



GET TO KNOW THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF BELLA



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Get to Know the Heritage and the Culture of Bella

We invite you on a great trip to Bella Land. You will not find the land on the map, but many people already know about it. This concept has been used in cross border cooperation projects of the European Union program for Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus for many years. Bella is a tourist destination – an area that unites the border regions of three beautiful countries.

The centuries-old neighbourhood, common history and traditions, different ethnic groups and languages have created a special fusion of cultures. We would love to present it to you! We have identified three main categories of intangible heritage. Every country has its own unique spirit, i.e. genius loci. Neolocalism is one of the popular trends of modern tourism. Travellers are looking for distinct things in different regions. What is more, they want to see and get special products exactly at the place where they are made. This approach is the basis for this publication.

DIY in the tradition of Bella is a section related to beautiful handicrafts. Their variety is surprising: from 'paper lace' vytsinanka to ceramics made in different techniques, from metal, wood, leather, and birch bark goods to musical instruments.

Weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, wicker and straw weaving, wood carving, and making of musical instruments are traditional crafts and trades of Bella destination.

Speaking about the culinary heritage, we have identified traditional products of the three countries. The products have local characteristics and are divided into two sections: Taste cheese and traditional drinks of Bella and Taste bread, pancakes, and kvass.

Bread is the most important and sacred product for ethnic groups of Bella countries. It serves as a guarantee of happiness and well-being. The aroma of black bread is usually associated with these places. Travel around Bella Land and taste real rye sourdough bread, learn how to make it and visit bread museums. Get to know the history of bread from a grain to sourdough.

Other unique products are awaiting you too. What about the wonderful Lithuanian shakotis, delicious ritual buns, "sunny" pancakes with potato sauce, as well as potato and pumpkin pancakes?

Each country has a huge variety of surprisingly tasty kvass: caraway, bread, birch, honey, etc. The traditions of cheesemaking from cottage cheese are common for Belarusians, Lithuanians, and Latvians. You will taste a wide variety of cheese during the trip: white cheese with caraway seeds and herbs, dessert cheese with poppy seeds and raisins, smoked cheese, brynza or bryndza with parsley and garlic, as well as rennet cheese that takes a lot of time to make and ripen.

Do not miss the opportunity to taste the unique apple cheese, the tradition of which is still alive in Lithuania and Latvia.

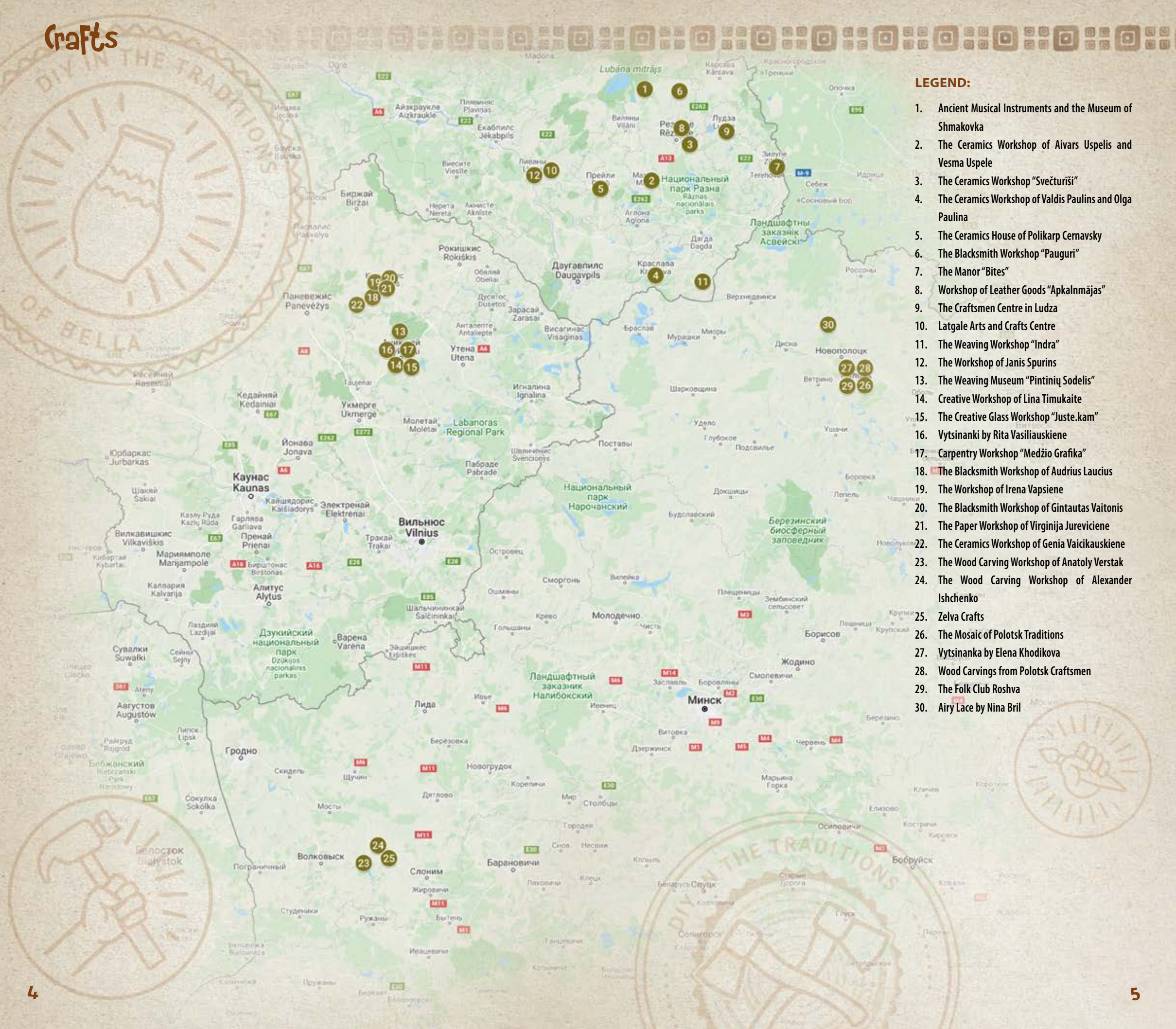
Bella drinks will surprise even the most sophisticated travellers. What do you think of acorn and dandelion coffee or green cocktails?

Herbal tea, homemade beer, fruit and berry wine, and, of course, homemade vodka (Belarusian moonshine, Lithuanian samane, and Latvian shmakovka) are among the traditional drinks. By the way, there are three museums dedicated to shmakovka in Latgale region, Eastern Latvia.

This is just a tiny bit of what you can see and taste in Bella land. Kind-hearted and hospitable people are the most important thing that will remain in your heart forever. We wish you a happy journey!

DIY in the Traditions of Bella





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LATVIA

Ancient Musical Instruments and the Museum of Shmakovka

THE MUSICIAN AND HIS ENSEMBLE



Gunars Igaunis

Folk music accompanies Gunars Igaunis throughout his life. Gunars, his wife and three daughters are a real musical ensemble. Each of them is good at playing three or four musical instruments. The family is often invited to local and international musical projects, as well as to private events. Gunars is a certified music teacher, a graduate of the Latvian Academy of Music. His love of music and an appeal to local folklore prompted him to make the crucial decision: "There was a time when there were not enough musical instruments at school. I started making them myself". His first instruments were a metallophone, a xylophone, a kokle, and drums. "Every time I make or restore an instrument, I feel the joy of creation. It's very inspiring," the master notes.



THE MUSEUM OF ANCIENT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The Balt Harmonia studio was established in 2007. You will find a wide range of old Latgalian handmade musical instruments here. Strings, percussion, and wind instruments include cymbals, xylophones, wooden flutes, rattles, bells, violins and many others. Each instrument is suitable for learning, for personal and professional use. Repair of musical instruments is possible upon request. The Igaunis family provides consultations and music lessons for schools, groups and individuals. The Museum of Ancient Musical Instruments was organized here later. The exposition includes more than 100 instruments: accordions, zithers, local kokles, balalajkas, harps, etc. Tourists will find a fascinating story about the instruments that have been played in Latvia for the last 150 years.

The Museum of Shmakovka (the local moonshine) was created at the other end of the same building in 2015.

It was the first museum of this kind in Latgale. The exposition includes about 15 distillation devices, containers for storing drinks, and utensils. Visitors will learn about the history of moonshining and distillation, as well as the most interesting recipes. They will also be offered to taste two types of infused liquors and one type of shmakovka. A variety of souvenirs can be purchased in the museum too.



A RECIPE OF APPLE SHMAKOVKA

Squeeze apple juice from any well-ripened apples, pour into a large container and cover with a warm blanket. The juice should ferment at 18-20 °C for eight to ten weeks. Add yeast for better results. The alcohol content of the homebrew is 5-6.5%. It is advisable to verify the end of the fermentation process carefully. Make moonshine. Make sure to distil over low heat so that the apple aroma does not disappear.

The Secret of Craftsmanship

To start creating or restoring musical instruments, you must love music and have the desire to perform it. Start showing interest and your instrument will find you.

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② The Discreet Beauty and Practicality of Ancient Pottery

THE POTTER AND THE ARTIST

Latgale is the cradle of pottery. In the Uspelis family, the potter's skill has been passed down through generations. Aivars Uspelis is the sixth generation and one of the youngest representatives of the family of potters. He and his wife Vesma Uspele are the most active followers of the local pottery tradition. Their son Jumis is a potter too.

Aivars is one of the participants of Pudņiku skūla (School of Potters). This is a creative team of craftsmen created by the Latvian Cultural Foundation for the preservation and transfer of non-industrial and environmentally friendly technologies. The craftsmen work together, exchange their experience, study materials and ancient traditions.

Aivars is best known for his black (ash) ceramics. It is the oldest pottery technology. His interest in history (especially the Middle Ages and Vikings) influenced the development of the unique style. Aivars creates novelties with varied textures and simple yet practical utensils.

Vesma is a freelance artist, a graduate of the Latvian Academy of Arts and the author of over 40 solo exhibitions. She mainly adheres to the classic style of old masters. It is a folk style with bright colours and its own character in colour shades. Vesma alternates work in different workshop zones according to her mood. For example, she spends two weeks painting, then devotes two weeks to clay. "Clay teaches to observe the regime, but painting brings me closer to bohemia," the artist admits.

Aivars Uspelis and Vesma Uspele



THE RURAL STYLE MUSEUM

Aivars and Vesma have developed their own ceramics brand Malnī Vylki (Latgalian for 'Black Wolves'). Their workshop is located in a picturesque place and resembles a small rural style museum. The best way to start your visit (by prior request) is to look at the collection of antiques and paintings. Ancient irons are the most interesting exhibit. There are already more than 200 of them. Vesma's oil paintings convey the joy of life, brightness and infinity of colours. The visitors of the workshop can work with clay by prior agreement and on condition that their items remain at the workshop. In the museum, the visitors can watch the unique process of making ceramics – from shaping on a potter's kick-wheel to firing in a wood-fired kiln.

The craftsmen do not work to order, however, their products can be purchased in Garkalne and at craftsmen fairs in Luznava manor (Rezekne municipality).

The Secret of Craftsmanship

The black ash ceramics technique attracts Aivars by the opportunity to see and feel all the grooves and irregularities of clay hidden in the finished product.



The Ceramics Workshop of Aivars Uspelis and Vesma Uspele

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③ Clay, Milk, and Fire Sculptures

THE KEEPER OF TRADITIONS

Rezekne is the centre of Latgale region; the city is familiar to all ceramists. Anatolijs Vituskis is among them. He is the keeper of the classical pottery tradition and is engaged in pottery for more than 45 years. A wide variety of products are subject to his skill: from whistles and kitchen utensils to the most complex candlesticks for 11 to 15 candles. "When creating such candlesticks, it's important to think over the architecture and take into account how the clay behaves when drying, where the curls will be directed. It's necessary to maintain a distance of ten centimetres between candles, otherwise they will melt each other. Like any other work of art, a candlestick shouldn't be overloaded with elements," the artist says.

His fire sculptures are especially interesting. The sculptures are made of chamotte clay, which is not afraid of rapid change of temperatures, and fired in the open air. Rozitta is the most famous work of the artist. The embodiment of the beauty of Latgalian women is installed on the Castle Hill in honour of Rezekne City festival. Anatolijs' works are often called 'typically Latgalian' due to their traditional form, colour and technique. Brown and green colours predominate. There is also blue glaze. After a close acquaintance with Belarusian artists, Anatolijs Vituskis began to develop the milk sealing technique in Latgale. The two cultures had similar items created using this technique: jugs for storing butter or paired pots for food.

THE KEEPER OF TRADITIONS

In Svečturīši you can learn how to create products on a potter's wheel, make whistles or panel pictures from clay. You can also visit an excursion and purchase finished works. The artist invites visitors to the openings of the kiln.



The Ceramics Workshop Svečturīši (Candlesticks)

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④ The Latgalian Spirit and Pottery Traditions

THE POTTERS

Latgalian pottery is known for its ancient traditions, typical forms and decor. It is better to start the discovery of the Latgalian pottery with help of famous masters and artists for whom ceramics is a passion and a hobby. For instance, Valdis and Olga from Kraslava municipality. Their works are varied not only in shape but also in colours and types of glaze, the method of firing and finishing. The artists participate in national and foreign exhibitions regularly and are presented in private collections. In 2014, the potters received the Sign of Latvian Heritage.

Personal acquaintance with the artists is a fascinating story about pottery and its importance for the history, culture, spirit and hospitality of Latgale.

Valdis and Olga work together and use both industrial and local clay that they extract themselves. The couple burns the ceramics in a traditional Latgalian open-type wood-fired kiln. A Latgalian style candlestick is the most complicated piece of art among the variety of products created by the potters.



Valdis Paulins

PROGRAMMES AND EXCURSIONS

The workshop is located in a picturesque place near a castle. Individual and group excursions are offered for visitors. During the engrossing master classes, the visitors can not only watch, but also participate in the process of making products and lighting the pottery kiln. Newly married couples are invited to make their first family utensils from clay with signatures and good wishes from the guests.



A Piece of Advice From the Craftsmen

It is better to start your acquaintance with pottery by making a clay whistle.



THE SECRET OF MILK SEALING TECHNIQUE

After the first firing, works are immersed in country milk for a minute or a little more. Then the works dry up and are placed in a kiln for firing at a temperature of 350 °C. Make sure to wash each item well after the process is finished. The pottery comes out silky to the touch. Please note that the milk you buy in a shop is not suitable: it does not contain casein needed to obtain the beautiful brown colour. You can use modern domestic ovens if you do not mind the smell of burnt milk at home.

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

It takes a lot of good clay and a lot of practice to develop pottery skills. There is a joke that processing the first five tons of clay is hard, the next five tons – you get used to it, and then it is easy to work. Of course, you need to feel and to have a calling. You can make everything if you love clay and if clay loves you.

The Ceramics Workshop of Valdis Paulins and Olga Paulina

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The Secret of the Craftsmanship

The Latgalian ceramics will not disappear as long as there are people who are passionate about their business.



⑤ The Fascinating History of Ceramics in Preili

THE CERAMISTS



Raivo Andersons

A Recipe From the Craftsman

One artist does not need a lot of clay, 1.5 tons per year is enough. We usually dig it at a shallow depth of half a meter, 15 kilometres from Preili.

PROGRAMMES AND MASTER CLASSES

Raivo conducts creative clay modelling workshops and tells about the peculiarities of the local material. The craftsmen dig it themselves, so their ceramics have a natural red hue that cannot be found anywhere else. The visitors can create a Latgalian toy – a whistle Preilju svilpaunieks (Latgalian for 'A whistle of Preili'), watch the master's work on the potter's wheel, as well as try their hand at the craft and keep the finished products after firing (or receive them by mail). Tourists will find a large selection of souvenirs, decorative ceramics and household items. Everybody is welcome to order personalized custom-made pottery and to celebrate a wedding or a birthday in the Museum.



The Ceramics House of Polikarp Cernavsky

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⑥ The Works of Art in the Shape of Wrought Metal

THE EPOCH-MAKING ARTIST

There are not many blacksmiths left in Latvia. Each of them can be recognized by specific products, as well as by artistic elements of his works. Janis Lubka is among these people. He did a lot to preserve the ancient craft by studying the work of ancient craftsmen and applying his own creative findings. "The transmission of national traditions is the transmission of the skill itself," Janis notes.

In Janis Lubka's hands, the black metal seems to flourish owing to the meticulously executed details, delicate elements of the ornament and smooth curves.

All items are very different, ranging from tools and building elements (pokers, lanterns, fences, nails, doorknobs, window hinges and stair railings), household items and interior details (candlesticks, chandeliers, mirrors, chairs, clothes hangers and flower stands) to souvenir coins and horseshoes. But no matter how practical the products are, they always have artistic components. Each nail is a special and valuable piece of art.

Janis became acquainted with blacksmithing in early childhood. At school, he studied woodworking, then mastered the profession of a carpenter and made furniture. The first personal exhibition with metal products was held by the master in 1984. Janis Lubka ran the art studio Zile in Riga for 19 years. The studio collected the folklore and ethnographic knowledge base and contributed to the development of blacksmithing skills. "Nowadays, the main thing is to attract young people and to pass on the knowledge and skills to them," Janis says.

The Secret of Mastery

There are no secrets, it is just the point of life, hard work and great experience.

TO FORGE A NAIL

You can visit the workshop located in the building of a former Latgale manor, as well as get to engrossing master classes by prior registration. Master the artistic processing of metal and forge a nail or a horseshoe. You can order special goods from ferrous or non-ferrous metal, as well as artistic metal processing. Janis Lubka participates in various fairs, demonstrates his craft and collaborates with local farmers. His works are presented at the Ludza Craftsmen Centre too.



A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman For Beginners

To start you need the desire to learn and a goal. Only after than diligence, perseverance, patience, as well as strength and endurance come. It is not for nothing that blacksmithing is a man's work.

