Lampėdžiai Lake Beach

(Raudondvario pl. 161A)

It is one of the favourite recreational and bathing places in Kaunas. There is camping here to, which makes it an ideal place for tourists.

You can spend your time at Lampėdžiai quarry renting kayaks, water bikes, canoes, and wakeboards. The wakeboard park has one of the longest tracks in Europe. Its length is 287 meters. You can try canoeing with oars, too. This is a universal sport with no age limits, so everybody can join.

You can also spend your time at Lampėdžiai playing basketball, beach volleyball, mini golf, or tennis. There is also an adventure park here.

Everyone will find various water attractions and other active leisure opportunities here!

Panemunė Beach

(the end of Smetonos Alėja)

Here you will find a newly built resort with athletics courts and playgrounds, gazebos, and benches for cheerful and purposeful recreation.

Kaunas Lagoon 1st and 2nd Beaches

(T. Masiulio g.)

At Kaunas Lagoon you can ride around in the water on a rented water bike or boat, enjoy a game of beach volleyball, or enjoy an outdoor cafe.



Water tourism in Kaunas offers many opportunities to enjoy both the city and the beautiful outdoors. All that remains is to choose the most suitable trip for you!

For more information, you can always check the Kaunas Tourist Information Centre and Convention Bureau. Just do not forget to take care of tickets in advance!

Routes from the marina in the old town near the Vytautas Church

(Prieklaikos kr.)

Right next to Confluence Park you will find the Old Town pier inviting the check out the warm season from the vantage point of the Nemunas.

Kaunas

During the trip you will paddle up the river past Vytautas the Great bridge to the newly built Žalgiris Arena. You will see the beauty and architectural heritage of the old town of Kaunas. You will also have the chance to see the confluence of the biggest Lithuanian rivers (Nemunas and Neris), enter the river Neris, and admire the oldest Lithuanian brick castle.

Kaunas-Kačerginė-Kaunas

During the trip you will pass by Kaunas Castle, the picturesque Nemunas and Neris confluence in Lampėdžiai village, you will see Nevėžis River tributary, and take a glance at the town of Raudondvaris. When you get to Kačerginė you can spend an hour and a half walking around the town, visiting places, or just taking a load off in the pinewood. Kačerginė has long attracted visitors with its natural beauty and fresh pinewood air.

Kaunas-Kulautuva-Kaunas

Every Sunday during the summer season, tourists can enjoy a very fun pastime: a trip to Kulautuva on the legendary Tolstoy ship. Destinations are spread along the Nemunas River, as well as the town of Kačerginė that is famous for its rich history of and fresh pinewood air.



Kaunas-Raudondvaris-Kaunas

During the trip you will see the beauty of the old town of Kaunas, the Nemunas and Neris confluence, Kaunas district settlements, and the Nevėžis landscape. In Raudondvaris you will visit the beginning of the 17th century, the Lithuanian Renaissance architectural monument – Raudondvaris castle estate, where the Countess Rozalija will lead an entertaining excursion.



Routes from the Kaunas Lagoon Beach

(T. Masiulio g.)

Kaunas-Rumšiškės-Kaunas

Regular boat trips to Rumšiškės – great Sunday fun, during which you will have the opportunity to admire the beautiful panoramic views of Kaunas Lagoon, see the Pažaislis monastery ensemble, and visit one of the largest open-air museums in Europe, the Lithuanian museum of folk. During the trip to Rumšiškės you will be given 4 hours' time during which you will be able to visit the museum.

Kaunas-Kruonis-Kaunas

Regular flights to Kruonis are carried out on Saturdays. During the trip you will enjoy beautiful Kaunas Lagoon panoramas and see the Pažaislis monastery ensemble, as well as the Kruonis pumped storage power plant.

Kaunas-Birštonas-Kaunas

During the day trip you will have a unique opportunity to admire the Kaunas Lagoon Regional Park views and spend time at the beautiful Birštonas resort. Sailing to Birštonas will take 4 hours; during the trip the guide will regale passengers with stories and you can buy snacks and drinks on board. There will be 4 hours to see Birštonas, during which you will be able to participate in the overview excursion, rent a bike, dine in cosy cafes and restaurants, or just hike around.

Pleasure boats cruise around starting in May. Depending on the route, you can take a dip until September or November. Charter sailing is also possible.

IMPRESSIONS BOTH GREAT AND SMALL

Kaunas is the perfect place for a family vacation. There is such diverse entertainment! And the city's ultra-compactness will allow you to experience more excitement. Most of them are equally fun for both children and their parents.

The Lithuanian zoo inviting you to visit more than 2,000 animals is located in Kaunas. The collection consists of over 250 species, many of which are included in the Lithuanian and International Red Books. The zoo organizes educational programs too, as well as a night zoo and wide variety of other events.



If you are just looking for the sensation of free falling, but you are afraid of heights, you can check out trampoline parks – you can even bounce off the walls in the trampoline sprawling space here.

