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In this work i will talk about some cities in Lithuania, such as, **Kernavé, Vilnius, Šiauliai and Kaunas.**

Kernavé

Kernavé was a medieval capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and is now a tourist attraction and archaeological site. The Kernavé Archaeological Site, located in southeastern Lithuania., approximately 35 km northwest of Vilnius, represents an exceptional testimony to nearly 10 millennia of human permanence in this region. Situated in the valley of the river Neris, the site is a complex array of archaeological properties, comprising the city of Kernavé, forts, some unfortified settlements, cemeteries and other archaeological, historical and cultural monuments from the late Paleolithic to Middle Ages. The site has preserved the remains of ancient land use as well as the remains of five impressive hill forts, part of an exceptionally large defense system. Kernavé was an important feudal city in the Middle Ages. The city was destroyed by the Teutonic Order in the late 14th century, however the site has remained in use until modern times. The archaeological site of Kernavé (Kernavé State Cultural Reserve) was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2004.

Attractions

- **The Hillforts of Kernave;**
- **Kernaves Svc. Mergeles Marijos Skaplierines baznycia;**
This church from the modern era reflects the historical times and prevailing religious practices. An imposing structure adorned by a monument of saintly figures from ancient times.
- **Kernave archaeological site museum;**
The museum's halls contain a detailed presentation of the site's history, from its inception, which dates back to prehistoric times, to the thriving craft period during the 13th–14th century.
- **Neris River,** which is a river that starts in Lituania and ends In Belarus.



Vilnius

Vilnius is the capital and largest city of Lithuania. It lies on the bank of the Neris river and has approximately 560,000 inhabitants. The Lithuanian Parliament is located in Vilnius. Vilnius was the European Capital of Culture in 2009. It is known for its baroque architecture, seen especially in its medieval old town. The Aurora Gate, was built in the 16th-century, and houses a beautiful chapel and altar in honor of the Virgin Mary and used to protect one of the entrances to the original city.

Attractions

- **Gediminas Castle Tower- Gediminas' Tower** is the remaining part of the Upper Castle in Vilnius, Lithuania. This 3-story brick tower was originally part of a castle built in the 15th century.
- **Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights**, this museum was the former headquarters and prison of the KGB that honors Lithuanians killed there after World War II.
- **Vilnius Cathedral**- is the main Roman Catholic Cathedral of Lithuania. Dedicated to Saints Stanislaus and Ladislaus, the church is the heart of Catholic spiritual life in Lithuania. It is believed to be the first place of worship in Lithuania devoted to Catholicism.

- **Trakai Island Castle**- is an island castle located in Trakai, Lithuania, on an island in Lake Galvė. The construction of the stone castle was begun in the 14th century by the order of Grand Duke Kęstutis.
- **Hill of Three Crosses**- is a prominent monument in Vilnius, originally known as the Bald Hill (Lithuanian: Plikasis kalnas), in Kalnai Park.



Šiauliai - The city of the Sun

Šiauliai is the fourth largest city in Lithuania. It was established as early as the 13th century. Its name derives from the word Saulė, which is a Lithuanian word for Sun. It is named after a Sun Battle that took place nearby, in 1236.

The first Jews settled in the city four hundred years later, during the 17th century. Some of them arrived as refugees from the pogroms conducted under Bohdan Khmelnytsky against Ukrainian and Polish Jews during the Khmelnytsky Uprising (1648 – 1649).

The Jewish Community until the German Invasion in WWII

At the beginning of the 20th century, some 10,000 Jews were living in Šiauliai, about 60% of the city's population. Thousands of Jews worked in

medium to large sized factories, most of them in the food and clothing sectors, though others were employed in construction, woodworking, and chemicals.

The Jewish Community of Siauliai during the Holocaust

The Siauliai Ghetto

On the 1st of September 1941 both parts of the Siauliai Ghetto were fenced in and sealed, and Lithuanian guards were posted at its gates. Entering and leaving the ghetto required a special permit. One of the most severe problems in the ghetto was overcrowding: some 5,500 Jews, residents of the city as well as refugees.



Attractions

- **The Hill of Crosses-** Hill of Crosses is a site of pilgrimage about 12 km north of the city of Šiauliai, in northern Lithuania. The precise origin of the practice of leaving crosses on the hill is uncertain, but it is believed that the first crosses were placed on the former Jurgaičiai or Domantai hill fort after the 1831 Uprising.
- **Siauliai Saint Disciple Peter and Paul Cathedral-** The Church of Saints Peter and Paul was built in the seventeenth century, between 1617 and 1626, and is a significant example of the Renaissance and Mannerism.



Kaunas

Kaunas is the second largest city in Lithuania and the former temporary capital of the country. The city of Kaunas is located at the confluence of two rivers, the Neman and Neris, which link Lithuania's interior and its capital, Vilnius, to the Baltic Sea. The Teutonic Order began targeting Lithuanian lands at the beginning of the 13th century.

Attractions

- **Kaunas Castle**, is a medieval castle in Kaunas it was originally built during the mid-14th century, in the Gothic style. Its site is strategic – a rise on the banks of the Nemunas River near its confluence with the Neris River.



- **Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church**, The Holy Resurrection Church is an Eastern Orthodox church in Kaunas, Lithuania, built in 1862 in the area of the local Orthodox cemetery.
- **Church of Vytautas the Great**- Church of Vytautas the Great or the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Lithuanian: Vytauto Didžiojo bažnyčia) is a Roman Catholic church in the Old Town of Kaunas, Lithuania, and is one of the oldest churches in the city and an important example of Gothic architecture in Lithuania.
- **Kaunas Fortress**-It was constructed and renovated between 1882 and 1915 to protect the Russian Empire's western borders, and was designated a "first-class"

fortress in 1887. During World War I, the complex was the largest defensive structure in the entire state, occupying about 65 km². The fortress was battle-tested in 1915 when Germany attacked the Russian Empire, and withstood eleven days of assault before capture. After World War I, the fortress' military importance declined as advances in weaponry rendered it increasingly obsolete.

During World War II, parts of the fortress complex were used by the Nazi Germany for detention, interrogation, and execution. About 50,000 people were executed there, including more than 60,000 Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Some sections have since been restored; the Ninth Fort houses a museum and memorial devoted to the Jewish victims of Holocaust mass executions. The complex is the most complete remaining example of a Russian Empire fortress.