The Blacksmith Workshop Pauguri (Hills)

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7 The Beauty and Grace of Birch Bark

SIMPLE AND COMPLEX BIRCH BARK GOODS

Birch bark resembles a book with “glued” pages, but “young” layers are never white. Their colour varies from golden yellow to pinkish brown. Birch bark is strong and rarely rots. At the moment, the traditions of birch bark processing in Latvia can be traced clearly on the exhibits of local history museums. Unfortunately, there are no craftsmen to learn the skill from. Jurijs Ivanovs is trying to renew the traditions of birch bark processing typical for Zilupe municipality with the help of the regenerative method.

These goods are characterized by asceticism, functionality, connections without glue and other auxiliary materials, without carving and painting. All patterns are created using poker painting methods only. Birch bark is perfect for creating baskets, decorative elements, handles of tools, insoles for shoes, coasters and souvenirs. Whole pieces of birch bark are used for large products, but layers are applied in making small items. The most complex products often seem to be simple. For example, pipes or whistles. It is especially important to prepare raw materials properly and without harming nature. According to the rules, birch bark is collected at a strictly defined time — only a week per year.

The craftsman will tell and show you how to make an incision and how many layers to remove. Cleaning and processing birch bark is a painstaking job that requires absolute accuracy. Jurijs loves experiments and is not afraid of hard work. A unique birch bark shower sponge is one of his brand new creations.

In 2017, Jurijs Ivanovs's workshop was awarded the cultural Sign of Latvian Heritage. In 2018, the artist became the Craftsman of the Year in Latgale.



Ilga Ivanova

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

Handles for knives and other tools can be made from scraps of birch bark. Coated with linseed oil, they do not slip in the hand, can be cleaned and washed easily. Such products as utensils must be made from whole pieces of birch bark of excellent quality.



Jurijs Ivanovs

PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

The visitors of the workshop can create various types of handmade birch bark products: cylindrical birch bark baskets, whistles, wall hangings, Christmas tree decorations, etc. The master offers an interesting service, which especially popular among newlyweds — writing a special letter to a dear person. Such letters are created using special devices and stored for a very long time.

Not only Jurijs works in Bites, but also two other craftsmen: his wife Ilga, a florist-designer, and their son Janis, a potter. Ilga conducts master classes in floristry and knitting on pitchforks, i.e. the pitchforks used to form the top of a stack. The Ivanovs family also grows melons and watermelons, makes jam from pine cones and buds, conducts thematic events and excursions in Zilupe municipality. There are more

than 40 routes available for tourists. A visit to the thematic cinema village in Zilupe is one of the most interesting and popular routes. The village is an international tourism brand — filmmakers from different countries develop their film projects here.

There is a rare habitat of European importance on the territory of a manor — an upland meadow; a regional cycling route number 36 goes along it.



The Manor Bites (Bees)

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⑧ Workshop of Leather Goods Apkalnmājas

Some Pieces of Advice From the Craftsman

Irena says that working with leather is not easy. You must feel the material. The skin on the abdomen, for example, is almost one third thinner than the skin on other parts.

Wallets and belts are usually made of leather, but the raw material is "hardened" using chromium instead of natural methods. Of course, it is much faster and easier. But the process reduces the elasticity and strength of the material significantly.

Leather belts and bags will last longer if you take care of them using products based on natural emollients. Pharmacy glycerine is good too. Softening is especially important for leather accessories that are exposed to sun, rain and sweat. Saddlery and other leather goods should be stored in a well-ventilated area.



Irena Baufale

"CLOTHES" FOR HORSES

Straps from old boots were the first product created by Irena Baufale. On the way to creating a unique leather workshop after the collapse of the Soviet system, Irena had to learn the craft on her own, but the experience and knowledge of horse breeding and her passion for horses came in useful. Indeed, to create a high-quality and comfortable leather harness, you have to understand exactly how it is used and to know the anatomy of a horse. For more than 20 years, Irena, a graduate of Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy, a zootechnician, a master of sports in show jumping (overcoming obstacles), one of the few in Latvia, together with her husband Peteris Reiniks, a veterinarian, has been successfully engaged in the creation of various leather goods and accessories for horses and equestrian sports. The family workshop Apkalnmājas has more than 100 products. It was awarded the Sign of Latvian Heritage in 2014.

The workshop Apkalnmājas is the only workshop in the Baltic states that produces traditional arc harnesses. The building of the workshop was created in a typical Latgalian style, its beauty is inextricably linked with functionality. There is a workshop at one end of the house, and two exhibition and conference halls at the other.

A lot of materials are purchased in European countries since the durability and quality of the created products are essential for the craftsmen. By the way, from time to time they find excellent raw materials in Belarus too.



PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The workshop provides accessories not only for horses, but also for other domestic animals. Moreover, the craftsmen create leather goods for women and men: belts, covers, brooches, mobile phone cases, bags, as well as all kinds of belts for athletes, electricians, seat belts, etc. A lot of accessories are made to order.

The workshop has been providing excursions in Russian, Latvian and Latgalian languages since 2011. The main topics are:

- family heritage;
- the traditional lifestyle in Latgale;

- types of leather and secrets of creating leather goods;
- handicraft traditions in Latgale (ceramics, weaving, and wooden utensils).

It is also possible to see the showroom and workshop. Apkalnmājas is the only workshop in Latvia that teaches saddlery and offers lectures on horse breeding basics. Besides, Apkalnmājas provides comfortable premises for various business meetings and events, sports grounds and camping sites.

Workshop of Leather Goods Apkalnmājas

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9 The Variety of Handicraft in Ludza



Marita Tutane



Eriks Kudlis



Liga Kondrate and Eriks Kondrats



Salimons Kipluks



THE UNIQUENESS OF LUDZA

Since ancient times, Ludza has been famous for its craftsmen who create amazing goods. The Craftsmen Centre is located at the foot of the castle hill and combines workshops, a small craft shop and a museum. Here you can find a unique souvenir, book an excursion and admire the work of local artists of ceramics, weaving, embroidery and other ancient skills. The main task of the centre is to preserve and transfer the knowledge about Latgalian crafts and traditions, to increase their prestige in society and to develop the uniqueness of the region. There is a public organisation Ludzas amatnieks located in the building. The main activities of the organisation are aimed at developing the tourism industry.

PROGRAMMES AND MASTER CLASSES

In the show-room, you can buy finished products or order something special from 70 local craftsmen (ceramics, textiles, forged items, jewellery, wicker, and wood products, including elements of home or garden furniture, as well as leather goods), order wool, and linen clothes, folk costumes from any region of Latvia and get a consultation.

The representatives of the centre will tell you about the history of handicrafts and the life of a peasant family, as well as give you a try at work. The range of activities is impressive: blacksmithing, pottery, whistle making, knitting of mittens, flax processing, butter churning, candle casting and much more.

Eriks Kudlis works at the pottery studio and makes traditional Latgalian pottery, candlesticks and lamps of unusual shape, as well as shares his skills. **Marita Tutane, Inese Silkane** and other craftswomen introduce weaving belts on a



loom and embroidery wreaths. **Rasma Vancane** knits both with a bone needle and knitting needles, embroiders skilfully and weaves top-class Latgalian belts.

Salimons Kipluks is the most experienced and knowledgeable artist in the centre. He makes wickerwork, teaches how to make rakes and scythes, thatched and reed roofs. He is one of the few who knows the ancient Latgalian craft – weaving shoes from linen twine. Such shoes are comfortable, lightweight and hygienic. This handiwork is especially appreciated by dancers.

When ordering an excursion, ask about watching video stories and tasting gems of the Latgalian cuisine. There is a culinary school at the centre. You will be offered peas with cracklings, round Latgalian cracknels and shmakovka. A unique dinner on a lake raft on Small Lake of Ludza is available for tourists from May to November.



Fairs and festivals, exhibitions and educational projects related to crafts and Latgalian traditions are held in Ludza regularly. The Big Latgale Fair for the Ligo holiday (celebrating of the summer solstice), The Road of Golden Hands, the school of crafts, and Latgale Days are the most popular and attractive events.



Latgale recipe of Fresh cabbage soup with lamb

Bring meat to a boil in a saucepan, add chopped cabbage. Shortly before the end of boiling, add diced potatoes, salt, pepper and other spices and boil until tender, separate the meat from the bones, cut and put it back in the soup. Serve with rye bread and cream.



Rasma Vancane

The Craftsmen Centre in Ludza

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The Magic of Glass and Other Crafts in Latgale

Practical Suggestions

Latgallians are used to dyeing yarn with natural materials: birch, alder and oak leaves, onion husks, etc. The intensity of the colour tone obtained depends on whether fresh or dried plants are used. On average, 100-150 grams of dried plants are taken per 100 grams of yarn to get a pleasant dim shade. 300-500 grams of fresh plants are taken to get a more saturated colour. The more plants are used, the brighter and the darker the colour is. The dried plants are stored in cloth bags. Before dyeing, you have to pour water on fresh or dried plants: about two litres of water per 100 grams of crushed plants. Fresh plants are soaked for 2-3 hours and dried for 24 hours. You can add one teaspoon of soda per litre of water to improve the colour. Interestingly, the same dye can produce different shades of colour.



A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CENTRE

Glass mass is miraculously born from tiny grains of sand and takes on amazing outlines in the artist's hands. A story of an entire nation can be told through the glass.

Let's talk about Livani Town. The glass tradition of the town is 130 years old and is related to every family living here. Although the famous Livani Glass Factory (1887-2008) does not work anymore, the history of the museum and the largest collection of glass goods in all colours in the Baltics are carefully preserved by Livani Glass Museum located in Centre of Latgalian Arts and Crafts.

The centre has been headed by Ilze Griezane since 2004 and is a unique complex where you can get acquainted with the history and development of Latgalian crafts. Activities of the centre are developing in two main directions: museum activities and tourism.

In addition to Livani Glass Museum, there are two more permanent exhibitions in the centre. The exposition "The Craftsmen in Latgale" of the 19-20th Centuries located in a restored barn building of the 19th century describes the main crafts and their representatives in Latgale: weavers, knitters, shoemakers, potters, carpenters and blacksmiths. There is also detailed information about the culinary heritage of the region. "The Water Gallery" exposition placed in the old brick cellar preserved from the 16th century tells about all rivers, lakes and floods of Livani and the surrounding area.

The centre hosts art and craft exhibitions of Latgale artists every month.

EVENTS AND SERVICES

Much effort is being made to preserve and transfer the endangered glassblowing technique. For this purpose, the century-old tradition has been revived in the glassblowing workshop (by the way, there are only two of them in Latvia).

An experienced specialist works manually, without moulds. He will reveal the main secrets of the creation of glass goods. You can buy beautiful finished items

in the souvenir shop.

Besides, you can visit a ceramics workshop and a weaving workshop — the studio of decorative applied arts Dubna that studies ancient Latgalian symbols and integrates them into modern textiles.

The centre has been working for 15 years and has formed wonderful and uniting traditions. For example, decorating Christmas trees with 155 pairs of knitted socks or 133 pairs of patterned mittens provided by local craftsmen.



To attract the general public to craft traditions, the Centre of Latgalian Arts and Crafts in cooperation with the Ludza Craftsmen Centre held seven annual events under the name "The Road of Golden Hands". Everyone was invited to visit at least 5 out of 40 craft workshops in Latgale and to master new skills. The centre has developed several tourist programmes. For example, you can purchase the programme "The Amazing Livani" and get to see the longest national belt in Latvia: 94 metres of more than 20 symbolic patterns created by 13 craftswomen. Another programme "Weddings in Latgale" was developed especially for newlyweds. Schoolchildren can get acquainted with the delicate and complex process of creating glass products at the practical lesson "Glass in your palms". Last but not least, the participants of the program "Straightening curly wool" can learn how to knit patterned socks from sheep wool.

UNIQUE TECHNIQUES

Picking up is a special weaving method, one of the leading branches of folk arts in Latgale. Two scales are used to create intricate yet beautiful designs on blankets and pillows. Currently, this technique is relatively rare because the process is complex and time-consuming.

In the middle of the 19th century, decorative multi-coloured woollen blankets with fantastic patterns of roses were widespread in the Southern Latgale. These blankets have strict left and right sides. You can see roses, octagonal stars and grape branches with berries on them. Such works require special skills, good taste, a lot of raw materials and time.



Latgale Arts and Crafts Centre

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11 The Ancient Weaving Technique in Indra

THE SECRET OF WOVEN BEDSPREADS

Indra is a village in Kraslava municipality, near the border with Belarus that is well-known for the workshop Indra, where the long tradition of weaving patterned bedspreads is continued. But 15 years ago, when it all began, this craft was almost forgotten. The production of woven bedspreads (in Latvian – skalu segas) was typical for the border regions of Latvia, Poland, Lithuania and Belarus. “The pattern is usually formed with controls and threads. Each cell of the pattern is drawn with a splinter,” explains Olga Jokste, the manager of the workshop. A professional weaver, she became the “engine” of the project, bringing together those who could pass on their skills learned in childhood from mothers and grandmothers, and those who wanted to learn weaving techniques.

There are currently 15 weaver’s looms in the workshop. Some of these machines are over a hundred years old. The large wooden equipment is really impressive, especially since it is in operating condition. Six weavers are working in the workshop and creating classic bedspreads, tablecloths, towels and rugs. Olga weaves belts and flags.

The weavers preserve their craft for future generations, participate in various local and international projects, as well as entertain guests.



Olga Jokste

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

A woven bedspread is a high-level product. Its production is a long and laborious process similar to baking a premium class cake.



The Secret of Craftsmanship

Before you sit down at the loom and start weaving, use a special structure and prepare the material. The structure looks like a cube without walls that rotates around its axis. And for the manufacture of rugs, you also need to cut the material.



The Weaving Workshop Indra

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12 The Time-Tested Handicraft

THE FAMILY TRADITION OF WOODWORKING

Janis Spurins took over the traditional woodworking technique and love for this craft from his father and grandfather. Later, he consolidated his knowledge at the Latvian University of Agriculture and received a diploma in woodworking engineering technology.

His grandfather was a forester and used wood to make various tools. Janis Spurins has been working with wood for many years and today his workshop is located in Livani.

“My grandfather made wooden bathtubs – a kind of outdoor bubble bath – for saunas, as well as tubs, utensils for homemade whipped butter and many other tools. My father was involved in this craft too. As you can see, it is natural that I took over the craft from my family,” says Janis. The artist works in his workshop in Livani, fulfils individual orders, delivers souvenirs to local shops and participates in craft fairs around Latvia.



Janis Spurins

SPOONS, BOARDS, TRAYS AND MORE

Janis makes various kitchen utensils (spoons, knives, boards, dishes for canning and storing food). He strives to show the natural beauty of wood and to popularise wooden goods. You can see various kitchen utensils, as well as wooden bath ladles, toys, wall clocks, jewellery boxes and other items in the workshop. The artist mainly uses ash tree, spruce, linden and some fruit trees.

Household items (e.g. buckets and bathtubs) are made applying traditional technology that was used by the artist’s grandfather. But kitchen utensils and other products fully and completely reflect the character of the artist. Janis burns various texts and drawings on ready-made kitchen and other decorative items. His style looks harmonious in a modern interior.



The Most Interesting Order

A wooden bathtub was the most unusual item created by the artist. As Janis says, the creation process was difficult yet fascinating.



The Workshop of Janis Spurins

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LITHUANIA

13 The Wicker Garden

THE WEAVING MUSEUM

A motorcycle, a car, a cradle, a chest... from the vine? These unusual and unique exhibits can be seen in the manor house of the 19th–20th centuries and in the weaving museum of Kazis and Ligita Morkunai. Both Kazis and Ligita are certified artists of this type of creativity that is classified as the national heritage in Lithuania. The Markunai family bought the manor in 1988. The manor is located in a picturesque place at the intersection of three woodlands in Anyksciai municipality, on the territory of a geological reserve.

Fascinated by country romance and the desire to create, the owners of the manor did their best to preserve the original appearance of the farmhouse and other buildings. A lot of effort and physical labour is an integral part of the life of the owners: chopping wood and fetching water from a well... But the couple is happy to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. Besides, it does not interfere with their creativity at all.

The weaving museum is located in the building of the former barn. It is a rich exposition of various items: a painted chest, an armchair, real high beds, a wicker baby cradle, household utensils (some items are even difficult to name), as well as a collection of such vintage household appliances as radios, televisions and telephones.

Kazis and Ligita create their own large and small willow goods. These goods can be used in everyday life or decorate homes. The craftsmen always base themselves upon the national heritage of Lithuania, adapt ancient forms and are interested in the ethnography of weaving.



Kazis and Ligita Morkunai

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsmen

It is important to avoid exposure to moisture when using wicker goods.

"Hard work, stubbornness, high-quality raw materials, tools, forms, imagination and positive mood are necessary to learn willow weaving," the artists Kazis and Ligita say.

PROGRAMMES FOR TOURISTS

The house and the museum are often visited by tourists from Lithuania and other foreign countries. In 2019, there were guests from the USA, England, Germany, Japan, Uruguay and Iceland, both adults and children. The craftsmen willingly pass on their skills to the younger generation. Children not only learn to weave but also are delighted with the real rural environment and nature. What is more, the hosts are used to invite children from disadvantaged families. These visitors can visit the museum free of charge.

During their master classes, Kazis and Ligita introduce their guests to the basics of beekeeping, the peculiarities of collecting herbs, mushrooms and berries. Tourists can taste honey, local herbal tea, cheese and other rural delicacies, as well as get acquainted with the natural monuments and legends of the reserve. There is also a great possibility to enjoy a black sauna or banya.

The Weaving Museum Pintinių Sodelis

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14 The Dreamland of Lina Timukaite

CREATING A FAIRY-TALE

Lina Timukaite's works are a whole fabulous land. Lina is known by the brand name "The Fox in the Fog". She works with special grace and delicate taste, paying much attention to details and colour combinations. Endless fantasy and high artistic performance are the main features of Lina's work that everyone wants to examine and to try on. The woman works with porcelain, ceramics, wood and paper, paints with enamel for metal and creates jewellery, tableware and accessories. This technique is called sgraffito.