After the installation of a new roller-skating, skateboarding and BMX park, enthusiasts can spend entire days and nights at Confluence park in active leisure/extreme sports.

All those who wish to actively spend time in the fresh air without leaving the city are invited to adventure park, located next to Lampėdžiai lake. It offers various tracks from the Quick track for children,

which will give the little ones trust in themselves, up to 16 meters high Elephant Flight.

In the warm season the town is flooded by soap bubbles. You can dive into the coloured bubbles fiesta at an agreed upon place several times during the summer!

You are also invited to play laser tag, a new high-tech game.

There are also playgrounds at the city parks, the city offers theatre performances for children, and most of the museums each leave their own impression not only the little ones but also their parents.



KAUNAS DISTRICT

Zapyškis Church (It is 23 km from the city centre)

The town, located on the right bank of Nemunas, is famous for one of the most beautiful churches in Lithuania. Zapyškis Old Church (St. John the Baptist) is one of the most unique cultural heritage sites. Built in 16th century Gothic style, today the church stands lonely and picturesque on the

bank of the Nemunas. It is said that once it was surrounded by cabins, but due to frequent flooding and a large population shift the homesteads deteriorated. Only the remaining trees still quietly speak about them in the green meadows. Unfortunately, you usually will not be able to see the church interior. Most of the time it is closed, and visitors are allowed in only during holidays and festivals. However, it is interesting enough to see from the outside. The walls are one meter thick, red-brick at all levels. But that only adds a charm to the area. Rich profiled brick facades consist of a range of compositions around the windows, niches, and portals. The old Zapyškis church is no longer used for religious purposes since the beginning of the 20th century. Because not all of the parishioners fit inside anymore for mass, it was officially closed in 1901 and a new church was built in Zapyškis.

Driving down the Kaunas-Šakiai road or sailing Kaunas-Kulautuva via board pleasure craft, there is no doubt that the old Zapyškis church is one of the highlights of the Nemunas Valley. In the summer the Pažaislis Music Festival concerts take place here, as well as the kite celebration and other events.

Centre of Traditional Crafts (It is 22 km from the city centre) www.krmuziejus.lt

An exposition of 19th and 20th century technical heritage and ethnic culture can be found at the Centre of Traditional Crafts, established under the open sky in Biliūnai village, Raudondvaris township. There is an exhibition of engines, agricultural machinery, cars, motorcycles, wagonette, village craftsmen tools, and household items produced by Juozapas Liekis in Lithuania and abroad. You can see pretty rare machines. Most of the equipment is repaired, restored, and functioning. You can get acquainted with the exposition of ethnic heritage of the land and renewed ancient outdoor equipment.

Žemaitkiemis-Babtynas Manor (It is 35 km from the city centre) www.senasdvaras.lt

This place is in Kaunas District, Babtai township. What they have got there is the Žemaitkiemis manor, founded in the 16th century and standing on the right bank of the Nevėžis manor; the ensemble has been repeatedly rebuilt and reconstructed. Žemaitkiemis manor was reborn in 1999. It was acquired by a new owner who began more than just restoration work. Gradually, the mansion or whatever remained of the building was been turned into a cultural space. The manor building contains more than just a living room, library, and art gallery. The stack yard became a place for concerts. Artists' workshops, creative afternoons, and poetry and music events take place at Žemaitkiemis Manor.



PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS

This rewarding route along the Panemunė was formed as the centuries elapsed. One side of the road is surrounded by the picturesque valley of the Nemunas, the other by towering mounds. Check out the Panemunė, visiting all the natural, historical, and cultural sites along the way.



1. Raudondvaris (It is 12 km from the city centre)

Today, it is a cosy town in the middle of Lithuania, located on the confluence of the Nemunas and Nevėžis rivers. Raudondvaris manor is mentioned in chronicles as early as the 17th century, run by and cherished by the Radvila and Tiškevičius families. In its time, the manor was known as a cultural and artistic centre, and had a good art gallery and library.

Raudondvaris manor house (traditionally called a castle) is a reason for the town's emergence and current tourism attraction centre. The castle is only one of the architectural ensembles of elements of Raudondvaris.

Everyone should take note of the officina, conservatory, and stables built next to the castle. All this is surrounded by greenery, a park. Now a variety of concerts, festivals, exhibitions and other events are often held here. The castle also houses the museum of the composer Juozas Naujalis.

Raudondvaris church is the tallest and most visible building in town, with neo-baroque and neoclassical features. Right next to the church you can see design work contributed by the famous Italian architect Wawrzyniec Cezary Anichini. It was built in 1846-1857 by the then-owner of the manor, Count Benediktas Emanuelis Tiškevičius.

PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS

2. Kulautuva (It is 21 km from the city centre)

One of the most beautiful places in Kaunas District located on the right bank of the Nemunas. During the interwar period it became a prominent resort; Kulautuva still entices people who want to relax in the evergreen pine forest and tranquillity.

