

THE MAIN TYPES OF TOURISM IN ESTONIA

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In the 1990s, international tourism became one of the important sectors of the Estonian economy. In Soviet times, more than 400 sanatoriums and recreation facilities functioned here. 450 thousand people rested in them annually. Tallinn was a well-known tourist center. Estonia was famous for its developed network of tourist hotels, boarding houses and campgrounds in various parts of the country - on the shores of the Pärnus Bay, on the islands of the Moonsund archipelago, along the shores of lakes. However, most of them are now used to a much lesser extent, as the concept of tourism has changed. Tourism for the purpose of treatment and recreation was replaced by recreational tourism, domestic - international. The linguistic and geographical (80 km) proximity of Finland determines the predominance of Finnish tourists arriving on short-term visits, primarily to Tallinn. A well-known role is played by the relative cheapness (in comparison with Finland) of alcoholic beverages and services, with a certain development of the service. In 1995, 1.3 million tourists visited Estonia, of which 96% were from Finland. The European Union Regional Development Fund allocated 791 million kroons (50 million 700 thousand euros) to support cultural and tourism facilities in Estonia.

Tourism is different in different regions of Estonia.

Northern Estonia ("Toila", "Narva Jõesuu") is a changeable landscape, where the steep coastline gives way to sandy beaches. In addition to traditional mud therapy, treatment of the respiratory and gastrointestinal tract is offered. The "salt chamber", the walls of which are made of salt blocks ("Toila"), has a beneficial effect on the respiratory organs.

Southern Estonia (Pühajärve, Väraska) is untouched nature, amazing beauty of the hills, the highest point of the Baltic States - the Haanja Upland, national parks and reserves with numerous rivers and lakes is located here. Pühajärve and Väraska are located on picturesque lakes. It is here that you can find peace and quiet, restore peace of mind. Väraska uses local mineral water for treatment.

The second type of tourism in Estonia is educational tourism. Undoubtedly, this type of tourism is very popular in Estonia. The country is rich in history, architectural monuments, museums and other attractions of interest to tourists from all over the world. The centers of educational tourism are Tallinn, Narva, Tartu.

Also in Estonia, an active type of recreation is well developed:

1) Water sports. During a canoe trip, the tourist will not only be in close contact with nature, but will also be able to see the most beautiful places in Estonia, which are usually difficult to get without a boat: sandy cliffs of the high banks of the Ahja

River with colorful geological deposits; raised bogs in the Soomaa nature reserve, where the pristine silence will only be broken by the splashes of your oars. There are several canoeing options to choose from. It can be a short trip along fast-flowing rivers or a long descent downstream of "lazy" rivers. The accompanying person can take part in the hike with the tourists and help guide the canoe and show the places of interest. The canoe trip usually lasts one to three days. The season opens immediately after the rivers are freed from ice, and ends with the first frost. The cost of the hike includes a canoe rental, a life jacket and a short course on safe canoeing techniques, as well as guide services and light snacks at the halts. The price depends on the duration of the trip. If a tourist has never sailed a canoe before, he will be able to learn the basic techniques of boat control very quickly. Sailing can be a delight even for the observer. White sails, playing water, beautiful and courageous people who, in spite of a hopeless calm or unrestrained storm, lead their ship wherever they want. Yachtsmen are advised to ask the Port Authority to notify the next port in which they arrive.

2) Ski tourism. Skiing came to Estonia from Scandinavia at the beginning of the century and quickly took root here. It can be said without exaggeration that every inhabitant of Estonia has skied at least once. Cross-country skiing is popular for its flat terrain and low hills. Specially paved tracks make it possible to escape from prison in school walls and offices. The climate of South Estonia, where there is almost always snow, makes Otepää a particularly attractive destination for winter lovers. The largest and most modern skiing center in the Baltics has been created here. In South Estonia, skiing enthusiasts have conditions for downhill slopes of 200-300 meters of moderate steepness. Some of the slopes are equipped with lifts. All necessary equipment can be rented. The center of ski tourism is the town of Otepää; there are also ski resorts in the region of Võru and other regions of southern Estonia.

3) ATV safari. This type of recreation is suitable for thrill-seekers who have everything in order with the coordination of movements and have experience in driving motor vehicles. ATV safari is held in a beautiful natural place in Estonia (Põhja and Lõuna Kõrvemaa) in any weather and at any time of the year. Briefing and study tour are provided.

4) Horse riding. It doesn't matter if the tourist is a novice rider or an experienced rider. There are plenty of opportunities for horse trekking in Estonia: forest trails and groves, juniper-covered shores and dunes, or historical parks where you can follow in the footsteps of famous people. If the tourist is a novice rider, you can take a week-long riding camp or initial training in the arena under the guidance of experienced instructors - and he will have the ability to control a horse and the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of nature, observing it from a greater height and not as usual. There are several riding clubs and riding schools in Estonia. If a tourist does not know how to sit in the saddle, it doesn't matter, he will be taught this. Many farms have horses that can be ridden for a small fee.

5) Hiking. The best way to relax, get out into nature and experience the local culture is by hiking. Estonia has four national parks and several protected areas, where, following marked hiking trails, a guest of the country will have an excellent opportunity to see everything that a hurrying tourist will never see from a car

window. In order to get to know the untouched nature of Estonia better, it is best to follow the special hiking trails in many scenic spots, or the special trail in one of the nature reserves.

6) Fishing. You can fish without paying anyone for it with just one simple fishing rod with a rod no longer than 1.5 m, a single hook and live bait. The rod can be equipped with a sinker and a float. Fishing in private waters is allowed only with the permission of the owner. Fishing with a spinning, a bridle, etc. is paid. Such fishing is allowed only with a fisherman's ticket and subject to the established restrictions on the seasons, places of fishing and types of fish. Tickets and information on restrictions can be obtained from the regional departments of nature conservation, the Ministry of the Environment and registered fishermen societies. The price of a fisherman's ticket depends on the length of the validity period.

7) Cycling. Estonia, with its varied landscapes, is the ideal destination for cycling. People with different riding experiences can choose the most suitable route for themselves in hilly or plain terrain. You can ride a bicycle where it is impossible to reach by car.

8) Golf. The only 18-hole golf course in Estonia is located 33 km southeast of Tallinn, next to the well-known riding center in Niitvälja. The total length of the course is 6280 m. The shortest distance to the hole is 153 m, and the longest is 510 m. The owner of the course is the Estonian Golf Center. The course was equipped in the so-called "Florida style", which is characterized by slopes of slight steepness, the presence of water obstacles and free approaches, alternating with narrow approaches with areas of dense forest. The quality of the playing field in hot and dry summers is guaranteed by an irrigation system designed by Danish designers. The course is open from late April to late November.

Welcome to Estonia.

References:

1. *Estonia - travel portal. URL: <https://triptoestonia.com/>*