In the artists' hands, all kinds of goods are born in the form of adorable animals, plants, birds, butterflies, angels and deities. There are also characters endowed with amazing properties and not existing in ordinary life.

Lina's ability to bring magic and beauty is especially attractive. Nobody remains indifferent.

The workshop is located in the public institution Anyksciai Art Incubator, where everybody can get acquainted with Lina Timukaite and her works.



Creative Workshop of Lina Timukaite

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Artist's Notes

I love sharing the magic of creating art with others. It is especially inspiring when the participants of my masterclasses realize that everyone is talented and has creative abilities.



Justina Kamarauskaite

TEACHING

The artist creates amazingly beautiful and graceful items from glass: jewellery, "dream catchers", glass paintings, interior details and much more.

Justina conducts master classes for adults and children regularly. These are masterclasses on working with glass (jewellery and stained glass) and on working with graphics (linocut) and ceramics.

The artist chooses floral and natural motives, delicate graphics and ornaments. She loves experiments and prefers pastel and monochrome colours, painting with oxides and glaze, playing with layers and space. Numerous technical skills have to be applied during the work: cutting glass, cleaning it with sand, drilling, etc. Justina does everything herself.

Glass is not only a kind of creative impulse. It is patience and perseverance. Sometimes an item is burned several times in a special firing chamber before the desired result is achieved. Currently, Justina's works can be seen in Anyksciai Art Incubator, the Angel Museum at Anyksciai Centre of Sacred Art and in the stained glass gallery Vitražo manufaktūra in Vilnius.

15 When Dreams Come True

THE MAGIC OF GLASS

Can glass be light and graceful? Can it create a sense of magic? Yes, if we speak about products that are skilfully crafted by a professional. While studying in Vilnius, Justina Kamarauskaite was fond of photography, jewellery, graphics and restoration of paintings. She worked as an art restorer for almost seven years. "It was an exciting period in my life. At that time, glass was just a hobby." Justina is a member of the Lithuanian Painters' Association. She works with various forms and techniques of art, but the glass remains the main material. "When I saw the firing chamber of the public institution Anyksciai Art Incubator after moving with my family to Anyksciai, I was eager to continue working with glass," recalls Justina. Today the woman has her own workshop located in the incubator. This makes it possible to communicate with customers and colleagues, friends and admirers. It is a great opportunity to create and present her work. Justina participates in exhibitions and art projects. She always starts her work with an idea. "First, there's a thought, a sketch, a poem, a journey, a verbal reflection... Then it is the implementation of the idea with the help of glass." The most interesting projects for Justina are projects with numerous details and experiments. The artist participates in collective exhibitions to share the experience.



The Creative Glass Workshop Juste.kam

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16 Finding New Things in the Past

AMAZING CRAFTSMANSHIP

Rita Vasiliauskiene has been introducing folk art to the visitors of the horse museum for over 16 years. She has an art education and has been engaged in creativity since her childhood. Rita is very talented and teaches how to bake sourdough bread, paint Easter eggs and make candles from natural wax. But her most amazing skill is vytsinanka or cutting out patterns from paper. Rita's creations decorate not only the museum but also many houses in Lithuania.

The roots of the paper cutting lie deep in the past. 100 years ago in Lithuania, after the widespread use of chimneys and, as a result, cleaner air in houses, housewives began to beautify window spaces, cult images, kerosene lamps and other items.

Today, Rita carves such curtains with museum guests during masterclasses, as well as during long winter evenings. It usually takes at least one day to make a curtain. First, Rita sketches the future vytsinanka on paper. Each drawing should be planned so that it looks nice and symmetrical. For rolling, the paper is folded three or four times, and then cutting with scissors or a knife begins. As Rita says, this work requires patience and endurance, but the result is worth it.

En plein air activities for paper cutters are held at the horse museum every summer. The participants share their experience and create items on specific topics. This kind of craftsmanship is becoming more and more popular in Lithuania.



The Secret of the Artist

The delicious bread is baked using old leaven," Rita says. "It is very important to remember and know the traditions. Perhaps they will make your life more beautiful or tastier. Look for something new in the past!"



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17 Wood Graphics

IDEAS EMBODIED IN WOOD

All kinds of inscriptions, housekeepers, hangers, pieces of furniture and decor, toys, sheet music, notebooks... It is difficult even to list all types of wooden products that Irmantas Rimkus has created since 2011. As a rule, Irmantas fulfils individual orders. He is sure that everything can be made of wood. "I often find a solution together with my clients. This makes my work diversified. It's so nice to see happy and satisfied people when their ideas are brought to life, whether these are decorative items with children's names or exquisite interior details." The master works on a CNC milling machine, carves out of wood and plywood, as well as makes engravings. Irmantas uses local wood and buys plywood in Latvia. "The machine can cut various shapes and symbols. It allows me to obtain high precision and complexity of patterns that cannot be achieved manually," the artist says. However, half of the work is done both using a machine tool and manually. Irmantas acquired his skills from his father, a carpenter. Irmantas works alone, but his wife Lina takes care of orders and communication with clients. By the way, she is also a creative person and suggests bang-up ideas.



Lina and Irmantas Rimkus

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

The most important quality for this kind of work is patience while haste is the most dangerous.



THINGS THAT CAN BRING JOY

Most of all, Irmantas likes to create goods for children: small chairs, benches, toys, etc. The artist believes that these products bring warmth and joy. Moreover, nowadays people have become more interested in authentic goods made from natural materials.

Some details can be done in a couple of minutes while the creation of others can take several days. For example, furniture.

The craftsman has not organised a personal exhibition yet, but some of his works were presented at the famous Berlin Bazaar sale exhibition. Of course, Irmantas would be happy to create more products based on his preferences, but usually there is not enough time for it.

Among the most interesting orders, Irmantas names the creation of a small chapel near a house. Such a structure is most typical for Samogitia, one of the regions of Lithuania. To implement the project, Irmantas immersed himself in the



study of the history and architectural features of such chapels. You can see the artist in his workshop in the Art Incubator in Anyksciai. Since the work is made to order, there are not many finished products available in the workshop, but you can see the process of work and follow the news on the Facebook page Medžio grafika (Wooden graphics).

Carpentry Workshop Medžio Grafika

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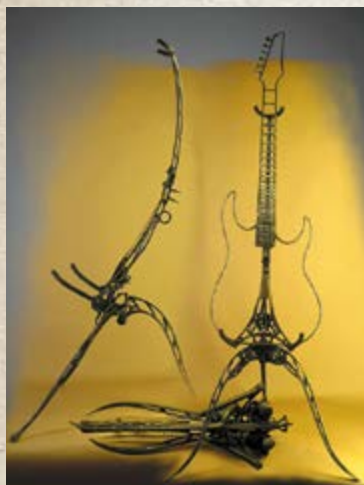
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18 Taming the Forces of Nature



A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

I'm sure that nothing else brings people together like culture, the encouragement of traditional crafts and creativity. It isn't difficult to find talented people, you just need to notice and encourage them.



TO TAME THE FLAME

Audrius Laucius tames the fire and transforms iron into exquisite pieces of art. During four years of study at Kaunas Faculty of the Vilnius Academy of Art, Audrius learned to work with stone and wood. He was educated as a sculptor, but it was metal that he liked more than other materials. He acquired useful skills in working with metal by observing the work of a blacksmith. Audrius says that spending one day at the forge was more efficient than spending several months at the academy.

Now Audrius is a famous blacksmith, a sculptor. Television, Internet portals and newspapers are interested in his work. Numerous exhibitions were held in Lithuania and abroad.

By the way, Audrius has other hobbies too. He is a percussionist, plays in rock and brass bands, as well as folk music ensembles.

CREATION

Wrought iron is one of the oldest crafts. Metal seems to be static, but it comes to life in Audrius Laucius' works. Many people adore his work: architects, employees of cultural institutions, bikers, who want to decorate their powerful motorcycles, heads of educational institutions, who want to teach children blacksmithing and the initial skills of sculpture. The master organizes en plein air activities and presentations.

More and more interested young people from Kupiskis visit his workshop. Audrius is happy to help children and young people to feel the joy of creativity and reveal their vocation.



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19 The Weaving Classics

THE ARTIST

The famous weaving artist Irena Vapsiene has been fond of drawing since her childhood. She began to study weaving in 1991 with the famous Lithuanian master Petras Jankauskas and became seriously interested in this craft. Irena participates in regional, county and republican exhibitions, exhibits wickerwork and paintings actively. The wickerwork of the artist is distinguished by a high level of professionalism and bright ethnic traditions. In 2016, her products were awarded the National Heritage certificate of Lithuania.

More than ten of her works are in the collection of works of folk artists of the Kupiskis Ethnographic Museum. Irena has been a member of the Union of Folk Artists since 1993. In 2014 she was awarded the Golden Wreath diploma of Panevezys district and became the Artist of the Year.

She is also engaged in ceramics and painting and is a participant of en plein air of folk artists of Kupiskis district. Her creative portfolio includes still-life paintings, landscapes, as well as portraits, including portraits of familiar masters and representatives of other crafts, for example, the blacksmith Gintaus Vaitonis. Irena strives not only for external similarity, but also tries to convey her mood and emotions.

When presenting her works, Irena notes that all people perceive and interpret them in their own way.



A Recipe From the Craftswoman

I use willow twigs, wheat or rye straw for my work.

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20 Gintautas and His Blacksmithing

METAL IS HIS ELEMENT

All the work of the Honoured Artist of Lithuania Gintautas Vaitonis has been associated with metal since 1985. In his works, the artist tries not to lose ties with the national Lithuanian culture and traditions. In addition to the main material, the artist uses stone, wood and glass. He is interested in everything he is doing, whether it is a coat of arms, a decorative bench or a simple nail. Otherwise, there is no sense in doing it. Gintautas has other hobbies too: folk dancing and collecting card decks.

A TURNER, A WELDER, A LOCKSMITH

First, the artist mainly helped farmers with the repair of different equipment. Today he specializes in artistic metal processing and has been making a variety of products since 2009: benches, gates, fences, all kinds of gifts, etc. Gintautas is known as a turner, a welder, a locksmith and, of course, a blacksmith. He is happy to help his clients.

Gintautas Vaitonis' works can be seen in the folk craftsmen studio, in Kupiskis Ethnographic Museum, in some Lithuanian cities, as well as in Norway, Germany and Ireland.



Gintautas Vaitonis

The Secret of Craftsmanship

Usually, Gintautas chooses colours for the products himself, unless the customers require otherwise.



A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

Work, try new and unknown, don't give up. Even if something doesn't work out right away, tune yourself to a positive result and start all over again. Then success is guaranteed.

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21 Stories Cut From Paper

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CRAFTSWOMAN

Would you like to decorate your home with carved paper curtains? Looking at Virginija Jureviciene's work, it is easy to believe that such decorations were especially popular some time ago: local people used to decorate windows, shelves, chandeliers and icons with paper before all holidays. The National Artist of the National Heritage, the author of more than 25 personal exhibitions, a participant of national and international projects, festivals and fairs, a teacher by education, Virginija Jureviciene develops the tradition of paper cutting and shares her knowledge and skills with everyone. In 2018, she organized the first international en plein air in Lithuania that was attended by paper carvers from Poland, Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania.

THE SECRETS OF THE CRAFTSMANSHIP

With the help of nail scissors, Virginija Jureviciene embodies ethnographic traditions, nature and legends of Kupiskis in paper paintings. For example, she carved out all the Catholic churches of the region.

Virginija's work can be distinguished by a variety of ethnographic motives and love of authenticity and details. Virginija manages to accommodate the entire life of a person in one storyline. For example, the work about her father's life — it reproduces his hobbies (blacksmithing, agriculture, music, love for horses and bees) in tiny scenes. Virginija cuts curtains, postcards and bookmarks from paper. She also decorates chicken, goose and duck Easter eggs with colourful patterns. This type of decorating Easter eggs is traditional for Lithuania.



Virginija Jureviciene



A Piece of Advice From the Craftswoman

Everyone can learn my craft. But first of all, you need to be able to draw, to have well-developed logical thinking, a lot of patience, creativity, the ability to concentrate and, of course, very good eyesight. Sometimes an idea comes up quickly, but sometimes it takes at least a year to think it over.

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22 The Warmth of Genia's Clay

CREATIVITY AS A PART OF LIFE

Pottery has been a traditional technique used in the manufacture of tableware and simple decorations since the earliest times. Nevertheless, over time new shapes, decors and compositions appear. It makes it possible to experiment with clay. Besides, each region of Lithuania retains its own pottery technology. For example, the characteristic forms of jugs and pots produced by firing black clay.



Genia Vaicikauskiene



For many years, Genia Vaicikauskiene has been engaged in the visual arts and has an impressive teaching experience in this field. Her creative path began with a ceramic symposium 20 years ago. Since then, Genia has been sculpted a lot, participated in pottery en plein air, seminars, exhibitions and symposia. She follows her colleagues' creative activities.

Today Genia Vaicikauskiene is one of the most famous ceramics artists in Kupiskis. She teaches adults to sculpt from clay and to paint on silk. Every summer, Genia participates in various local and international ceramics seminars and improves her skills. She has been participating in exhibitions since 1985. In total, she has had more than two dozen personal exhibitions of paintings and ceramics, as well as more than fifty joint ones. The artist is a member of the Union of Folk Artists of Lithuania.

Genia Vaicikauskiene's works are exhibited in Vytautas Valiusis Ceramics Museum in Leliūnai and other museums. She also initiated the project Creative Spaces that has existed for 17 years: every year a thematic exhibition of Kupiskis district art teachers' works is organised.



BIRDS ARE THE FAVOURITE CHARACTERS

Genia Vaicikauskiene creates various types of products: dishes, sculptures and souvenirs. She mainly uses chamotte clay for modelling.

To create drawings, the ceramic products are covered with glaze or coloured clay. Genia's special paint is not harmful to ceramics.

The firing temperature depends on the type of glaze. More often it is 1000-1040 °C. Genia draws inspiration from nature. She observes plants and uses their motives in her works, but birds are her favourite characters. They attract the artist with their beauty, variety, colour and movement. The master drew attention to them when she started to make whistles. In addition to birds, you can see images of rams, horses, other animals and even reptiles on Genia's ceramics. The woman creates original engravings on linoleum too. First, a drawing is cut out. Then imprints are made using a special paint.

A Piece of Advice From the Craftswoman

Chamotte clay is easy to mould. You can mould a variety of shapes and create small and large products. The ceramics are fired at a high temperature of 1260 °C. "Everyone can sculpt. Though, theoretical knowledge in the field of ceramics is also very important. It takes a lot of time to acquire and consolidate all necessary skills: to throw, to dry, to burn, to glaze and to burn again."

The Ceramics Workshop

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BELARUS

23 The Wood Carving Workshop

WHEN A TREE COMES TO LIFE

Anatoly became interested in this type of creativity at school when he was 11 years old and began to attend a woodcarving workshop. The teacher of arts and crafts became his first carving mentor. The results were great, Anatoly participated in regional competitions, and his works were exhibited in the school's museum. By the way, there are still several works stored there. The first works were made using the technique of a flat-relief carving.

THE SECRETS OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

Oak, hornbeam, birch, apple, pear and ash tree are the main types of wood that Anatoly uses. Acacia, walnut, elderberry and apricot are used to create original products. Anatoly has mastered various types of carving, such as contour carving, geometric, flat-relief, embossed and 3D carving using a CNC machine. A separate direction in carving is occupied by the manufacture of boxes. They can be made with carving or with an unique pattern of the structure of the material.

Also, the artist adopts 3D carving by CNC machine. It creates a computer model with the help of ArtCAM. The concept is to use digital technologies in woodworking. More precisely, the introduction of the technology that completely or partially replaces manual labour of a woodcarver with milling on CNC machines. At the same time, the processes of creating 3D models and writing of control programs for CNC machines are of great importance.



A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

Wooden panels and icons are the most original and complex objects. Objects made from the threadlike structures of wood species, created by Mother Nature and successfully selected by an artist are the most interesting and unique in their design.



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24 Mesmerizing Wood Carvings

INSPIRATION OF THE ARTIST

Alexander Ishchenko has mastered several professions: from welding and shoemaking to artistic leadership. He tried various materials (metal, clay, leather and polyurethane), but wood seems to be the best one for him. Alexander notes that "nothing is difficult, sometimes there is little time". Nevertheless, he can create a complex of sculptures for one of the local cultural institutions in one month. There is a sculpture of a fisherman (by the way, Alexander is a big lover of fishing), a family of bears on a bench, a mushroom picker with a basket in which you can plant real flowers. The graceful multi-coloured peacock near Ishchenko's house will attract your attention immediately. Alexander loves to create monumental works that are visible from afar. Such creations weigh accordingly – about 200 kilograms!

The reconstruction of the model of the residence of the Sapieha dynasty for the museum room in the Department of Crafts and Traditional Culture of Derechin was a very important project for the artist. The whole work took a month and a half, including the finalization of the drawing, because the building is quite long – about one and a half meters. The biggest challenge was to get everything into place and to make it look like a whole. The palace has a foundation, walls and rafters were assembled separately and then cut out. The tin roof is fastened with a soldering station. Alexander added the ability to turn on the light in the



numerous windows. As Alexander jokes, there are three things that you can watch forever: fire burning, water falling and CNC machine working. After mastering, such a machine saves a lot of time for other work and "unties your hands". It can be used to make magnets and other souvenirs with tiny print and engraving. The master even carves icons using this machine.

Alexander loves global projects and tasks. The two-meter high wooden sculpture of a horse and a metal horseshoe created by him have replenished the collection of symbols of the Annensky kirmash.