Currently the name Kulautuva is best-known by bard fans, because every summer the town becomes a bard capital. Every year in July a festival takes place here.

During the summer, you can get to Kulautuva by boat. The Kaunas-Kačerginė-Kulautuva-Kaunas tourist-educational route takes you around to show off local innovations to tourists interested in learning.

3. Paštuva Carmelite Monastery (It is 25 km from the city center)

The monastery of St. Joseph and St. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux in Paštuva, which is divided into two parts, public and private, was restored in 1994. The public area is a place where people who want to pray together with the nuns can stay.

The Carmelite Order name is associated with the Carmel mountain range, located in the Holy Land, from where the prophet Elijah once lived in a hermit community.



PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS

4. Vilkija (It is 31 km from the city centre)

The whole town is a valuable architectural whole, starting from the 16th century. The town's old street dates from the 14th century; they are noteworthy and protected by the state.

When you visit the town you also have to check out St. George's church built in 1900-1908 and the Antanas and Jonas Juška Brothers Ethnic Culture Museum (Kauno Mažoji g. 2) located in the oldest building in town, calculated to be ~300. Its walls are hung with the works of well-known Lithuanian artists, but the sharpest footprints are left behind by the most famous Lithuanian folk artist, Antanas Juška. The spiritual riches of Lithuanian folk art he accumulated impress us with their abundance even today. Antanas Juška's contemporaries had collected and put together a dictionary of more than 70,000 old Lithuanian words, a songbook with 7,000 songs set out to about 2,000 melodies, Vydūnas' handwritten letters, Balys Buračas' autographs books, dozens patterns of flashy fabric, chests, and hundreds of old household utensils. Each year, a Juška brothers traditional song holidays is held here together with exhibitions and meetings with interesting people. During the summer season you can cross the Nemunas River with the Vilkija ferry.

5. Seredžius (It is 44 km from the city centre)

Seredžius has a mound, as do other castle mounds; it is reminiscent of a bitter struggle with the Crusaders and is called Palemonas Hill. This is one of the tallest and most picturesque Lithuanian mounds (about 40 m). According to legend, this mound was established as a residence for the Roman Empire's Duke Palemonas, who escaped with 500 Roman nobles to live there. Palemonas' sons and grandchildren ruled large territories and founded cities. The grandson, Kernius, established further away from Seredžius, on the right bank of the Neris and the area called it Kernavė.

Peter of Duisburg's "The Chronicle of the Prussian Land" mentioned the mound castle in 1293. The Crusaders attacked the castle from 1293 to 1363. That was the year the castle was burned and never rebuilt. The southern part of the city has burial grounds dating back to the 3rd-4th century.

6. Belvederis Manor (It is 45 km from the city centre)

Belvederis Manor was built according to a design by the Italian Pietro de Rosio around 1840 (*Belvedere* means beautiful view). Nobleman Kazimieras Burba ordered of the manor built according to simulate an Italian Tuscan villa. This two-story brick house with an irregular plan with a three-story tower was luxuriously furnished inside.

The manor included not only the chambers and park. There was a huge residential and farm building complex, which consisted of about twenty buildings.

At the end of the park there stands a small neo-gothic chapel: the mausoleum of Burba's kin.

Although this place was once flashy, shiny, beautiful, and luxurious, and now the chambers and other buildings of the estate are almost completely ruined, and the park abandoned: this place radiates a special aura, and traveling to visit Panemunė is a must.

PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS

7. Veliuona (It is 53 km from the city centre)

Folks say that this is one of the oldest settlements in Lithuania. It is often referred to in history because it is next to the flowing Nemunas; that was a natural limit to the Prussian lands, which were established by the Teutonic Order as early as the 13th century. According to historical sources, Lithuania Grand Duke Gediminas visited Veliuona, as well as fought and died there.

In Veliuona, the Nemunas valley slope offers a historic monument: an archaeological complex of mounds. The western mound is called the Hill of Peace. This is a 32 m high steep frustoconical mound. The second mound is called the Hill of Gediminas' Grave. According to legend, Lithuania Grand Duke Gediminas died in Veliuona attacking Bayerburg and defending Veliuona castle, and the mound was poured over his body as a tomb. A monument built to Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas stands on the mound. The Classicist 19th century manor house built by Michael Zaleckis has survived in the town to the present day. They are wooden, with a four-column portico facade. Trees brought from other countries grow in the manor park. There was a school here, on and off, through the 20th century, where the writer Petras Cvirka studied. Currently the manor houses a lore museum.

