





Traditions

Traditional Latvian folklore, especially the dance of the folk songs, dates back well over a thousand years. More than 1.2 million texts and 30,000 melodies of folk songs have been identified. The mostly peasant local pagan heritage was preserved, partly merging with Christian traditions. For example, one of the most popular celebrations is Jāņi, a pagan celebration of the summer solstice—which Latvians celebrate on the feast day of St. John the Baptist. The Latvian Song and Dance Festival is an important event in Latvian culture and social life. It has been held since 1873, normally every five years. Approximately 30,000 performers altogether participate in the



Cuisine

Latvian cuisine typically consists of agricultural products, with meat featuring in most main meal dishes. Fish is commonly consumed due to Latvia's location on the Baltic Sea. Latvian cuisine has been influenced by the neighboring countries. Common ingredients in Latvian recipes are found locally, such as potatoes, wheat, barley, cabbage, onions, eggs, and pork. Latvian food is generally quite fatty, and uses few spices.

Grey peas and ham are generally considered as staple foods of Latvians. Sorrel soup is also consumed by Latvians. Rupjmaize is a dark bread made from rye, considered the national staple.



Architecture

A Nordic blonde with a fiery heart, there's much more to Riga than meets the eye.

In its 800 years of turbulent history, everyone from German knights to Swedish kings and Soviet commissars have left their footprints, and today Latvia's capital is an exciting European metropolis at the crossroads of eastern and northern Europe. The artistic style known as "Nouveau" first appeared at the turn of the century, and certainly was a fresh approach and stunning in its diversity - from ornate entrances, building facades to minimalistic detail, Art Nouveau considered functionality as a key guiding light for the new look - interior design and selection of furnishings with many innovative touches.



Central Riga, the downtown area, is included on the UNESCO World Heritage List thanks to its Medieval dwellings, quaint 19th century wooden structures and its prime examples of Art Nouveau architecture that, actually, are like no other!

Weather

In Latvia the weather in May is unpredictable but here is the forecast:

SV 05.06	PR 05.07	OT 05.08	TR 05.09	CE 05.10	PK 05.11	SE 05.12
						
17° / 8°	20° / 9°	17° / 9°	21° / 12°	22° / 13°	20° / 11°	20° / 12°
Daļēji saulains	Galvenokārt saulains	Daļēji saulains	Daļēji saulains	Daudz saules	Saulains un daļēji mākoņains	Arvien lielāks mākoņu daudzums
Vēstur.vidējais 14°/4°	Vēstur.vidējais 14°/4°	Vēstur.vidējais 15°/4°	Vēstur.vidējais 15°/5°	Vēstur.vidējais 15°/5°	Vēstur.vidējais 15°/5°	Vēstur.vidējais 15°/5°

Useful things to know

Most of the stores you will find here work
from 8:00 to 22:00

Most of the banks you will find here work
from 9:00 to 19:00 or 20:00

If you'll ever need a taxi here are some of the prices:

- *Getting in to/out of the taxi - 2.00 EUR*
 - *0.64 EUR per Km*
- Time tariff - 0.13 EUR min*

From the airport

- *Getting into/ out of the taxi - 2.13 EUR*
 - *0.71 EUR per Km*
- Time tariff - 0.14 EUR min*

Public transport

Riga city provides public transport services, including trams, buses, trolleybuses and also minibuses. All of these transports cost

- 2 euros, if ticket is bought inside of transport
- 1.15 euros, if you buy e-tickets

E-tickets can be bought at little kiosks called "Narvesen"

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in most public parks in Riga. No smoking in bus stops, 10 meters from the doorways of stores. Also if you are smoking in public by law you need the permission of the people around you; if someone asks you to put out your cigarette, you must. Same restrictions apply for e-cigarettes.

Public restrooms

Mostly all of the big shopping centers in Riga have public restrooms. Most of them require a small entering fee, which is usually no more than 20 cents. Some parks in Riga also might have public restrooms.

Currency

Since January 1st, 2014, the official currency of Latvia is the Euro. The price levels in Latvia for many groups, including restaurant and hotel services, are lower than the average for European countries, though price levels may vary in the capital and regions of Latvia.



Free internet

Free high-speed wireless internet is now easily accessible in more than 930 locations throughout Riga, including parks, city squares and other open-air spaces. There is now one free WiFi network per 750 residents; three for each square kilometer. It will usually be named "Lattelecom Free WiFi"