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The Secret of Craftsmanship shared by Sergey Khudyaev

Sergey Khudyaev has improved the technology of making black-smoke dishes in a homemade oven. When the temperature of the oven drops from 1000 °C to 800 °C, resin wood is laid. When the access of oxygen is blocked, iron reacts with graphite and paints the ceramics in dark grey tones. Such products are very durable.



25 The Wealth of Zelvensky Crafts

WEAVING, SPINNING, POTTERY AND MORE

Zelvensky district is a land of talented people, a land of folk craftsmen: there are about 100 craftsmen in the area. The secret cultural capital of Zelvensky region is Derechin, one of the most ancient settlements in Grodno region. To make sure of the fact just look at the Department of Crafts and Traditional Culture located in the centre of Derechin.

The Folk Artist of Belarus **Antonina Pentyak** is engaged in spinning, weaving, cross-stitch and satin stitch. She will be happy to show her work to visitors. Antonina deftly and freely alternates ornaments and colours, creates intricate patterns. Her bedspreads and carpets in the traditional Belarusian technique of weaving are especially recognized. Antonina Pentyak constantly popularizes her crafts, willingly imparts unique skills at master classes, fairs and festivals.

The visitors are advised to look into the ethnographic room to imagine the ancient weaving process and feel the atmosphere of their ancestors' life. The second exposition is dedicated to ceramics and includes potter **Sergey Khudyaev's** works, who restored the ancient technique of black-smoke ceramics, as well as the artists **Veronika Zhamoitina** and **Irina Derechinik**. Here you can also see crockery made from clay that was used by inhabitants of Zelva district in the 19th–20th centuries. The museum room Annensky Kirmash tells about the rich history of the district with help of five expositions, including a unique model of the palace of the Sapiehy dynasty, made by woodcarver Alexander Ischenko.

EXCURSIONS AND MASTER CLASSES

In the Department of Crafts and Traditional Culture, everybody can gain invaluable experience at master classes presented by any artist. Visitors will be taught embroidery by **Anna Poznyak**, **Zinaida Shabunko**, **Vera Dorokhovich**, straw-weaving by **Lilia Amelyanchik**, decorative and applied arts by **Marina Zhoglik**. Woodcarvers **Valery Fitinsky** and **Mikhail Grintsevich** will share their secrets too. **Irina Derechinik** will introduce the technology of pottery. With **Alena Zhuk**, you can master the skills of sewing, knitting, as well as creating folk amulet dolls. You can order an excursion in the field of weaving or the history of Derechin. The annual holiday Craft as a Way of Life hosts an exhibition and sale of hand-made souvenirs. It offers to try your hand at mastering ancient occupations in a fun way. Masters' works can be purchased at any time in Derechin museum room, as well as in the Fairy cinema in Zelva. You can also get acquainted with the craftsmen and their products at the famous Annensky Kirmash in Zelva.



A Piece of Advice From Woodcarver Valery Fitinsky

For beginners, it is better to choose a pliable linden and cut out something simple, for example, chamomile flowers. Do not forget to apply a pattern with a pencil. When the drawing is transferred to a block, a cutter or a corner chisel is used. This work requires a lot of concentration, dexterity and physical strength. Finish the process by shaping with a jigsaw and firing.

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26 The Mosaic of Polotsk Traditions

THE CENTRE OF CRAFTS AND ITS ARTISTS

Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts and National Culture is engaged in the preservation and development of local tangible and intangible culture and folk arts. The Centre has three folk clubs of craftsmen: Maistar, Rodnasts and Roshva. There are about 20 craftsmen who actively participate in craft fairs and festivals of folk arts.

The permanent exposition *Z krynic narodnych* (Belorussian for 'From the national resources') introduces the traditional crafts of Polotsk district: weaving, weaving from straw and wicker, wood carving, pottery, blacksmithing, embroidery and knitting.

The exposition in the big hall of the centre changes once a month. There are regular thematic and creative evenings and meetings, concerts, presentations of exhibitions, lessons of Belarusian culture and ceremonies for different categories of people. Mass events are usually free of charge.



Ekaterina Zelenskaya



Tatyana Korenevskaya



Inna Karandey

A Piece of Advice From Tatyana Krasikova:

When choosing linen fabric for cross stitching, you have to pay attention to the thickness and number of threads in the weave, since the cross can turn out to be rectangular, not square.

PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

You can order group workshops and individual lessons, visit workshops on ceramics, straw weaving, patchwork, as well as workshops on knitting, embroidery, sewing, painting and making folk dolls.

Artist **Ekaterina Zelenskaya** invites you to create your own clay goods and master the pottery wheel. She is an active participant of sculpture and ceramics clubs, as well as of the studio of arts and crafts *Garlachyk*, where 3-5 years old children learn about the national or folk holidays and celebrations and embody their symbols in clay. Ekaterina reconstructs Polotsk clay whistle of the 17th-19th centuries. Whistles were usually made by potters' wives, commonly they were stylized in the form of horses, domestic animals with original engobe painting.

Tatyana Korenevskaya, the head of the folk club *Rodnasts*, will help to master weaving from straw. The artist creates graceful straw decorations, flowers, panels, sculptures and amulets-spiders.

Artists of the Centre are actively reviving traditional Belarusian crafts based on expeditions around the region. Thanks to the head of *Maistar* folk club **Inna Karandey**, the women's folk dress of Polotsk district acquired a material appearance. The artist has recreated "piece by piece" the pious embroidered towel (for framing icons) in the traditional Polotsk style of *sirloin* crochet.

Inna Karandey is a versatile artist, she can teach you knitting, sewing, hand embroidery, embroidery, creating a variety of textile souvenirs and folk dolls.

Tatyana Krasikova, one of the brightest representatives of the folk club *Maistar*, is an artist who knits and creates reeled dolls. She also restores towels with a characteristic red and black border using the counted cross stitch technique. Her plans for the future include reconstruction of old white embroidery according to a complex scheme: "A hemstitch is made, the threads are pulled out, all three threads are entwined with a sewing thread with a needle, and then a pattern with cornflowers is embroidered on this background with a thicker thread." Within the framework of the collective club project *Z kuferka minulaga* (Belorussian for From the Chest of

the Past), **Tatyana Krasikova** used the memories of her family and restored a wedding wreath typical for Polotsk district made from paper napkins, wire and paraffin.

Tatyana Metlyuk says that she learned to hold a crochet hook earlier than a pen. The artist knits on knitting needles and forks, masters two ways of knitting with a needle. Tatyana conducts master classes on making dolls, knitting and creating textile jewellery. She reconstructed Belarusian tablecloths in fillet and counting techniques, with floral motifs and geometric patterns, charms, as well as Scandinavian socks, hats and the Hanseatic fishing sweater of the 18th century. Now Tatyana is working on the reconstruction of the 18th-19th century folk costume of Polotsk district.

Zinaida Letina has created a unique collection of more than 1000 dolls. These are dolls-charms, dolls for games and souvenir dolls made according to folk traditions and in the author's technique from various materials. Zinaida is a winner of many competitions, the creator of a collection of ancient toys from cotton wool and a puppet theatre – *Batleyki*.

Tatyana Ushakova is ready to paint any material: fabric, ceramics, wood, glass and porcelain. Her works are bright, depicting fairy-tale characters, magical fauna and flora, as well as symbols of Polotsk and Belarusian flavour.



Tatyana Metlyuk

A Piece of Advice From Tatyana Ushakova:

The paintbrush should be thin, stiff at the base, but soft and firm at the tip.



Tatyana Ushakova

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A "Recipe" of a Reeled Doll From Tatyana Metlyuk:

Reeled dolls are made in one sitting, from natural fabrics, without a needle and scissors. It is important to maintain a positive mood during the work.



27 The Magic of Vytsinanka

A Piece of Advice From the Craftswoman

It is convenient to have templates of future work during masterclasses. This helps to understand how to fold paper, how to make a cut and how to use scissors. Please note that your scissors must slide on paper instead of biting it.



Elena Khodikova

THE HOBBY THAT HAS BECOME A PROFESSION

Elena Khodikova is a member of the Union of Folk Artists of Belarus, a member of the folk club Rodnasts at Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts and National Culture and a researcher at the National Polotsk Historical and Cultural Museum and Reserve.

Elena Khodikova became interested in vytsinanka at school, in the 90s when only a few artists were engaged in this craft. Vytsinanka is a kind of magic. When you start cutting, you forget about the time. Most often the artist cuts from black paper. It makes her works more graphic. Elena's work is characterized by scenes depicting the Tree of Life, birds and flowers, such folk festivals as Kupalye, Gukanne viasna and Kalyada. Elena carved out architectural monuments of Polotsk. The image of St. Euphrosyne and four main temples became her diploma work at the university. The artist especially loves images of birds and uses images of people in national costumes. There is a series of small vytsinankas created in a popular print style and dedicated to cats. Only scissors are not enough for the artist. Both a knife and a special cutter are used, because there are many thin and small details.



EXHIBITIONS AND MASTER CLASSES

The artist regularly holds personal exhibitions in various museums and institutions of Polotsk and Novopolotsk. She actively participates in international projects. The optimal number of participants in Elena's master classes is 10-12 people. The most interesting moment is when people unfold their works. It is interesting to see how surprised they are when they see the results. Anyone can master the art. All necessary materials and tools are simple. The teacher only has to explain the technique.

A Cutting Recipe From the Artist

Get acquainted with the technique, listen to your teacher carefully, fold the paper correctly, take scissors and give space to your imagination. The hand is only a tool of your thoughts.



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28 Wood Carvings From Polotsk Craftsmen

Wood carving is one of the traditional crafts of the region. You can appreciate the high quality of the work when meeting the craftsmen from the folk clubs at Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts: Nikolay Abramenko and Valentin Nagorny (Rodnasts), Khachik Chilingaryan (Maistar).



Nikolay Abramenko

WHEN A TREE STARTS SPEAKING

Nikolay Abramenko is a winner of numerous competitions and festivals. He has been engaged in woodcarving since the age of 14 and works with all kinds of wood: aspen, linden, oak, pine etc. He owns the technique of cutting, relief, bas-relief, volumetric carving, creates souvenirs, stands for mobile phones, candlesticks and much more. More than 100 works of the author are recognized as works of decorative and applied art. The artist can carve a figure of Saint Euphrosyne from memory during one day. His chess sets with Polotsk warriors, princes and princesses of the 11th–14th century are especially popular.



Nikolay Abramenko. Chess

Secrets of Craftsmanship Nikolay Abramenko:

The carving pine must be at least one hundred years old and have enough resin not to rot.



Nikolay Abramenko. Figures

Valentin Nagorny is a film director and has been professionally engaged in wood carving for 24 years. He restores antique furniture and wooden utensils. Valentin prefers valuable and hardwoods, especially lilacs, as dense as a bone and suitable for jewellery. He also loves working with wood of apple and pear trees. The artist works with Karelian birch, as well as twigs, i.e. growths on a birch: "To survive after splits, the birch is covered with a black striped bumpy bark. I cut it down and apply images of churches." A grandfather floor clock and an apple-tree chess table are among the most complicated works. There is also a box made of 16 precious types of wood. The artist creates all kinds of tables, boxes, panels and souvenirs. He polishes wood to reveal the texture.



Valentin Nagorny. Box

Khachik Chilingaryan became famous in Polotsk and many cities of Belarus thanks to his numerous works with iconostases and icons. The iconostasis of the Church of the Intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos in Polotsk is the special pride of the artist. Khachik does not have similar works. Each work is a mixture of Armenian and Belarusian traditions, as well as his own creative discoveries. The master is engaged in relief carving from linden, alder, birch, apple and pear trees. A chestnut crucifix for Grodno church made from 3 meters high logs is one of the most interesting works created by Khachik Chilingaryan.



Khachik Chilingaryan. Iconostasis

Valentin Nagorny:

Carving takes strength, precision, perseverance, imagination and even scrupulousness.

Khachik Chilingaryan:

Carving means patience and endurance. An artist must love his craft.

Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts and National Culture

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29 The Brightness of Patchwork

THE FOLK CLUB ROSHVA

Nina Yarmukh, the head of the folk club Roshva at the Crafts Centre, revives patchwork. This ancient craft is as traditional for the Slavic culture as ceramics, woodcarving and others.

Roshva was founded in 2004. The club is a winner of numerous international, republican and regional competitions. There are 19 people in the club, but another 30 are mastering their skills at the courses of patchwork sewing. Achievements of the club include numerous creative projects: the international project Polotsk Amulet consisting of 16 canvases, fragments of which were sewn and donated to the city of Polotsk by artists and people of goodwill from 15 countries. The project Heritage was created to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing and is dedicated to Francysk Skaryna. The project Commonwealth Wreath is a story about a friendly family of representatives of different peoples living in Belarus. And the famous project Grani was awarded the Grand Prix of international competitions twice. The project is dedicated to Slavic mythology. The work of craftsmen lasted more than six months. Dedication is a story about "glorious people of the land of Polotsk." Roshva initiated the first competition and festival of patchwork sewing in Belarus Polotsk-Quilt. The club owns a unique patchwork sewing technique malyavanka traditional for the region. The members of the club are actively working on the development of the project A Song of Malyavanka, the embodiment of the work of the Belarusian artist Alena Kish.



CREATE AN AMULET BELT

The old technique of weaving belts-amulets on planks is among the crafts that Nina Yarmukh practises. The planks themselves are the progenitors of a weaving machine. In the old days, these were wooden plates with four holes, into which yarn was threaded according to pre-created patterns. The richness of the pattern depends on the number of boards and turns. During a master class with Nina Yarmukh, you can also make a patchwork bird and a folk twist doll.



Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts and National Culture

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A "Recipe" of the Patchwork Technique

Patchwork has three main directions: mosaic (all details are sewn with internal seams), applique (external, decorative seams) and quilting (hand or machine stitch).

Tips For Weaving Belts on Planks

Instead of heavy wooden planks, Nina Yarmukh uses about 20 cardboard ones. At first, you need to control every movement, and then, when you get the hang of it, you can weave with your eyes closed.



30 Airy Lace and the Local History

LACE FROM THE MASTER

Nina Bril has been engaged in needlework since she was 5 years old. She got her skills from her grandmother. The master knows various techniques of embroidery and knitting, as well as several ways of weaving belts. But lace-making is her favourite kind of needlework. Nina's works are airy and light, often performed in volumetric technique (vases, boxes and baskets). Nina has restored about a dozen of her grandmother's tablecloths with unique patterns. She is a member of the national club Maistar at Polotsk Regional Centre of Crafts and National Culture, participates in numerous exhibitions, fairs and festivals.

THE SCHOOL MUSEUM AND MASTER CLASSES

During her masterclasses, Nina Bril introduces not only to knitting but also to such modern techniques as scrapbooking and kanzashi, i.e. coloured ribbon decorations that can be used as brooches, clasps or hair clips. Along with her passion for folk craftsmanship, Nina and her family are engaged in the creation and support of the local history museum located in Matushi secondary school. The opening in 2005 had been preceded by continuous research. The museum has more than 3000 exhibits. The Fiery Years hall presents local history from ancient times to 1941. More than a half of the exhibits related to the war of 1812 were raised from the bottom of the Drissa River. An entire cabinet is occupied by bottles for wartime medicine, steelyards, the 11th-century locks, etc. The second ethnographic hall is dedicated to life and culture of Belarusians, their crafts. "We demonstrate weaves and how weaving looms and spinning-wheels work," Nina says. Tourists are ready to stay in the museum until late at night. All exhibits are allowed to touch and try on.



The Regional History Museum of Matushi Secondary School

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A Recipe from the Craftsman

I usually crochet souvenirs (napkins, jewel-baskets, angels and openwork bells) and knit clothes. All napkins are created using linen threads. I wash my handiwork by hand and dry on a flat surface. There is no need to starch linen. This material is naturally tough and pleasant.

A Piece of Advice From the Craftsman

For crocheting, it is enough to have threads, a hook, desire and good mood.



TASTE Cheese and Traditional Drinks of Bella



Cheese and Traditional Drinks



LEGEND:

1. The Guest House "Mežinieku Mājas"
2. Farm Household "Bagātības"
3. Farmhouse "Kalni"
4. Shmakovka Museum in Daugavpils
5. Shmakovka Museum in Malnava
6. Latgalian Beer Manufactory
7. Farm Household "Kurmiši"
8. Guest House "Mežabeles"
9. Homestead "Upenite"
10. Plaza restaurant at Park Hotel Latgola
11. Homemade Cheese by Violeta Mikalauskienė
12. Handmade Butter and Cheese by Rima Gatautienė
13. Café "Pasagėlė"
14. Apple Cheese "Marijos trobelė"
15. Tea Magic Company
16. The Factory "Anykščių Vynas"
17. Agricultural Homestead "Staraya Ves"
18. Agricultural Homestead "The Garden of My Dreams"
19. Café "Gannenski Padvorak"
20. Agricultural Homestead "Dorogobushka"
21. Homemade Cheese by Mekenya Family
22. Agricultural Enterprise "Kozkin Dom"



LATVIA

1 Guest House Mežinieku Mājas

HOSPITALITY AND GASTRONOMY

The guest house is located in a picturesque village near the Aglona Roman Catholic Basilica. The owner of the house Marita Meziniece says: "We started our activity in 1999. Our family has been engaged in gastronomic tourism for the fifth generation. All our recipes have been tested by many years of experience!" Mežinieku mājas produces 14 types of cottage cheese from cow's milk all year round. If guests want to learn one of the recipes, the hosts will offer a gastronomic master class on making cheese on the fire. Additional services are provided too. For example, you can take a tour of the park of the ancient Baltics and the astrological trail. There is a garden and a forest near the guest house, so it is a great place to watch birds and forest animals.

You can enjoy a full-fledged rural spa complex: a bath with a professional bath attendant, massage and aromatherapy.

Three secrets of popularity: first, everything well forgotten is interesting; second, we grow all the products we eat ourselves; third, tourists appreciate Mežinieku mājas for environmental-friendly processes and taste.