8. Raudonė (It is 63 km from the city centre)

During the 16th-17th century, once the Nemunas became an important trade artery, castles took on a new form: rich men, merchants, and nobles began to build castles type residences, where the only decorations were shooting holes reminiscent of the previous more-functional castles. At the end of the 16th century the castle was erected in this quadrilateral shape. Now, Raudonė Middle School is located in Raudonė castle. You can admire the scenery and the curves of the Nemunas from a restored 33.5 m high castle tower. The castle is surrounded by an entire old park of rare trees. Unfortunately, the Gediminas oak tree, under which, according to legend, Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas last dined having arrived in Veliuona, no longer blooms. There is a stone mill by the pond. It was built in 1887 as a farm building and later equipped with a mill.



PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS



9. Panemunė Castle (It is 72 km from the city centre)

Panemunė Castle is nearby Raudonė Castle. The castle name changed several times. It was first named Panemunė Manor for the land where it was built. The timber merchant Janušas Eperješas moved here from Hungary and started to build this castle in about 1604. The castle was not supposed to be a defensive fortress, but rather a typical 17th century feudal castle with defensive equipment, as well as residential and farm buildings. Panemunė Castle was completed in 1610.

The castle's tower has a lockup cell in the basement where unlucky peasants ended up if they offended their masters. The longest term was three months. Seeing this place today will make your skin crawl. Ghosts quietly speak of their suffering.

Panemunė Castle awaits you on a high hill, cradled in an old park, surrounded by five cascading ponds.

PANEMUNIAI: A ROUTE FORMED BY THE AGES ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE NEMUNAS

10. Šilinė Tavern (It is 74 km from the city centre)

A few kilometres to the west of Panemunė Castle stands the formerly famous Šilinė tavern. This is a mid-18th century wooden folk architecture building. At present, the former Šilinė tavern is occupied by the Panemunė Regional Park and Information Centre and a nature school. The building has natural and the everyday life expositions on display. You can devote some time to the Medaus Slėnis (*Honey Valley*) educational program in Šilinė.

11. Jurbarkas (It is 88 km from the city centre)

On the left bank of the Mituva River, the Jurbarkas Regional Museum operates in the superb former manor buildings in the large park, as well as the Grybas memorial museum and Tourism and Business Information Centre. The rebuilt portico decorates the central building foundations and attracts visitors.

While visiting Jurbarkas you should also visit the Church of the Blessed Trinity and Jurbarkas mound, known as Bišpilis.

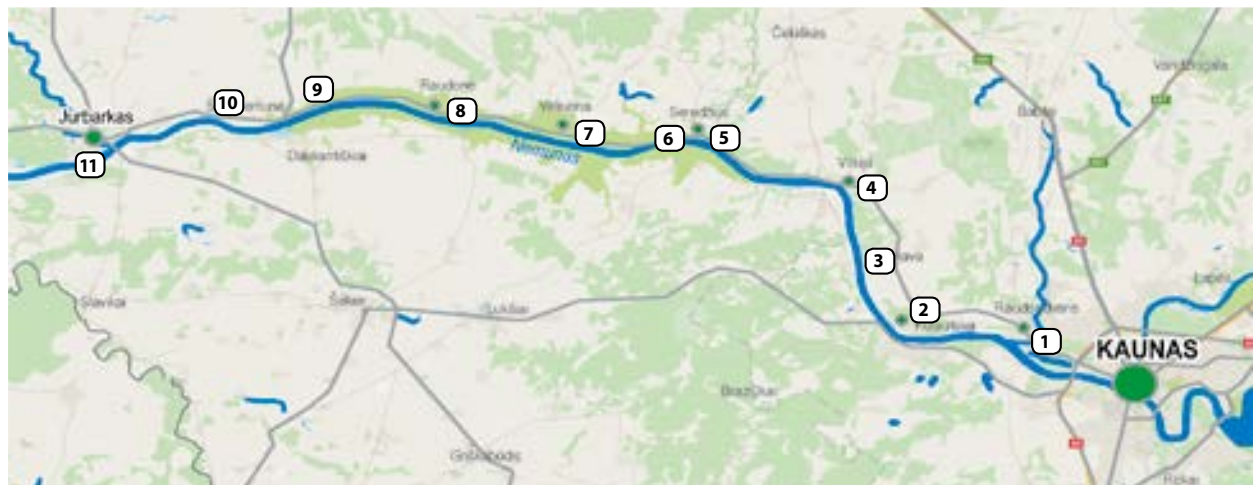
Kaunas District Tourism & Business Information Centre

Pilies takas 1, Raudondvaris, 54127 Kauno r.

Tel. +370 37 548118

Email: info@turizmo-info.lt

www.turizmo-info.lt



Regional Park was established to preserve the unique Kaunas Lagoon dam landscape complex, large outcrops, flooded Nemunas tributary estuaries, the unique architectural complex of the Pažaislis monastery, and other natural and cultural heritage.

The park includes part of the city of Kaunas, as well as the district areas of Kaunas and Kaišiadorys.

The Kaunas Lagoon Regional Park area is 9,869 ha.