Marija Lilija Meziniece

A Recipe From the Hostess

Homemade Cheese

Ingredients: 0.5 litres of milk, 400 grams of low-fat cottage cheese, 1 egg, 40 grams of butter, 1/3 teaspoon of salt, 1/2 teaspoon of sugar.

Pour milk into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add low-fat cottage cheese. Stir until the whey separates. This may take up to two minutes. Put the strainer on a tray and pour the mass to separate the cheese from the whey. Beat an egg with salt and sugar. Melt butter in a saucepan. Add cheese and stir lightly. Add the beaten egg and continue stirring until smooth. In this way, the cheese is cooked for five to eight minutes. Remove the cheese from the heat, wrap in a piece of cloth and place in a cool place for at least three hours. Serve with honey or jam.



The Guest House Mežinieku Mājas

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2 Farm Household Bagātības

FARMHOUSE BAGĀTĪBAS

The activity of the farm began with some arrangements. At first, Olga Birke and her family did not even think about guest entertaining and providing food services. But in 2013, the family was invited to take part in a project to develop the culinary heritage of Latgale. Everything changed after that. Bagātības and the delicious products of the farmhouse became popular in Kraslava and beyond. And so began a series of events and festivals, where the owners presented their products: homemade cheese, fresh pastries, salted cucumbers and craft ice cream.

"The recipes of classic cheese are borrowed from our ancestors. This cheese was made by my mother and grandmother. Only baked cheese is something new. Today this cheese is one of the most preferred by our visitors," Olga says.

ABOUT PRODUCTS AND EXCURSIONS

It is possible to organize lunches, dinners and degustation for tourist groups by prior arrangement. Local products grown or produced in Bagātības are used for cooking. Bagātības sells fresh homemade cheese and other products and replenishes the range of the farm food store in Kraslava every week. In Bagātības, you can enjoy delicious food and go on a tour to study the lifestyle of a classic farmhouse.



Olga Birke

A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

Cook with love and in a good mood! Those who will taste the products will definitely feel it.



A Recipe For Homemade Classic Cheese From the Hostess

Ingredients: milk, salt and citric acid.

Preparation: boil 10 litres of milk, add a tablespoon of citric acid and stir until the milk coagulates. Add salt to taste.

Farm Household Bagātības

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③ Homemade Wine and Gingerbread in the Magic Garden

THE MAGIC GARDEN AND THE HOSTESS

The Magic Garden created by Irena Koleda is one of the most beautiful of the landscape projects in Preili. The area of Magic Garden is 12 hectares with fruit and berry plantations, as well as well-groomed flower beds. Small sculptures of elves, fairies and gnomes will make your walk-tour unforgettable. Plums, cherries, raspberries, strawberries and grapes grow in the garden...

Irena has been making homemade wine since 2007. She has succeeded by carefully selecting flavours and studying traditional recipes. Now the brand *Vina pagrabi* of the farmhouse Kalni is widely known in Latvia and abroad. It has several different awards. And the main award is a sign of the Gastronomic Heritage. According to Irena, this sign is difficult to obtain and easy to lose. The wine label depicts Preili Castle, which was owned by Counts von der Borch. "The Counts produced natural wines and I am proud to continue the winemaking traditions of our region," Irena says.

EXCURSIONS AND WINE TASTING



By prior arrangement, Kalni invites you to The Wine Cellar in the Magic Garden tour with wine tasting. Tourists can walk around the picturesque garden – a perfect place for photoshoots. During the season, it is possible to try fresh fruits and berries. Irena's guests will learn about the process of the birth of wine, brand building, visit the production and cellars where wine is stored. It is possible to taste the following types of wine: plum, raspberry and chokeberry, strawberry and black currant. Wines can be purchased on-site or ordered.

Natural ginger and honey gingerbreads with white glaze decorations are a part of the range too. Irena offers her guests to decorate gingerbread during a master class. Get inspired and see beautiful ideas for your creativity.

An Advice From the Hostess:

This wine is natural, live, without preservatives. To avoid further fermentation, it should be stored at a temperature of 3 °C to 12 °C.

Farmhouse Kalni

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④ Cognitive and Fascinating Information about Shmakovka

THE MOONSHINING MUSEUM

The traditions of moonshining in Latgale can be called long-standing. Today, the cultural and gastronomic heritage of the region and the country includes shmakovka, a strong noble drink that has become a tourist brand. You can get to know it in an unusual environment and with the help of interactive technologies at Shmakovka Museum in the historical centre of Daugavpils.

Here, visitors will see 23 modern stands and more than 200 authentic exhibits related to alcohol production, including all kinds of moonshine stills. Each stand has interactive screens in six languages. There are figures of law enforcement officers and a "mini-prison" for heavy drinkers among the exhibits. A wooden distiller from the 20th century is the oldest one. The museum provides comprehensive information about the culture and history of Daugavpils and Latgale.

EXCURSIONS AND TASTINGS

The visitors will find an entertaining story about shmakovka, the oldest alcohol drink in Latgale. During the tour, not only technologies of moonshining are described, but also its history including the fight against illegal production of the drink. Each guide has funny stories and secret facts to share.

There is also a tasting of three types of shmakovka from a local official producer: classic shmakovka from grain and homemade wine, as well as oak, black currant or mint shmakovka. Other flavour variations are available too. All tours are conducted in English, Latvian or Russian languages. You can use an audio guide at no additional cost and take part in masterclasses.

There are new souvenirs added to the range every year: magnets, key chains, breathalyzers, T-shirts with the museum logo, fabric bags, cups and carafe made from local clay, a book about the history of Latgale and shmakovka, etc.



Shmakovka Museum

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A Piece of Advice From the Expert

Shmakovka can be stored in a cool or warm place. Drink shmakovka of different types with plain water, bite a fresh cucumber, celery or an apple after each drop. A small amount of alcohol on the tongue is enough to feel the taste of the drink. If you want to feel the strength of the drink, drink it in small sips.



A Recipe

Shmakovka is made from flour, bread, grain with the addition of water, sugar and yeast. Each manufacturer has its unique recipe that is often kept secret. Shmakovka in Latgale is as transparent as spring water and as strong as a handshake of a labour-hardened rural worker.



5 Shmakovka Museum in Malnava

SHMAKOVKA IS THE LOCAL MOONSHINE

Shmakovka or the local moonshine is the most popular and traditional strong alcohol drink in Latgale — one of the four regions of Latvia. There are several versions of the origin of the word shmakovka, but most often they say that the roots of this word must be sought in the Polish language: smak (taste), smaczne (tasty). In Latgale, shmakovka is savoured and even museums are opened in honour of this drink. You can visit the real industrial production of the drink, the museum and the tasting room in Latgale.



MALNAVA MANOR

Production of shmakovka is located on the territory of Malnava manor, the first mention of which dates back to 1774. It belonged to the landowner Hilzen and soon became the property of the Sadurskis family. The owners rebuilt and expanded the manor and landscaped the park. In 1928, an agricultural school was opened in the main building. Malnava College is located there today. The so-called wine house has also survived from the middle of the 19th century. But moonshine is legally brewed in a building that has been used to collect milk. The current owner got it for a cheap rate. It should be noted that the condition of the house was far from brilliant.

Janis Krivtezs, the new owner, understands very well that production and tourism are different concepts that is why he gladly accepts groups and talks about the history of the manor, shows the underground bunkers and does everything possible to make people stay here longer. Janis brought a small banya or sauna from the country-side. The guests have a great opportunity to relax.

Tourists are introduced to the history and traditions of moonshining. A small exposition presents the most famous modification of the moonshine still converted from a manual milking machine and some equipment for brewing. After fascinating stories, the guests are brought to the sanctuary of the saints, where a sparkling apparatus purchased in Portugal is installed. The visitors will learn that more than half a ton of apple juice or beer must be distilled to get 40 litres of shmakovka. It is not possible to visit the production of shmakovka without tasting it! After the tour, snacks and drinks await the guests on the bar counter. The guests eat bacon with onion and rye bread and try apple shmakovka (by the way, the drink is similar to Calvados), as well as shmakovka infused with pieces of oak bark and a Saint-John's wort. This shmakovka is easy to drink and has a noble taste. The tour and the tasting take about an hour.

In 2019 Janis organized a festival of the Latgalian cuisine and shmakovka, which attracted numerous visitors not only from Latvia, but also from many other countries. The guests were offered a lot of delicious national dishes, as well as a cocktail Shmahito invented by Janis.



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6 Production of Real Latgalian Beer

ANCIENT TRADITIONS

Homebrewing is a business with centuries of family history. Dainis' father and grandfather were engaged in brewing and learned it from their forefathers, who provided themselves with food from their garden, baked homemade bread and homemade beer. When Dainis was younger, he helped his father with the brewing process and mastered the skills and characteristics of this difficult business over time. He liked his father's beer and decided to continue the tradition. At first, beer was brewed only for the family. However, friends and acquaintances who tasted the drink highly appreciated its taste. This brought the brewery to a new level: from a small family production to a well-known craft beer manufactory.

"Many traditions are forgotten and remain in the past today. This is one of the reasons why we want to preserve the brewing technology in Latgale. The entire process of making the drink is done manually. We work with small batches of beer. It allows us to preserve the natural and unique taste," Dainis says.



Dainis Rakstins

Secrets of the Latgalian Beer

A good drink is based on high-quality ingredients. Barley, malt and hops go through various stages: harvesting, steeping, germination, drying, grinding and boiling. The time it takes to brew the beer depends on whether all of the ingredients have been brewed. The cooking process takes about a week if the ingredients have already passed the necessary processing steps. For example, malt preparation usually takes about two months.

The beer we make has absorbed all the best from the earth, clouds, the sun and wind. Very often the aroma of beer reminds of childhood, sometimes it reminds of natural elements of the environment. Whichever beer you taste in our production, we hope that you will feel the real and unique aromas of the ancient recipe. The real Latgalian beer is made here!



THE TASTE

This beer is prepared from natural ingredients only. Hops and barley are grown on their land, with the barley being dried in the attic above a black sauna, giving the beer a unique smoky flavour:

– The brewing method in Latgale differs from other Latvian technologies. The one we use is specific to our region. The main difference is the preparation of the malt. It dries in the attic, above the black sauna, that is a sauna with no chimney. Heat and smoke seep through the ceiling panel allowing the malt layer to dry. This process gives the beer the unique smoky aroma.

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7 Farm Household Kurmīši

"MOLES" AND MEDICINAL HERBS

The Farm Household Kurmīši (Moles) is located near Kraslava, in the natural park Daugavas Loka (Latvian for Bends of the Daugava River). About 60 types of herbs are grown here. The farm household produces natural essential oils and hydrolates. Kurmīši is famous for its medicinal herbs, but this type of business is still quite rare in Latvia.



Ivars Geiba

Advice from the Hosts

The most popular tea is called The Power of Nine Herbs and consists of oregano, lemon catnip, willow tea, echinacea purpurea, mint, chamomile, calendula, meadowsweet and yarrow. This collection of herbs helps to boost immunity and calm down after a busy day. For 26 years, the farm has created 17 herbal teas that can be used daily. "We do not cure specific diseases but strengthen the only and invaluable – your health!"



WHY MOLES?

Local moles were not the ones who inspired the owners to name the farm household Kurmīši. The point is the maiden name of owner Ivars Geiba's wife Sandra – Kurme. "I had to keep Sandra here," Ivars jokes. The farm household was awarded the Sign of Latvian Heritage in 2015. You can taste a variety of herbal teas, learn about the beneficial properties of plants on excursions and purchase high-quality products of this unusual farm: oils, hydrosols or hydrolates and other natural cosmetics. Tourists have a great opportunity to visit the beeswax processing shop, where excellent honeycombs are produced for beekeepers from all over Latvia.



SERVICES AND PROGRAMMES

All excursions must be agreed in advance. During the excursion, tourists will learn about the beneficial properties of the surrounding plants and will be able to partially adopt the experience of the owners in growing medicinal herbs. For example, it is striking that there are 900 species of sage plants in nature. Three types of them are grown in Kurmīši: pharmacy (medicinal), nutmeg and whorled. Oil from whorled sage seeds is made for cosmetic purposes. The herb has analgesic, antibacterial, diuretic and other beneficial properties. Sage beds give way to aromatic lavender plantings. Kurmīši produces a lavender face toner. Spicy hyssop is used as a seasoning for meat. This herb stimulates brain activity, helps to cope with stress and colds. Hyssop is similar to an elecampane. "Elecampane is a biennial plant. In the first year only leaves can be seen," Ivars says. Then the guests will see the medicinal catnip that smells like a lemon balm. "This herb is attractive for cats and useful for people because it helps to cleanse the body. Catnip leaves and young shoots are a storehouse of minerals and vitamins, essential oils," the owner adds. In total, tourists will get acquainted with a couple of dozen herbs. The approximate duration of such a walk will be 1.5-2 hours. After the walk, there will be time to try the natural herbal drinks prepared by the owners of the farm household.



Farm Household Kurmīši

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⑧ Natural Relaxation with Cleansing Teas and Apitherapy

THE GUEST HOUSE

Sounds, aromas, sensations... You will feel the services of the guest house. Here, natural resources are actively used to create an atmosphere of relaxation and harmony releasing you from stress.

The guest house is located by Lake Dridzis, the deepest lake in Latvia, in the protected area of the natural park – Dridzis Lake Nature Park. It is a paradise for every fisherman: a pike, a tench, a bream and a huge crayfish, as well as forests, meadows and picturesque green hills around.

The idea of the guest house came to Anna Krumpāne and her family during the reception of friends and after the construction of a bathhouse. Mežābeles is a part of the culinary heritage network in Latgale and participates in various fairs and events.



Anna Krumpāne

A Recipe

Herbs are harvested according to an ancient method and the lunar calendar. They are brewed in authentic handmade dishes, which were made by local craftsmen, using heated well water. But a drink made from pine cones, for example, must be boiled – it is not enough to pour hot water on pine cones.



SERVICES

Relaxation begins in the most natural way: water, bees and herbs.

Guests can stay overnight (up to 10 people), try walking therapy – through the forest and meadows, along the lakeside or by boat, go swimming and fishing.

The owners offer “white” and “black” baths or sauna on the lakeshore, the bath ritual includes honey masks and coffee scrubs. Special offer: a very tasty fish soup cooked over a fire.



Herbal teas will be an excellent addition for vivacity, calming and good mood. They include mint, lemon balm, hawthorn, calendula, chamomile and a collection of herbs growing in the surrounding area.

The “honey” part of the services includes a walk through the apiary with tasting honey and honey products (organic flower honey, propolis or bee glue, bee bread and pollen) and a story about the life of bees. The products can be purchased at the manor or can be ordered.

Bee sound therapy is one of the most interesting services. There is a special lounge house with a bee hum and the scent of propolis in Mežābeles. The procedure is carried out under the supervision of an apitherapist in the form of an individual appointment. The service includes a consultation and a tea ceremony. Invigorating or soothing teas are selected individually.



A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

We always cook lake fish soup in front of our guests. It gives the soup a special taste!

Guest House Mežābeles

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9 Latgalian cuisine on the shore of Lake Ciris

ABOUT THE HOMESTEAD

«Upenite» is located in a picturesque place on the shore of Lake Ciris. The doors of the homestead were opened for guests in 2004, at the same time the homestead joined the project for the development of the culinary heritage of Latgale. Since then, it has offered ancient dishes of the culinary heritage to both tourist groups and individual visitors. The owner of the homestead Inese Survilo invented home cooking «Made at home», where during an hour various homemade dishes are prepared and offered to the guests of the homestead.

HOMESTEAD SERVICES

«Upenite» can accommodate up to 30 people for the night at a time: guests are provided with 2 rooms, an attic, and a place for tents on the shore of the lake. The homestead also has a hall with a capacity of up to 60 people for organizing seminars and celebrations. There is a traditional smoke sauna where upon request can order a bath ritual.

ABOUT THE KITCHEN OF THE HOMESTEAD



«Upenite» offers dishes of Latgale culinary heritage from natural products grown on the farm. Inese took over all the recipes from her grandmother. The dishes that guests really like are: homemade cheese according to grandmother's recipe, rye bread baked in the oven, as well as gulbeshniki and pancakes. The hosts hold gastronomic master classes and share the secrets of Latgalian cuisine with their guests.

"One of our unusual cheeses is a cheese made from cow's milk with curd whey and pickled cucumbers," says Inese.

Homestead "Upenite" ("Upenite")

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Special recipe:

«Pancakes from Malvina»
Mix curdled milk with salt and sugar, add flour, soda on the tip of a knife, stir the dough until the consistency of sour cream. Bake in a pan on both sides. Serve with sour cream, jam or sauce.



Hostess advice

Everything should be made with love, including the preparation of food. And then everything will work out for you!

10 National cuisine with sophistication

ABOUT THE RESTAURANT

The Plaza restaurant, located on the 10th floor of the hotel, has been working since 2005. One of its features is a unique bird's-eye view of Daugavpils. Calm atmosphere, pleasant service and delicious national cuisine - all this can be found here! The hall can accommodate up to 100 people, making Plaza an excellent choice for organizing corporate parties, weddings and other festive events.

RESTAURANT KITCHEN

Plaza restaurant's cuisine follows the traditions of Latgale. On the menu you can always find cheese cakes, potato pancakes, cabbage soup with mushrooms and many other Latvian dishes. And, of course, the famous Latgalian shmakovka is served here! The dishes are based on the traditional recipe, but the serving is adapted to modern European standards.



CHARITY

The restaurant's management actively supports charitable activities. On the New Year's Eve holidays in 2019 was held a charity ball. Collected donations were used for organization of an excursion for pupils of the Daugavpils orphanage "Priedīte".

The organizer of the ball was Daria Orlovskā, holder of the title Mrs. Queen Top of the World 2018 and Mrs. Elite Beauty Queen 2019 3st. Runner Up.