1. The Internal Exposition of Kaunas Lagoon Regional Park

www.kaunomarios.lt

The transformation of the Nemunas River into a lagoon is the main theme of the exposition, which combines a rich and dramatic history of certain villages and the most significant changes in the 20th century Lithuanian landscape. The main highlight of the exhibition is the layout on which the image is projected, which, like a time machine, takes us to a distant past: we will get to see how the last glaciers retreated, the formation of the Nemunas and its valley, and how it eventually turned into Kaunas Lagoon.



2. Fifth Fort of the Kaunas Fortress

Alongside Kaunas Lagoon there are two unique pieces of Eastern European fortification architecture and military history within the monumental Kaunas fortress ring: the Fifth Fort, reminiscent of Imperial Russia, the two Vaišvydava bunkers, and the remains of the First World War Railway (Palemonas) fort bunkers circuit. The Fifth Fort was built in 1889 and is distinguished by its layout: pentagonal-shaped, asymmetrical, and adapted to the environment.

Fort territory plantations and anti-aircraft missile base buildings constructed during the Soviet period shape the territory landscape. The fort successfully promotes a paintball club at present.

3. Žiegždriai Geological Trail

– the 1.6 kilometre trail begins near Žiegždriai village. For those interested in genealogy it will be a great opportunity to learn to read the history recorded in the edges of crustal layers. The educational trail shows you porous clay and conglomerate outcrops, as well as grottoes.

4. Pakalniškiai Educational Trail

We suggest this trail for those interested in flora, birds and forest fauna. Journey time is about 2 hours, distance is 3 km. The route begins on Piliuonos Gatvė, the spot is marked on an information booth.



5. Arlaviškiai Educational Trail

Pedestrian trail with information stands and wooden benches on a slope edge stretching 1.3 km. The trail overlooks not only the slope which runs along Kadagiai (*Juniper*) Valley, but also the Kaunas Lagoon curled tail and Dabinta Island breaking through it.

6. Dubrava Minor Reserve Educational Trail

The area of Dubrava Minor Reserve is 120 ha where pines, which a man is not capable to embrace, of 33 meters high grow. About a quarter of the Dubrava minor reserve area are occupied by slender birch trees and small pine trees covered with moss and a tussock furrowed bog. The 1.9 km long educational trail with 8 information stands on the way introduce visitors to local flora and fauna features; it winds through all the most interesting places the Dubrava Reserve.

7. Mergakalnis Observation Deck

Mergakalnis is the highest point above Kaunas Lagoon. They say that in ancient times promiscuous women were tied up in bags and thrown from the cliff at this point. This place is now a resort with a beautiful landscape. Beside is you will see the Dovainoniai barrows, which according to findings date back to the 9th-12th century.

8. Exposure of conglomerates in Lašiniai

is a geological natural heritage site in Strėva Landscape Reserve of Kaunas Lagoon Regional Park. On the right bank of the river there is the Strėva ravine rock outcrop in Lašiniai village, Rumšiškės, Kaišiadorys District. A huge Lašiniai stone stands on the edge outcrop 200 meters south of the Strėva riverbank that opens up to the impressive Strėva exposure where geologists have found traces of amber.

9. Dubrava Arboretum

The Arboreta are one category of the botanical gardens where mainly woody plants grow. The Dubrava arboretum is currently the only one in Lithuania. Construction of the Arboretum began in 1958 at the Dubrava forest research station in the village of Vaišvydava, Kaunas. Over 1,000 taxonomic units of woody plants have been collected and analysed here (botanical species, subspecies, forms, and cultivars).

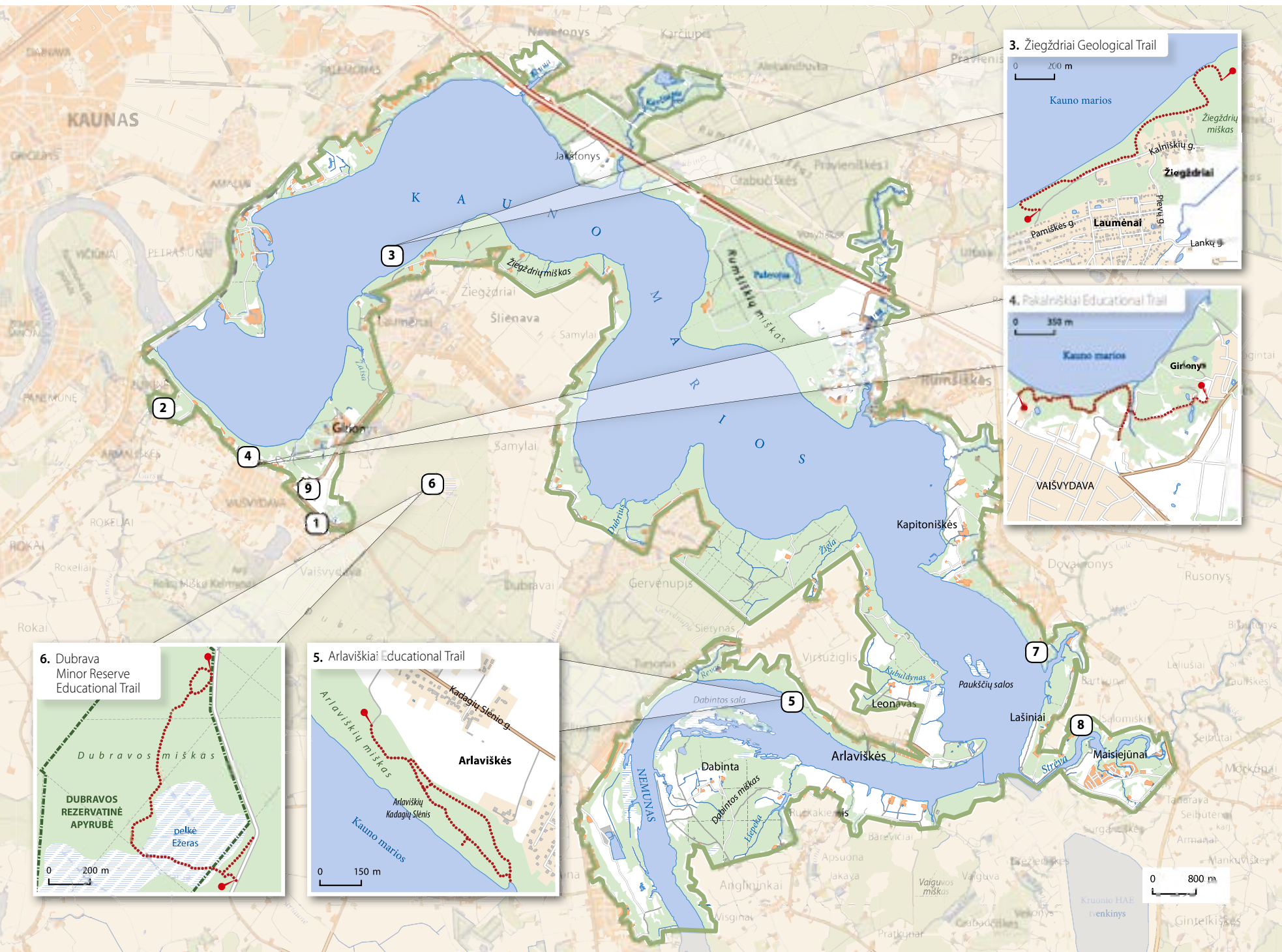
**The Kaunas Lagoon Regional Park Administration/
Visitors Centre**

Miškininkų g. 2, Vaišvydava, 53106 Kauno raj.

Tel. +370 3738 3070

Email: info@kaunomarios.lt

www.kaunomarios.lt



HEALTH AND BEAUTY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE BIRŠTONAS RESORT

Birštonas, located along the Nemunas, is famous not only unique scenery, but also for unique natural resources. Mineral water gushing from the bowels of the earth is the most important thing for the resort's existence and development.

Peaceful town is a favourite of both Lithuanian and foreign guests, especially those who want to improve their health.

There is a mineral water evaporation pavilion, originally designed, over whose walls flowing mineral water evaporates naturally and the tower itself has a 50-80 meter radius around it which allows you to breathe the sea air, all in the resort's central park.

This open mineral water evaporation tower operates only during the warm season. The recently installed the new "Birutės Vila" pavilion is private and operated all year round. The air emitted by the pavilion enables the integrated harmonized Birštonas sanatorium rehabilitation procedures to be carried out with natural health promoting factors that enhance therapeutic effect; patients quickly improve health and performance.

During your stay in Birštonas be sure to also visit "Kneipo takai" health promotion park. Pump-room mineral water, an ice-cold water fountain pool, and various trails can be found in the spacious park area. The latter, composed of twenty different tracks, is perhaps what interest tourists the most. You need to walk down the "Kneipo takai" trail barefoot so that that is massages your feet.

Both water the evaporation pavilions and the "Kneipo takai" trail are free to vacationers, as well as citizens.



HEALTH AND BEAUTY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE BIRŠTONAS RESORT

In addition to healing traditions, Birštonas can offer various forms of active rest: bike trails, tennis courts, basketball, volleyball, beach volleyball, kayaking, recreational boating, yachting, cruising in Viking ships, canoeing, balloon flights, gliders and planes, paragliding, parachuting, and much more. During the winter season there is ski slope skiing.

Birštonas resort is located in the southern part of Lithuania. It is 39 km from Kaunas to Birštonas.

There are convenient buses going directly there from Kaunas and Vilnius.

Birštonas Tourism Information Centre

B. Sruogos g. 4, LT-59209 Birštonas

Tel. +370 3196 5740

Email: info@visitbirstonas.lt

www.visitbirstonas.lt



Lithuania

Capital Vilnius

Currency Euro (EUR)

Time Zone: UTC +2/Summertime UTC +3

Climate: average annual temperature +7.2° C, July +18.4° C.