The recipe of Asushkas Ingredients:

1 kg of granular cottage cheese, 1 glass of flour, 2 eggs, sugar, vanilla sugar, salt, butter, 200 ml of cream and mint leaves.

Put cottage cheese, flour, eggs, sugar and vanilla sugar in a bowl. Stir into a homogeneous mass. Make small cakes. Fry in a pan on both sides for a few minutes. Continue to simmer cakes in the sweet cream sauce. Add sugar and vanilla sugar. Serve dessert with mint leaves.



Chef's advice

A little secret for batvini soup (or cold soup) lovers. Add a little mustard - this will give your soup not only spice, but also a bright color.

Plaza restaurant at Park Hotel Latgola

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Website: www.hotellatgola.lv

Working hours: 12:00 to 22:00

12:00 to 00:00 (Friday, Saturday)



LITHUANIA

11 Easy Recipes of Homemade Cheese

FOLLOWING THE TRADITIONS

Laicui is a small village in Kupiskis district. Deep traditions of cheese production have been preserved here. A grandiose festival is held here every year and brings together experienced producers of natural cheese and lovers of fresh products made from cow's milk.

Farmer Violeta Mikalauskienė's cheese always gets high marks from both the jury and ordinary visitors. This is not surprising, because its natural taste is the result of using recipes from mothers and grandmothers. Violeta says that this cheese is easy to cook. The woman and her family started making cheese about ten years ago when raw milk had no value, but it was necessary to earn money.

After a while, Violeta wanted to cook something interesting and unusual. This is how new tastes appeared: baked and smoked cheese, curd cheese with jelly, dessert cheese with poppy seeds and raisins. Also, the Mikalauskienė family keeps livestock and is engaged in agriculture.



Violeta Mikalauskienė

A Recipe from the Hostess

How to make white curd cheese? You will need 7 litres of sour milk, 3 litres of fresh milk, 2 yolks, sugar and lemon juice to taste. Mix sour milk and fresh milk, heat until curd forms and whey separates. Then strain the mass, grind the chicken yolks with sugar, add to the cottage cheese, mix everything, put in a gauze bag and press. Enjoy your meal!



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12 The True Taste of Handmade Butter and Cheese

RESPECTING TRADITIONS

Rima Gatautienė is a professional farmer. She worked in her speciality after the studies and then opened her farm. She has ten cows and is fond of her craft — making homemade cheese and butter. It is also a tribute to tradition. Rima continues her mother's and grandmother's work. The women took care of cows and produced dairy products.

Rima makes cheese following a slightly modified recipe of her mother. All products are completely natural, made from sour milk.

NATURAL PRODUCTS ONLY

To purchase cheese and butter produced by Rima, please visit her farm or meet her at fairs.

The hostess offers various types of sweet and sour cheese.

Rima makes butter without salt using only one ingredient, i.e. sour heavy cream; it is whipped manually in a special device called churn.

The shelf life of butter is one week, for cottage cheese, it is two days, but for sweet cheese or saldus sūris — five days.



Rima Gatautienė



A Recipe of Homemade Cheese

Heat sweet milk to 80 °C, add curdled milk (sour milk). Wait 30 minutes, then put the mass to a special cheese bag, leave for two hours, take the cheese out.

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13 Culinary Traditions in Pasagėlė

CAFÉ PASAGĖLĖ AND THE HOSTESS

There is a café Pasagėlė (Lithuanian for Horseshoe) located on the territory of the Horse Museum in the neighbourhood of Anyksciai. Laima Vasiliauskiene is the manager of the café. The café has quality certificates from the regional Park of Anyksciai that presuppose the use of ecological products and ancient technologies. Now Pasagėlė adheres to certain culinary rules: traditional and modern Lithuanian cuisine, seasonal dishes made from fresh products, the use of local herbs (caraway, thyme, mint and linden flowers), berries and dried fruits.

MENU FOR VISITORS

Lake fish is used to prepare a soup that "gives double strength", homemade cutlets with a thick white sauce and steaks. Herbal, horseradish, bacon or mushrooms and sour cream sources are an inherent part of all dishes. There is a large selection of potato dishes: not only the famous Lithuanian zeppelins but also potato horns (with meat and cottage cheese), zemaiciu pancakes from boiled potatoes with meat.

A Recipe From the Hostess

Ingredients for making caraway kvass: 300 grams of caraway seeds, 800 grams of sugar, 20 grams of yeast, 10 litres of water. Boil caraway seeds for 30 minutes, add sugar, cool to 30 °C and add yeast. The drink ripens for two to three days at room temperature.



Traditional dishes: grilled pork shish kebab with rice and vegetables; fried pork ribs with sauerkraut, vegetables and tomato sauce, boiled pork ears with boiled peas in a fat sauce with vegetables and horseradish.

Desserts include strawberry wine and strawberry jam pie.

Much attention is paid to the gastronomic heritage and food traditions of Aukštaitija.

PROGRAMMES AND MASTER CLASSES

Together with friends and family, you can participate in educational programmes and learn how to cook potato, meat and cheese dishes of Lithuanian cuisine.

The program "Cheese in the Ancient Times and Now" tells about all the stages of making cheese – from fresh milk to pressing and serving on the table, as well as about ancient methods of making white cheese. Tasting of various types of white cheese is available too. Taste cheese with caraway seeds, fried, smoked and sweet cheese. In the "potato" program, the guests can cook potato soup, jacket potatoes and potato rolls on cabbage. The program dedicated to meat dishes includes smoked ham and sausages, zrazy stuffed with cabbage, as well as homemade bread. Both programs include caraway kvass, acorn coffee and homemade sweets. The Anykščių vynas wine tastings are held in the wine cellar with high arches and wrought-iron lamps.

A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

150 millilitres of wine is enough to feel the taste. Red wine is perfect with game or quarry and pork dishes, as well as aged cheese. White wine is perfect as an aperitif and with desserts, cheese and snacks.



Café Pasagėlė

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14 Apple Cheese and the Magic of Nines

ABOUT THE OWNER

After moving from the city to a remote village of Anyksciai district, Mindaugas Balciunas began picking mushrooms and berries from local forests. The family business Marijos trobelė (Maria's Hut) was founded in the place where grandmother Maria had received guests for many years. Over time, her craft was taken over by her granddaughter Maria.

A unique product was created under the name of Marijos trobelė — apple



cheese. This is not a dairy product, but a traditional Lithuanian dessert made from apples and sugar.

Mindaugas strives to make apple cheese popular in Lithuania and abroad, and he has succeeded in it, because the volume of orders is constantly growing. Recently, Marijos trobelė has received the honorary badge of the producers of the regional Park of Anyksciai.

A Recipe of Apple Cheese

We make cheese manually and boil and stir it constantly for more than three hours. Later, packed in special cheese bags, the cheese is fermented for at least two months. Taste secret: the thinner the slices are, the more enjoyment you receive! Cheese is suitable as a dessert for tea or coffee. It can be served with cream cheese. If you love unusual tastes, combine the product with blue cheese, hard cheese, cured ham or olives. Cheese is best stored in a dry place at a temperature of 5 °C to 25 °C. Avoid dampness and direct sunlight.



ABOUT THE PRODUCTS

The Čiaukšt apple cheese contains nothing but 86% of local apples and 12% of sugar — it is the minimum amount of sugar, which is necessary for storing cheese for 24 months. Everything — from picking apples to stamping packages — is done manually. The process requires much patience and time.

There are various packages: from a souvenir weighing only 80–90 grams to 600–700 grams. It is suitable for vegetarians and vegans.

Chopped cranberries with honey from the Anyksciai bees is one of the healthiest treats. A couple of spoons a day and not a single bacillus will stick. Or add a couple of tablespoons to hot (not boiling) water for a delicious tea. Ingredients: honey 59%, cranberry 41%.

Apple frips are a favourite of all fairs: 100% apple chips crunch and melt when eating.

Pear frips are a healthy snack for every day. The product consists of pears only and has a naturally sweet and pungent taste. It contains 0.6 grams of fat per 100 grams of product that is 30 times less than in potato chips.

Pumpkin candies are a natural alternative to sweets. Marijos trobelė uses pumpkins grown in Lithuania without chemicals, homemade freshly squeezed orange and lemon juice and hand-grated peel with a bit of added sugar.



A Piece of Advice

You need to stir apple cheese 999 times and keep it hanging for 99 days to make the best product. But the magic of nines doesn't stop there. Don't hurry. Chew the cheese 9 times. Close your eyes. Do not swallow. Hold in mouth for 9 seconds. The sweet and sour taste will allow you to travel to a rustic apple orchard for at least nine minutes.

Marijos trobelė

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15 The Magic of Herbs

ABOUT THE HOSTESS

Have you ever tried carrot coffee? And what about tea called Sweet Dreams? Or a drink called A Hedgehog in the Fog? If not, you urgently need to get acquainted with Ramunas Daugelavicius, a Lithuanian farmer and herbalist, the founder of the Tea Magic company in Anyksciai!

This amazing man approaches the collection and preparation of drinks philosophically, studies Chinese medicine and knows everything about herbal medicine. Ramunas is a true connoisseur and enthusiast of his craft. He is happy to share his skills and knowledge. Several programmes have been developed for visitors.

PHYTOGEOGRAPHIC EXCURSIONS

Such walks are both educational and rewarding. Tourists will learn which plants are worth picking and which are not, how they should be prepared and used. Ramunas believes that his excursions are especially interesting for people who do not go to nature very often and have never seen thyme or chicory. Many people want to be healthy but lack knowledge of how to use herbs and their healing properties.



Ramunas Daugelavicius



TASTINGS OF DRINKS

The so-called Delicious Tea is the owner's signature. The secret is that Saint-John's-wort and thyme are collected in the vicinity of Anyksciai National Park. Elderberry, mint, cornflower, strawberry and linden are added to them. You will be offered an original drink called The Hedgehog in the Fog during a tasting. The composition includes rosehips, dill, linden, oats, chamomile flowers, peony and forest flowers called heather.

Banya or sauna lovers adore Bath tea. It contains sage, royal mint, black currant leaves, calendula inflorescences, needles, elderberry leaves and flowers, raspberries and blackberry leaves.

Coffee lovers will be surprised when they find out that coffee can be made from dried and fried carrots. The drink contains a lot of vitamins and antioxidants, slows the ageing process, strengthens the immune system and regulates blood sugar levels.

Drinks made from acorns, dandelion roots and chicory roots are surprising too. This "coffee" is extremely beneficial. Herbs, herbal teas, acorn and dandelion coffee were certified as national heritage products in 2010.



A Recipe of Acorn Coffee

To avoid bitterness, make sure to soak acorns for two weeks and ground fine in a coffee grinder. Fry for several minutes without adding oil and brew: take 1-2 tablespoons per cup of boiling water, infuse for 35 minutes.

A Piece of Advice From the Owner

Anyksciai herbs are well known in Lithuania. They can be found in pharmacies, eco-shops and at fairs. They grow on ecologically clean lands and are typical for the region. Herbs, roots and other components of drinks should be collected all year round and used to strengthen health, immunity system, vitality and good mood! This is a real gift of nature!



Tea Magic or Arbatos Magija

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16 The Return of the Past

HISTORY OF NATURAL LITHUANIAN WINES

Balis Karazių, the “king of wines” of the interwar Lithuania, managed to renew the tradition of production of natural Lithuanian drinks. The family winery *Anykščiu Vinas* founded by Balis in 1926 became the largest producer of fruit and berry wines in the Baltics.

More than 20 tons of apples, pears, black currants, cherries, strawberries and chokeberries are processed here annually into Voruta wine, Tinginio pantis cider and Mr Fruct – 100% apple, apple-cherry and apple-grape juice.



All drinks are united by common qualities: naturalness and the use of local raw materials. The Voruta collection includes more than ten natural fruit and berry wines, four of which are recognized as products of national heritage: black currant wine, semi-sweet apple wine, apple dessert wine and black currant dessert wine.

Semi-sweet cherry and legendary strawberry wine that received international recognition back in the interwar period are made according to ancient recipes. Pay attention to the semi-dry chokeberry wine and unique plum wine. The last one is perfect with white meat and light snacks.

Lithuanian honey is added to dessert wines made from cherries, black currants or strawberries. These wines are good as an aperitif or a dessert.

Voruta also includes natural wine drinks with additives: Lithuanian quince juice, lime blossom or rosehip petal extract, non-alcoholic black currant wine, as well as a limited “winter” series with natural spices.

The semi-dry Lithuanian cider is made from the juice of fully ripe apples and pears. Its delicate taste appears after six months of ripening at low temperature without adding sugars or any artificial additives.

Concentrated blackcurrant or cranberry juice mixed with an infusion of various herbs and other ingredients (e.g. thyme and lemongrass or mint and rose hips) are used for Voruta Berries & Herbs liqueurs.

EXCURSIONS AND PROGRAMMES

Use the offer *Drinks in Lithuania* of the factory *Anykščiu Vinas* – during the excursion professional sommeliers will tell you the history of wine production, offer to taste drinks of your choice, introduce you to the processes of making Voruta wine from squeezing fruit and berry juices to bottling, as well as the peculiarities of taste and aroma and rules for combining wine with dishes. Use the opportunity to purchase drinks and souvenirs in the shop. This programme brings together three cities where the traditions of the production of Lithuanian drinks are developing: Alytus, Kaunas and Anykščiai. of Lithuanian drinks are developing: Alytus, Kaunas and Anykščiai.



Secrets From the Manufacturers

The semi-sweet black currant wine goes well with red meat dishes, game or quarry stew, dried ham and wild boar sausage, long-maturing cheese. The semi-sweet cherry wine is suitable for semi-ripe cheese, duck, rabbit and wild bird dishes. These wines are served at a temperature of 14 °C-16°C. This wine can be drunk warm (make sure not to boil). The semi-sweet strawberry wine is combined with light desserts, fruit and chicken dishes. Voruta apple wine is combined with white fish and chicken dishes, Lithuanian cheese and fried vegetables.

Invaluable Advice

It is recommended to serve Voruta Berries & Herbs liqueurs in small glasses and drink it slightly chilled or use it as an ingredient for cocktails.

The Factory *Anykščiu Vinas*

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BELARUS

17 Butterfly Soap, Honey and Insect Museum

AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD STARAYA VES (OLD VILLAGE)



Sergey Mikanovich

Recipes of Herbal Teas

- Linden tea with rose hips: take 1 litre of boiling water, about 6 wild rose fruits and a full handful of dried linden blossom, leave for about four hours.
- Mint tea: pour half a handful of mint with boiling water, leave for an hour and a half.
- Wild raspberry tea with rose hips: pour boiling water over a bunch of chopped raspberry stalks, 1 tablespoon of dried raspberries, 6 rose hips, infuse overnight.



In the manor *Staraya Ves* the visitors will see beautiful panels of butterflies, find useful beekeeping products and original handmade souvenirs. Thanks to the Mikanovich family, the only museum of insects in the post-Soviet space appeared in Belarus. The interior of the museum is decorated with images of insects on a variety of objects, from clocks to lamps. Sergey Mikanovich, a professional biologist, has collected a unique collection of insects from more than 5000 specimens. Almost all of them were caught in Belarus, even praying mantises. More than a half of the exhibits are butterflies. There is even a death's-head hawkmoth, a galathea and a maturna.

Olga Mikanovich makes natural soap using beekeeping products collected in her father's apiary. She also adds herbs growing on the territory of the manor (linden blossom, calendula petals, chamomile flowers and mint leaves) and other original "filling", e.g. poppy and strawberry seeds. Olga's soap is suitable for even the most demanding skin, it does not contain preservatives and foaming agents. The final percentage of honey in the soap is low, so there is no need to worry about allergies.

Each bar of soap is enlivened by the creator with a unique design, and some of the products are similar to candies and cupcakes. Another handmade souvenir is rolled beeswax candles with wormwood, lemon balm and other additives. You can order amazing jewellery made of resin jewellery interspersed with insects and dried flowers from Olga. This is a painstaking and delicate work that requires great accuracy and time. The products are based on butterflies, beetles and even hornets from the father's collection or caught by him on his daughter's order. The master pours epoxy resin over the insects, which were previously dried and straightened on special devices.



EXCURSIONS AND TASTINGS

Visitors of the museum can learn the history of beekeeping and get information about beehives. The apiary can be visited in any season. A tour of the museum is accompanied by tasting of beekeeping products (honey, propolis, bee bread and pollen) and tea made from local herbs (peppermint, linden blossom with rose hips, wild raspberries and rose hips). You can also try a strong propolis tincture with a pleasant aroma. The agricultural homestead offers accommodation, food and beautiful tours: a meeting with beavers, a visit to the national biosphere reserve "Meduhovo" or a raised bog.

Agricultural Homestead "Staraya Ves"

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Website: www.insects-museum.by

18 The Dream Garden and Green Cocktails

GROW YOUR GARDEN

The name of the agricultural homestead *The Garden of My Dreams* shines through. Mikhail Zhidok, the owner of the agricultural homestead, says:

– I have been in love with gardens since my childhood. The area of my grandfather's garden was a hectare. It was a source of livelihood for our large family. To be honest, I always wanted to grow my garden so that it would provide healthy and wholesome products not only to my family but also many other people. With age, the desire became stronger. I planted some trees near the house. They got accustomed, began to grow rapidly. Today the garden is a family business.

Over 200 apple and pear trees grow in two gardens with an area of over one and a half hectares. Cherries, sweet cherries, peaches and apricots, many shrubs... These trees are grown using a special technology of ecological gardening. The adjoining territory is decorated with flower beds and ornamental trees and shrubs: yews, junipers, spruces and thujas. Matured cedars stand out for their special beauty.