Religion: Roman Catholic.

Internet top-level domain extension: .lt

Telephone code: +370

Kaunas

The city's foundation date: 1361 (mentioned in written sources for the first time)

City area: 158 km².

Population: 299 466.

Ethnicity: 93% Lithuanian, 4% Russian, 3% other.

Official city website *www.kaunas.lt*

Public holidays (non-working days)

January 1	New Year, Lithuanian Flag Day
February 16	Lithuanian Independence Day
March 11	Lithuanian Independence Restoration Day
May 01	International Labour Day
June 24	Rasos šventė (Dew Day – pagan version of St. John's Day)
July 06	State Day (Coronation of King Mindaugas of Lithuania)
August 15	Žolinės (Grass Day – pagan version of Assumption of Mary)
November 01	All Saints Day, Day of the Dead
December 24	Christmas Eve
December 25-26	Christmas

Understand Lithuanian

The Lithuanian language is the state language of Lithuania and an official language of the European Union. Most Lithuanians speak this language. The Lithuanian alphabet consists of 32 capital and small Latin letters.

Polite expressions

Hello (informally) – labas

(formally) – laba diena

Goodbye (informally) – iki

(formally) – viso gero

Please – prašau

Thank you – ačiū

Yes – taip

No – ne

Sorry – atsiprašau

Cheers – į sveikatą

Nice to meet you – malonu susipažinti

Useful phrases

The Old Town – senamiestis

Do you speak English? – Ar kalbate angliškai?

I don't understand – nesuprantu

How much (does it cost)? – Kiek (kainuoja)?

What's your name? – Koks tavo vardas?

Where is...? – Kur yra...?

Could you help me? – Ar galėtumėte man padėti?

Tea – arbata

Coffee – kava

Beer – alus

Shop – parduotuvė

Advice

Emergency number

In case of an accident or if you need the help of the police, a doctor or firefighters, call 112. An additional code is not necessary when calling from mobile or fixed phone.

Luggage office

There is a luggage office at Kaunas railway station in the undercrossing. You may take your luggage back 24 hours per day.

Ground floor

The ground floor in Lithuania is known as the first floor.

Smoking in public

Smoking is banned in cafes, restaurants, and public buildings. Smoking is also prohibited in some urban areas marked by special signs.

Drinking in public places

Drinking alcohol in public places (streets, parks and public transport) is prohibited. You may savour alcoholic drinks in bars, cafés or restaurants. The sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited from 10 p.m. until 8 a.m. (except in bars, cafés, restaurants, etc.).

Tips

It is not obligatory to leave tips. However, it is recommended to leave about 10 % of the sum for good service.

Did you know?

- The only Hansa merchants' office was founded in Kaunas in 1441. In commemoration of this event the town festival "Hansa Kaunas" is organized annually.
- There is "Sėjikas" (Seeding man) sculpture in the garden of Kaunas War Museum which sows stars at night.
- In 2011 the biggest arena in the Baltic States, "Žalgiris" Arena which can seat up to 17,500 spectators was opened in Kaunas. "Žalgiris" Arena is the Mecca of basketball: since its opening day 100 basketball matches have already taken place. The arena was acknowledged as the most visited Euroleague arena two years in a row.
- S. Darius and S. Girėnas Airport, which still operates until the present day which was established in honour of pilots Stasys Girėnas and Steponas Girėnas, famous all over the world for their successful flight across the Atlantic in 1933 and plane crash under vague circumstances when less than a tenth of their trip was left.
- Kaunas is called the capital of basketball, because the basketball team Kauno "Žalgiris" has existed for almost 70 years in this town. Such basketball stars as Arvydas Sabonis, Rimas Kurtinaitis, Šarūnas Marčiulionis, Šarūnas Jasikevičius, Mantas Kalnietis, Žydrūnas Ilgauskas, Donatas Motiejūnas, Paulius Jankūnas and Linas Kleiza were brought up in the capital of basketball.
- The business centre "1000" in Kaunas got into the Top 11 of the most unusual buildings of Europe composed by CNN.com and took a respectable second place. In 2010 the prestigious album of architecture "Collection: Offices" included it into the list of the 300 best world's office buildings. In 2009 Lithuanian a record registration agency "Factum" recorded that a banknote of one thousand litas depicted on the building is the biggest stained glass in our country.
- It would probably be difficult to find out when a Lithuanian drank the first mug of beer but breweries were known in Lithuania from the oldest times. The beginning of brewage in Kaunas was the steam beer and malt factory built by the merchant I. B. Volfas in 1853 where "Volfas beer" was brewed for the first time.
- There was a horse-drawn tram in Laisvės avenue until 1929 which was called this way because a tram on a railing (Lith. *konkė*) was drawn by horses.
- In 1910 the first puppet cartoon in the world "Fight of Stag Beetles" was created in Kaunas. The author of the cartoon is Vladislovas Starevičius. The main characters of the cartoon were huge insects stag beetles. Starevičius dried them, attached mechanical legs and joints and moved them in front of the camera.
- The most beautiful Christmas trees are in Kaunas. According to the people of Lithuanian. Four years in a row the most originally decorated Christmas trees are the decoration of the Kaunas Old Town. In 2012 an emerald 16 metre high Christmas tree was acknowledged as the highest sculpture made of plastic bottles in the world and was included in the Guinness World Records.
- "Fluxus Ministerija" operates in Kaunas, the walls of which are decorated with the greatest graffiti drawings Lithuania, "Master" (by Tadas Šimkus and Žygimantas Amelynas). This drawing decorates not only the facade of the Ministry of Fluxus, but

also the Kaunas panorama: the design is near the Confluence and well-visible from both rooftops and from both sides of the river.

- The story goes that if one makes a wish in lovers favourite Santaka park where the bends of two rivers, the river Nemunas (in other words, man) and the river Neris (in other words, woman), join it will come true. The confluence of two rivers is like the sacrament of marriage when two rivers join and never separate.
- Kaunas is where you will find the Vytautas the Great Bridge, aka the longest bridge in the world. In order to bridge the transition from one bank of the Nemunas to the other took 13 days, because Kaunas belonged to the Russian Empire and Aleksotas to the Prussian kingdom up to 1807. The different sides of the river had different calendars, which included a 13-day difference.
- Kaunas was awarded the European Heritage Label in 2015 for its famous, unique interwar modernist architecture (1919-1940). European Heritage Label is a European Union initiative, which aims to mark selected sites of historical and cultural importance for Europe and European Union development.

Hop on Hop off!

It is a unique possibility to visit exceptional Kaunas places of interest by bus with a convertible type of roof and audioguide.

Kaunas is introduced in 8 languages with the help of an audioguide.

Tel. +370 699 54064

www.kaunascitytour.com

Taste it

Black bread

It is the pride of Lithuanian cuisine. It was highly valued and even called "sacred". From old times Lithuanians related it with magic and superstitious beliefs.

Beer

Valued for its special taste not only in Lithuania but also abroad. There are two breweries "Kauno alus" (Kaunas Beer) and "Volfas Engelman" in Kaunas and we recommend you taste their products.

Cold beetroot soup

Traditional pink cold soup made of beetroots and served with boiled potatoes. This dish is especially popular in summer.

Potato dumplings

Lith. *cepelinai* is dish made of grated and/or mashed boiled potatoes with meat, curds or other fillings, also called "big dumplings". It is an inseparable part of traditional cuisine.

Baroque tree cake known as Šakotis

This high branchy hollow baked product which resembles a fir is one of the most popular confectionery products in Lithuanian cuisine. Lithuanian monasteries started to bake Šakotis in 20th century. It's a great dessert!

Take it home

Stumbras production

Stumbras is the biggest and most popular producer of spirits in Lithuania. You may buy Stumbras production both in the shop of Stumbras Museum and specialized shops. *Consuming alcohol, you risk your health, welfare of your family and society.*

“Volfas Engelman” production

“Volfas Engelman” is one of the most modern breweries in Lithuania, producing beer, cider and kvass which you may buy in the shopping centres.

Production of brewery “Kauno alus” (Kaunas Beer)

It is the only larger company which performs open fermentation of beer. The brewery “Kauno alus” constantly ferments 13 kinds of beer which you may buy in the biggest shopping centres of Kaunas.

Black bread

Lithuanians’ special pride which was the main meal in Lithuanian villages up to the 20th century. The types of traditional Lithuanian bread are the following: rye bread, wheat bread and triticale bread.

Amber

It is called “Lithuanian gold”. Amber is used to create unique jewellery and unusual art works; it is distinguished for its stimulating and strengthening properties. Therefore, from old times it has been used not only for decoration but also for treatment. Lithuanians’ ancestors protected themselves from the dark powers by wearing amber amulets. Amber therapy is becoming more and more popular: amber spirits and preparations with amber acid, oil or powder are made, healing and strengthening amber tea is drunk.

Flax

Also called “North silk”. Through the centuries Lithuanians have cherished traditions of flax growing and processing which are valued not only in Lithuania. We suggest that you buy flax textile products of high quality in specialized shops.

Wood

You may buy unique wooden craftwork the stock of which is really large: from housewares up to jewellery.



KAUNAS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Oro uosto g. 4, Karmėlava, Kauno r.
www.kaunas-airport.lt

KAUNAS RAILWAY STATION

M. K. Čiurlionio g. 16
www.litrail.lt

RAILWAY STATION LUGGAGE STORAGE

Kaunas Train Station has a luggage office located in an underground passage. Left luggage may be picked up 24/7.

KAUNAS BUS STATION

Vytauto pr. 24
www.autobusubilietai.lt



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