Mikhail Zhidok

A Recipe of Green Cocktails

The agricultural homestead is famous for its green cocktails. The cocktails are made from literally everything that grows. Dandelions, runny, nettle, milk thistle, honey, berries and fruits. It turns out a storehouse of vitamins in one glass, a delicious and nutritious dish. These cocktails could be called the best breakfast or lunch for adherents of a healthy diet. The choice of ingredients is constantly different and depends on the season. The peculiarity of such cocktails is in their soft harmonious effect on the body. They significantly increase immunity, help remove toxins from the body and have a rejuvenating effect. Such drinks are offered at the farm all year round. In the off-season, frozen berries, honey and summer-dried greens are used.



SERVICES FOR TOURISTS

The agricultural homestead offers excursions around the garden and Zelva. Accommodation for tourists is organized in a separate house, without hosts. The guests of the homestead have to prepare food themselves. Real fans of ethnic cuisine appreciate the old Russian stove. Zelva reservoir is located just 700 meters from the farm, so fishermen and active travellers will like this place too.

Agricultural Homestead "The Garden of My Dreams"

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19 Café Gannenski Padvorak

THE AUTHENTIC BELARUSIAN CUISINE

The real Belarusian cuisine can be tasted in the café *Gannenski Padvorak*. The menu is regularly updated and supplemented with new recipes. The guests are treated with such dishes as Zelven potato pancakes, tsibriki, etc.

THE CHEFS

The chefs of the café actively participate in gastronomic competitions and festivals. Not so long ago, the chef Natalya Tabashnikova became the Dumplings Master at one of the gastronomic fights in Oshmyany. The contestants were given the task of making dumplings with three types of fillings and using various types of culinary processing.

Natalya's dishes were not only the most delicious but also elegant. The woman admits that aesthetics is extremely important. She has been in the food industry for over 18 years and knows that the ratio of the criteria of "appetizing-tasty-healthy" is always the top priority, whether it is a lavish banquet or an ordinary dinner.



A Recipe of Hrenovukha Zelva Style

Hrenovukha Zelva Style
Take one bottle of vodka, add the juice of one lemon, 1 tablespoon of honey and two slices of horseradish. Put in a dark place for three days. The drink is ready to use!



Café "Gannenski Padvorak" (Ганненскі Падворак)

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20 The Atmosphere of the Hinterland

THE BELARUSIAN HINTERLAND

Visiting *Dorogobushka* is a great opportunity to experience the flavour of the Belarusian hinterland. Here you can feel like a real village dweller, breathe in the fresh air, taste natural products and relax. The homestead is located in a picturesque place, not far from a forest and a river. A village house with two stoves and a fireplace, warm bedrooms and a kitchen is offered for accommodation. Guests will enjoy walks in the forest for mushrooms and berries.

Not far from the homestead, in the village of Synkovichi, there is a 15th century fortified church with famous springs with healing water. Pilgrims from all over Belarus and other countries come to this place. The owners of *Dorogobushka* offer excursions to nearby historical and cultural sites.

THE ORIGINAL CUISINE

The hostess Galina offers traditional Belarusian dishes to her guests. Of course, there are some shsticks too. For example, galyshi pa-belarsku or goat milk cheese.



A Recipe of Goat Milk Cheese

Goat Milk Cheese
Boil three litres of fresh milk. When the milk boils, pour in 2 tablespoons of vinegar. Continue to cook for 5 minutes. Pour the milk into a special cone-shaped fabric and hang. When the whey is drained, put the cheese under a press for two hours. The cheese is ready!

A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

Sprinkle a little sugar or salt on the finished cheese. This will add a unique flavour.

Agricultural Homestead "Dorogobushka"

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21 Traditional Homemade Cheese

TAKING CARE OF HEALTH

The cheese-making business began when the family moved to the countryside and was looking for fresh and healthy products for children. Soon after buying a house in Revtovichi, two cows appeared. There was a lot of milk and the family started making butter and cottage cheese, and then came to the production of homemade cheese.

MAKING CHEESE

Alexander and Olga make cheese both for sale at regional festivals and to order. There are two main varieties: unsalted brynza with garlic and parsley and traditional cheese. Brynza is a classic village cheese without preservatives that can be stored for about three days. The traditional cheese is prepared according to Olga's grandmother's recipe. It takes a lot of time to prepare but lasts much longer.



Alexander Mekenya

Brynza

Put 6 litres of milk on medium heat and bring it to the boil. Add 6 tablespoons of vinegar or lemon juice, 2 tablespoons of salt. Keep on low heat until the whey separates. Remove from fire and put the mass in a special mould with holes covered with gauze. Put the mould under the press for 4-6 hours. The cheese is ready!

Traditional Cheese

Take fresh cottage cheese, add salt and caraway. Put the cheese in a wedge-shaped gauze bag and place under a press for 4-5 hours. Dry the cheese on the stovetop until solid (usually it takes from two days to a week).



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22 Cheese For Everybody

MOZZARELLA, SULUGUNI, JIL...

Anna keeps three dozen beautiful white Saanen goats in her subsidiary farm. She uses milk to make healthy, environmentally friendly products. Mozzarella, suluguni, jil, blue cheese, Maasdam, gouda... There are about 25 types of products in the assortment.

As soon as Anna started living in the village, she wanted to get her own farm. Once she got her first goat. Today there are thirty of them!

Over the eight years of cheese making, Anna has successfully mastered several dozen recipes and prepares cheese of various types: draft, aged, curd, burrata, etc.



The Secret of Mastership

To make any cheese delicious, you need to cook it with love, good mood and good thoughts!

You can taste Anna's cheese at local fairs or at Kozkin dom. Be sure to agree on your visit in advance.



Recipes of Kozkin Dom

Such cheese is prepared as follows: cut the base cheese into small cubes and place in a container with 80 °C hot water. The cheese begins to melt. It is easy to give it the desired shape: threads, pigtails or balls. It only takes a couple of hours to get the result. Of course, there are time-consuming

recipes too. This is so-called aged cheese. For example, Gouda, Maasdam cheese or Russian cheese. These types of cheese are placed in moulds under the press, salted and ripened for two to six months.

Anna offers interesting combinations of curd cheese sprinkled with coconut, cocoa or nuts.

Agricultural Enterprise "Kozkin Dom"

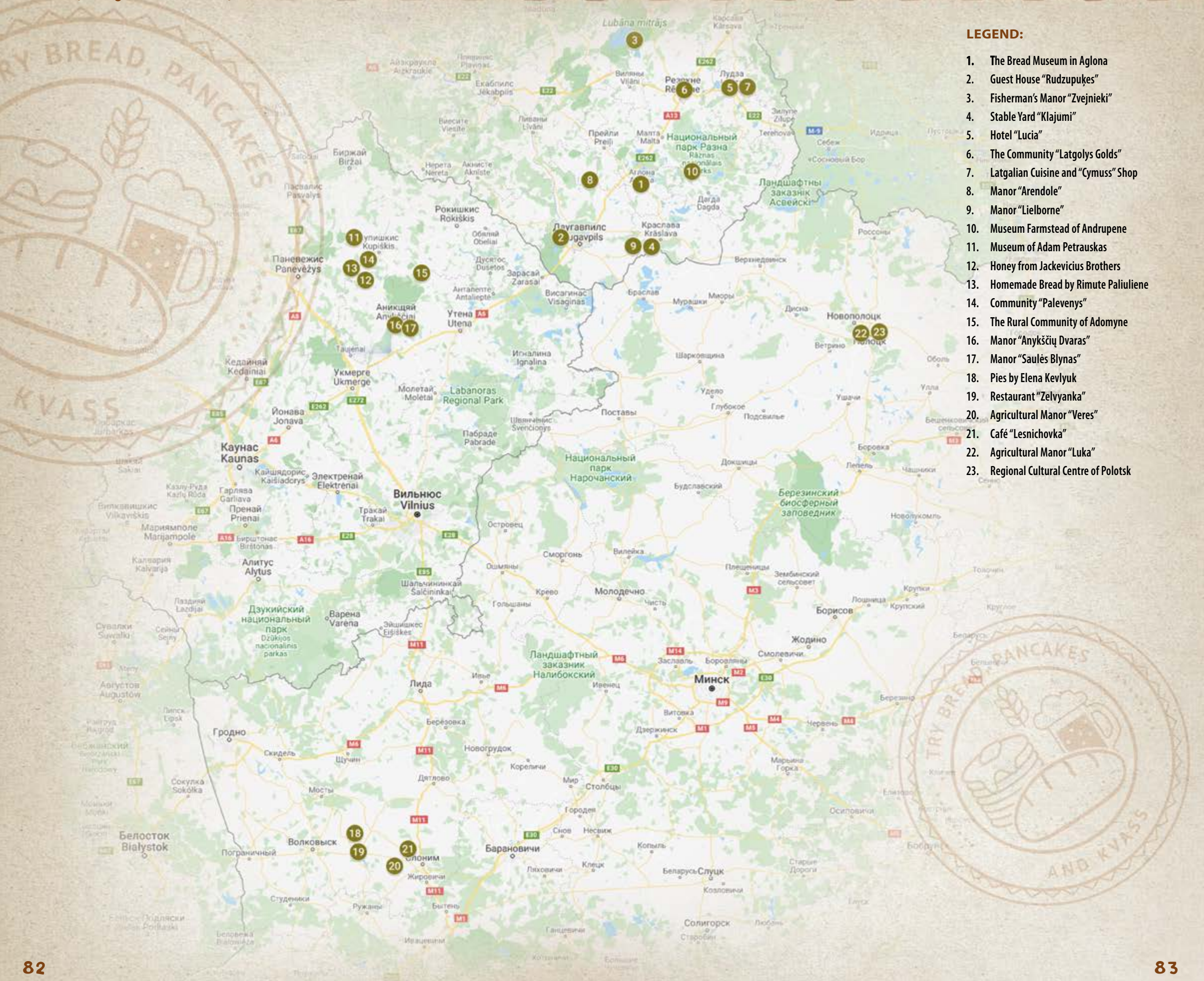
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Try Bread, Pancakes and Kvass





LEGEND:

1. The Bread Museum in Aglona
2. Guest House "Rudzupuķes"
3. Fisherman's Manor "Zvejnieki"
4. Stable Yard "Klajumi"
5. Hotel "Lucia"
6. The Community "Latgolys Golds"
7. Latgalian Cuisine and "Cymuss" Shop
8. Manor "Arendole"
9. Manor "Lielborne"
10. Museum Farmstead of Andrupene
11. Museum of Adam Petrauskas
12. Honey from Jackevicius Brothers
13. Homemade Bread by Rimute Paliulienė
14. Community "Palevenys"
15. The Rural Community of Adomyne
16. Manor "Anykščių Dvaras"
17. Manor "Saulės Blynas"
18. Pies by Elena Kevlyuk
19. Restaurant "Zelvyanka"
20. Agricultural Manor "Veres"
21. Café "Lesnichovka"
22. Agricultural Manor "Luka"
23. Regional Cultural Centre of Polotsk



① The Aroma of Bread

VIJA AND HER MUSEUM

The visitors of the Bread Museum are greeted by the hostess in a folk costume, with traditional songs and a unique Latgalian dialect. Vija Kudina is the author of the performance.

Candles, herbal tea in clay mugs and rye bread on the linen tablecloth. At the beginning of the excursion, Vija's guests will be offered to single out and taste a rye grain. Vija Kudina has collected dozens of proverbs, sayings, signs and fairy tales about bread.

Here the visitors can hear ear rustling in the field and the sound of rolling mills, play old games related to grain and bread, taste bread and test their strength by rotating a mill or holding a seeder full of grain.

Vija Kudina knows the skilful way how to tell about old Latgalian dishes and to cook them: krupnik, veisteknis, grutsis and many others. The museum contains hundreds of things related to grain processing and bread baking: threshing flails, bread shovels, doughs and much more.

During the work of the museum (more than 15 years), thousands of excursionists from all over Latvia and abroad have already visited it. Vija Kudina wholeheartedly praises and promotes Latvian rye bread.

Owing to her love for work, adherence to Latgalian traditions, and desire to instil respect for the history of their land in young people, Vija created the museum out of nothing, which is now known throughout the country.



Vija Kudina

A Recipe From the Hostess

Latgalian dumplings are one of the popular national dishes. First, you need to make the yeast dough (or any other dough you like). Roll the dough into small balls and bake in the oven. Put in a saucepan, add butter, sour cream and sugar. Heat until tender. These dumplings are served hot and are best eaten with your hands!



The Bread Museum in Aglona

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② Guest House Rudzupuķes

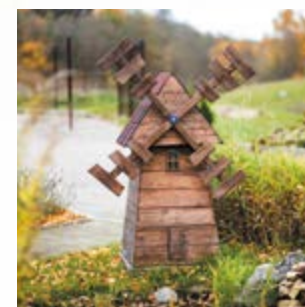
GUEST HOUSE RUDZUPUĶES

The guest house is located near the border of three countries: 30 kilometres from Lithuania and 30 kilometres from Belarus. Latvia does not end here, Latvia begins here! — this is a slogan of the house.

Lake Sventes is not far from the guest house. The water is clean and transparent, perfect for swimming. Rudzupuķes is a place where you can not only have a good rest and stay overnight but also taste delicious Latgalian cuisine. There are many bread dishes on the menu. There is a bakery at the house, where the visitors can always purchase fresh aromatic pastries. The peculiarity of Rudzupuķes bread is that it is baked in small batches and does not contain yeast and preservatives. This option is perfect for those who are afraid to gain extra pounds but cannot refuse a piece of bread. Here you can taste wheat bread with Sventes seeds and rye bread with caraway seeds. If you like hot bread, please call the hosts before you arrive to check if the bakery has fresh pastries. The bakery has recently launched a new product: wheat bread with hemp seeds. It is distinguished by its unique taste, hemp seeds give the bread a pleasant bright taste. "Bread tastes better with every bite," the owner of the bakery says. Hemp oil is also produced here. It goes very well with any bread. Crunchy garlic croutons are another treat offered to travellers.

ABOUT THE HOSTESS

"I am a mother of three small children and proper organic diet is important to me. I thought for a long time how to provide my family with tasty and healthy food, and in the end, I decided that yeast-free bread is ideal for maintaining proper nutrition. I love my job very much! There are many unique places in Latvia, including our guest house Rudzupuķes. I consider it important to warmly welcome the guests of our house and acquaint them with our national cuisine."



Guest House Rudzupuķes

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pagasts, Daugavpils novads, Latvija)

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Website: www.rudzupukes.lv



A Recipe From the Hostess

Bread soup is an old Latvian dessert. An unexpectedly tasty combination of bread with dried fruits and whipped cream. Boil water in a saucepan, put rye bread in the water and add lemon juice. After cooking, you can add a bit of sugar and various dried fruits, for example, prunes, dried apricots, raisins and candied fruits. Cool the mass. Put it in a bowl and garnish with whipped cream and cinnamon. But the recipe for our homemade bread remains a secret that every guesthouse should have!



③ Fisherman's Manor Zvejnieki

FOR FISHERMEN AND NATURE LOVERS

Zvejnieki manor is a classic object of rural tourism. Tourists can actively relax throughout the year, surrounded by magnificent landscapes, enjoying unspoiled nature, magnificent sunsets and silence. The owners of the manor organise bog tours and bird watching. There are six observation towers in the vicinity. 236 bird species have been recorded in the Lubana lowland. Zvejnieki is an object of the culinary heritage of Latgale and Europe. Tourists can try a variety of fresh fish dishes and organic products. The menu has historically been rich in fish dishes. For example, guests are offered fish soup, baked zander or carp, pike and roach cutlets, stuffed pike. During the hunting season, you can taste forest duck stews and various game dishes here. And finally, you will be offered the famous medicinal tincture of the beaver gland, that improves metabolism and enhances immunity.

ANNA AND JANIS' FAMILY MANOR

Anna and Janis, the owners of the manor, have been working in the tourism sector for over 20 years. It all started with a passion for fishing, a desire to live closer to nature and enjoy the unique sunsets over the lake. As a result, the family decided to build a house not only for themselves but also for tourists. Everybody can comfortably spend time here. Anna attended courses of guides to natural attractions. She offers ecological walks in the surroundings and along the nearest swamp trail. The woman says that swamp is her passion and love. Anna's husband Janis is a fisherman and hunter.



Anna Macane and Janis Macans

A Recipe From the Hosts

Vegetable pancakes with carp milts

Mix 2/3 of vegetables (potatoes, pumpkin and zucchini) and 1/3 of carp milts. Add 1-2 eggs, 1 tablespoon of sour cream and 0.5 teaspoons of soda. Add 2 tablespoons of flour, sugar, salt and pepper to taste. Fry in a pan until cooked!

"This recipe was invented by my husband when he smoked carps. Usually, fish meat and caviar are preserved after the catch, but such a nutritious product as fish milt is thrown away. Janis decided to add it to pancakes, because it gives the dish a special taste and saturates it with useful vitamins and microelements," Anna Macane says.



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④ Stable Yard with a Century-Old History

FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

The uniqueness of Klajumi stable yard is that it has almost a century-old history. The farm was founded in 1936. The new generation continues to work here today. These people preserve the historical and cultural heritage and take care of natural and ecological values. Guests and tourists will be able to go horseback riding through the protected area Augšdaugava in the natural park Daugavas Loki (Latvian for The Bends of the Daugava River) and on the Latvia-Belarus border.

WHAT TO TASTE?

After active rest and new impressions, people can refresh themselves with dishes of the culinary heritage of Latgale. The guests will enjoy such dishes as pancakes, nettle soup, beaver and pork fried sausages, game dishes and freshly caught fish. The recipes have been collected by the hostess for many years. The ingredients are always local, regional products. Ilze was born and lives in her homeland. The house was built by her grandfather. The family has been involved in tourism since 1998, and the village restaurant was opened in 2018.



Ilze Stabulniece

A Recipe From the Hostess

Pancakes with meat and mushrooms from the natural park Daugavas Loki
Grind meat, boil mushrooms (e.g. redcap and brown-cap boletus) and onions. Make thin pancakes, wrap the filling and fry all over. Serve with sour cream!



Stable Yard Klajumi

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5 Delicious and Pleasant Stay in Ludza

THE COZY HOTEL IN THE HEART OF LUDZA

Hotel Lucia is a small and friendly hotel located in the historic centre of the ancient town of Ludza, surrounded by five lakes. The guests of the hotel will need a few minutes to get to the ruins of the Livonian Castle, the craft centre and the oldest museum in Latgale. The spacious rooms of the hotel are simply decorated and equipped with everything you need for a comfortable stay.

The reception of the hotel works 24/7; the hotel has 21 rooms with Wi-Fi. Various events are held in the banquet hall for up to 70-75 people. Guests can relax in the hotel sauna and bubble bath. Car parking is free of charge.

WHAT TO TASTE?

The cosy café offers a Latgalian menu for groups by prior order. The menu includes grey peas, pea balls, salted cheesecakes, cabbage soup, pork head "cheese", Latgalian salad, local stuffed fish (pikes and pike-perches), eel, vegetable pancakes and pork ribs.

The amazingly tasty sourdough rye bread is also worth tasting. It is baked in a peasant stove of one of the Latvian farms according to an ancient recipe. Asuškas is an integral part of the menu. These are oblong buns made from yeast dough with creamy or sour cream sauce. Asuškas are usually served at the end of the meal. It is noteworthy that in the old days only rich families could afford them due to the obligatory ingredient – heavy cream.



A Recipe From the Chef

Vegetable pancakes are made from grated potatoes or zucchini, onions, garlic and herbs. At the request of the client, the pancakes are served with sour cream sauce (sour cream with horseradish), cracklings and onions.



Hotel Lucia

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Website: www.lucia.lv

6 The Culinary Spirit of Latgale

LATGOLYS GOLDS MEANS LATGALIAN FOOD

The society was officially founded in 2013. The story began when the founder Andris Meijers and his wife Zoja entertained their friends with homemade bacon made according to the family recipe. Soon there were so many people who wanted to buy the specialty! The couple decided to share the bounty of Latgalian cuisine on a large scale. The family follows the traditions of their ancestors. The menu of the society Latgolys golds includes such dishes as Latgalian bacon, meat smoked in a black banya, homemade rye bread and kvass. Andris and Zoja travel around Latvia and other countries, treating tourists at festivals with their specialties and demonstrating the spirit of Latgalian culture.

Latgolys golds cooks food over the fire according to ancient recipes. The menu is represented by several types of soups, cereals and rye pancakes. The most beloved soup is the soup with beaver meat and turnips. The main secret of all dishes is the use of locally sourced organic ingredients and the atmosphere of the cooking and serving process.



Andris Meijers

An Advice from the Latgolys Golds

It is essential to use local and natural ingredients to make a true homemade product. For example, delicious bacon cannot be cooked using imported garlic. Kvass should be made only from homemade rye bread. Bread, in its turn, is made from high-quality rye flour and homemade sourdough. Simplicity and quality are very important



The Community Latgolys Golds

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A Recipe of Latgalian Kvass

Ingredients: 600 grams of fresh rye bread, 30 grams of yeast and 350 grams of sugar.

It is necessary to dry rye bread in the oven at 120-130 degrees so that it remains firm and brown. Take the bread and break it into small pieces. Pour in 4 litres of water and let it brew for 3-4 hours in a bowl covered with a towel. Stir from time to time. Strain through a fine sieve and pour the remaining mass with two litres of boiling water. Leave to stand for two hours more. Strain again. Pour the liquid into a bowl or other container, add 30 grams of yeast and 350 grams of sugar. Leave overnight. Enjoy the delicious kvass!



⑦ The Return to Tradition, or a Path to Yourself

ABOUT THE LATGALIAN CUISINE

The founders of the *Latgaļu Kukņa* (Latgalian for Latgalian Cuisine) located in the Ludza Craftsman Centre, Eriks Kondrats and Liga Kondrate, conceived this place as an opportunity for tourists and residents to taste traditional Latgalian dishes cooked using local products. The menu contains classic regional delicacies: sauerkraut soup, Ludza porridge, grey peas with cracklings, baked apples, asuškas, homemade beer and shmakovka. What is more, everybody is welcome to enjoy dinner or a gastronomic adventure on a raft on the Small Ludza Lake (from May to November).

The owners say that everything started with an important thought that the River of Time takes all ancient crafts away. There are not many followers left. Life is changing rapidly, we are losing the knowledge accumulated by previous generations. Eriks and Liga want to keep these values.

MASTER CLASSES AND OTHER SERVICES

Latgaļu Kukņa is a part of the annual action "Find your master". People can participate in a series of training events throughout Latvia and learn the basics of crafts or master the recipes of the traditional cuisine. Thus, the guests of the culinary master classes at Latgaļu Kukņa learn how to cook homemade cheese and traditional pastries.



Eriks Kondrats



A Word from the Owners

"A person who does not know his roots is like a leaf torn from a tree. It has no future."

Latgalian Cuisine

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"There was a time when women and men could do almost everything. Diligence and wisdom of life were priceless. We strive to revive these qualities and educate people through our own experience. Thanks to this activity, we manage to raise a person's self-esteem and touch the past."

FARM SHOP CYMUSS

Cymuss shop sells products from local farmers and was conceived as an alternative to supermarkets. Here you can always find fresh, local and seasonal food, e.g. homemade cheese, aromatic pieces of bread, meat without additives, cereals, honey and much more. The farm shop has many regular customers, people choosing conscious consumption. The value of the shop is also reflected in its name. Cymuss is something mature, the most valuable and tasty.

Eriks and Liga, the founders of the shop, organize food and craft festivals and fairs in Ludza and have good relations with local producers. Therefore, the path of each product to the counter is known – the products are bought from local trusted farmers. Greenmarkets are held regularly, but the time is determined by a solar calendar. Local farmers gather in the courtyard of the craft centre or on the main square of Ludza and delight visitors with fresh and quality food during the days of solstice and equinox. The largest festival is held on the Ludza Castle Hill every Saturday before the Ligo holiday (summer solstice). More than 10000 visitors from all over Latvia and neighbouring countries gather here. This is a fun and educational holiday for both adult visitors and children.

A Recipe of pancakes with lungs

Make big thin pancakes following any recipe you like. They must be really large so that enough filling fits into a pancake. The filling is prepared as follows: pork and sheep lungs, fat meat, garlic, onions and spices (pepper and salt) are mixed. Boil everything and grind twice. Fill pancakes and fry on both sides. Enjoy your meal!



Cymuss Shop

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⑧ Manor Arendole

FAMILY TRADITIONS AND MODERN TIMES



The manor is located in Varkava municipality, 40 kilometres from Daugavpils, in a picturesque place by the Dubna River. It was first mentioned in historical sources in the 16th century. The manor has a typical interior of Latgalian manors of the late 19th and early 20th century. In the 17th century, the manor belonged to the Liedinhausen-Wolf family (until 1773). Later the manor was bought by representatives of the Zieberg family. Johann Tadeusz Zieberg, the Livonian governor, was the last of the Lithuanian branch of the clan, and his daughter Isabella-Helena (1785-1849) married a representative of one of the most significant clans in the history of Latgale – Mikhail Brele-Plater from Kraslava (1777-1863). The rebuilding of the manor at the turn of the century was carried out by Mikhail's grandson, Andrei



Plater-Zyberg. During the First World War, one of the hussar regiments lodged on the manor. In the late twenties of the 19th century, the famous Emilia Plater, a countess and a collector of Belarusian folklore, regularly visited the manor. The manor is an architectural monument of national importance now.

There are 7 rooms, two large halls, a dining room and a dance hall in the house. The area of the dining room and the dance hall is 90 square metres. It allows the guests of the manor to feel very comfortable. Also, the guest bedrooms have been preserved. Almost all the furniture, furnishings and books are authentic. The owners of the manor can tell a whole story about each item.



Signature Pancakes From Sour Milk

Mix a glass of sour milk, 3 eggs, soda on the tip of a knife, salt and sugar to taste and flour to make the dough thick like sour cream. Use vegetable oil for frying and serve with whatever you love.

THE RANGE OF SERVICES

Currently, the visitors of the manor are offered a wide range of services: accommodation for special guests, i.e. those who want to stay in a quiet and peaceful atmosphere; accommodation in one of the three bedrooms with antique furniture with breakfast and dinner; guided tours for groups; acquaintance with the manor and the history of Latgale.

You can order lunches and dinners for groups, participants of festivities, wedding and anniversary feasts, accommodation in economy classrooms here. Go boating (free of charge), enjoy a so-called black banya with swimming in the river, tasty and modern food.



Manor Arendole

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Opening hours:
by prior arrangement!



9 Manor Lielborne



Lielborne is the only manor that has survived on the territory of the Nature Park Daugavas Loki (The Bends of the Daugava River). The complex was renovated in 2020. This is a great place for groups of friends and families with children.

WHAT CAN YOU DO AT THE MANOR?

The manor offers numerous services to its guests. The visitors can order excursions around the recreation complex and a romantic park trail. There are 11 spacious and comfortable rooms, as well as two high standard two-room apartments for overnight stay. You can also spend a night in the camping area located in the Nature Park Daugavas Loki. What is more, it is proposed to take a unique walk from the manor to the mouth of the Borne River that flows into the Daugava River. You can rent a boat and enjoy fishing. The manor entertains not only adults but also children, who will appreciate the excellent multifunctional playground for outdoor activities, as well as a climbing wall, on which children and adolescents will certainly want to test their strength and agility.

Tips and Tricks

We offer our guests to cook waffles in an old waffle iron or bake a cracknel or pizza in a restored Russian stove. By the way, these products were popular in the ancient Livonia.



There is a ropeway with eight obstacles created for fans of extreme sports. The guests will find a Liana Bridge, a Rock Staircase and a fishing net. Test your strength and dexterity on such elements of the track as a Diagonal Road or a Slackline designed for young people.

Premises for seminars and small conferences (four halls of different sizes on the ground floor and three meeting rooms on the second floor) and service (coffee breaks and buffet tables) are perfect for organization of business events.

It is possible to rest in the manor park with barbecuing (by prior arrangement).

Visitors can rent bicycles or go horse riding.

TRADITIONS

Nora Poisa said:

— My entire adult life has been associated with tourism and the provision of related services. If we talk about my first skills in catering, it was in Sigulda Tourist Centre when I was 17 years old. My parents and I organised picnics for foreign tourists by the Gauja River. Today we cook using interesting and extraordinary combinations: berries, fruits, vegetables, poultry and game. These are new, tasty and healthy dishes. We grow many products on the territory of the manor or purchase from nearby farms. We not only feed the guests but also sell different products. Some gifts of nature are a wonderful souvenir.

The Signature Dish

Breakfast with eggs is an integral part of our lifestyle. Rye bread is one of the symbols of Latvia. We cook eggs as follows: heat a frying pan with a little oil, cut the middle out of a piece of soft rye bread and put the "frame" on the pan, crack in an egg, add some salt, turn the bread over after a couple of minutes and put a slice of cheese on it, fry a little more and serve with fresh herbs.



Manor Lielborne

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10 Farmstead of Andrupene (Andrupenes lauku sēta)



ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Museum "Farmstead of Andrupene" was built on the highest point of Andrupene, on the outskirts of the village. There was a hill overgrown with trees, but once there was a hurricane. After the broken trees were removed, it turned out that this is a very picturesque place, which is located not far from the Andrupene administration, a school and a kindergarten. In 1999, the rural municipality administration decided to start building a museum on this hill.

The central building – the house was built in 1927, it was brought from the Libili manor (Libiju sādža) (5 km from Andrupene). The barn was relocated with the house, but all other buildings were built from scratch. All log cabins are in traditional style. The buildings have characteristic roofs made from natural building materials – lake reeds and torn wood chips. Doors and windows are made of wood; foundations are made of boulders.



On June 23, 2000, the museum was opened to visitors. Today, all guests can see how life in the village was arranged from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1940s. Currently, the museum complex consists of several buildings: a house, a barn, a smokehouse, a smithy, a pottery workshop with a ceramic furnace. These are permanent exhibitions that are used as intended. Also on the territory of the museum there is a conference room for seminars and celebrations, a hostess workshop (well-equipped kitchen) with a tasting room where you can cook and taste Latgalian national dishes.

PROGRAMS AND DEGUSTATIONS

In the museum you can taste local bread, asushki, dumplings, porridge, homemade butter, country cheese, bacon, as well as local drinks and herbal teas. Every year the museum is visited by about 4000–4500 people from all over the world. Here are offered not only classical excursions and degustation of Latgalian cuisine, but also, celebration of traditional holidays, such as Christmas, Mikelis Day, Ligo. Every year the museum hosts the "Meet your master" festival, where you can buy handicraft goods, as well as learn how to cook Latgalian dishes according to traditional recipes.



The recipe of Andrupene bread

Ingredients: sourdough, wheat flour, wheat bran, flax seeds, sunflower seeds, salt and sugar.

Preparation:

For baking bread, a «live» sourdough is used, which is left for the next baking each time. Wheat flour, wheat bran with a small amount of flax and sunflower seeds, salt and sugar are added to the sourdough. The prepared dough should be left for 12 hours and then bake it in the oven for 1 hour.

The taste of Andrupene bread is unforgettable, it is because of it that guests return to the museum again and again!

Farmstead of Andrupene (Andrupenes lauku sēta)

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LITHUANIA

Bread According to Old Recipes



A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

Delicious bread is made in real stoves.



FOLLOWING THE TRADITIONS

Sandra Gabrenaite-Jukniene has been using her grandmother's recipes for about nine years: the pakišuolis cake, the karvojus wedding cake and the daily ragaišis cake.

"I can only bake six loaves of bread a day, and I do everything manually. I use whole grain flour from a local mill," she notes.

Sandra is a great connoisseur of the ancient traditions of Kupiskis region. She offers educational programmes on Lithuanian customs (weddings, christenings, bread baking and much more) for an audience of different ages. The venue for the programmes is the Museum of Adam Petrauskas – an unusual place with a rich history.



BAKE BREAD YOURSELF

The participants of the programme "At the Baltic Christmas Table" (November–December) try their hand at the most important rituals of Christmas: decoration of a Christmas wreath, making a candle from natural wax, decoration of a Christmas tree with straw toys, setting the table and tasting 12 traditional dishes.

Both adults and children can participate in such programmes. It is adapted to the season and the group.

Baking bread by young people is combined with games and creative tasks. For example, creating a painting for an ancient chest. At the master class "Bread smells of Adam Petrauskas" the participants will learn the secrets of baking real rye bread, study the history of bread from a grain to a loaf on the table, see how homemade bread is fermented, mixed and baked. You can knead your own bread, put it in the oven, wait until it is ready and take it with you.



A Recipe From the Hostess

Fill three quarters of the total amount of rye flour with hot water (about 80 °C) and leave for three hours. Add cold water, the sourdough should be thick, like a homemade sour cream, and leave for 24-48 hours. Add salt, caraway seeds and the remaining flour to



the leaven and knead the dough for about an hour. When the dough begins to rise, heat the stove for about three hours. When the oven is ready, make loaves and bake for about three hours.

Museum of Adam Petrauskas

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12 Honey From Brothers

Most of the inhabitants of our planet love honey. Of course, many people understand which honey is real and which is not very high quality. For good quality honey must be collected by people who love beekeeping. Brothers-beekeepers Ignas and Vilius Jackevicius, the creators of the Broliq medus brand are ones of them.

Golden Rules

Start with a small number of hives and calm bee species. See hives with different types of bee bread, observe the behaviour of bees and so you can decide which one is best for you. If you make the right choice, beekeeping will provide you with pleasure, peace and happiness.

Our ancestors believed that only a good, sincere person can be a beekeeper. It is advisable to go to the apiary with a clear conscience, because bees, like all animals, are sensitive to the vibrations that we emit. Honey is one of the most valuable products in Lithuania, which perfectly replaces sugar and protects against various diseases. No wonder beekeepers are among the healthiest people.

The composition of honey products is so rich that it is almost impossible to copy it. Only bees know the real recipe, which is different every time. It is impossible to count all the components of honey. It depends on the flowering plants at a certain time.



Ignas and Vilius Jackevicius

SOME BACKGROUND

The brothers run a large modern apiary, where bees collect honey from meadows and forests, so the result is organic honey products. It all started when the brothers brought an old beehive from the farm of their grandparents. The journey from one hive to an apiary was not easy, but it was worth it. There are 90 hives in the apiary today. The secret to success is very simple: "Bees are similar to humans — every family is special. The main difference is that everything depends on the queen bees. If a queen bee is calm, the whole family won't be aggressive, you can easily work with them. All our bees are of the Buckfast breed that is considered to be very productive and affectionate. You can even touch these bees and they will not sting."

A KNOW-HOW

Initially, Ignas and Vilius made their own hives in Kupiskis from scrap materials. Now they use modern bottomless hives, where instead of a bottom there is a metal mesh that protects bees from insects and wild animals. Owing to this, the air in the hive circulates constantly and at any time of the year, which improves the health and well-being of the bees and, of course, produces better quality honey.

PROPERTIES AND VALUE OF BROLIQ MEDUS HONEY

The buckwheat and linden honey is considered one of the most valuable in Lithuania.

Linden honey soothes, helps with treating colds, respiratory diseases and promotes perspiration.

Bees make spring honey from the nectar of orchards and meadow flowers. Particularly valuable is the one in which dandelion nectar predominates. It is a powerful weapon against colds due to many antibacterial properties. Besides,

such honey is considered to be one of the least allergenic, therefore it is recommended for children.

The brothers Ignas and Vilius have a unique and innovative product that is perfect even for those who do not like honey, this is a sweet and aromatic dessert. In addition to honey, it contains freeze-dried berries or fruit. Such honey desserts have a whole palette of additional flavours: raspberry, mint, sea buckthorn, mountain ash, tangerine, black currant and even chocolate.

There are also such useful and unique products as royal jelly, pollen or bee bread and propolis.

OUR RECIPES

You can make all sorts of useful and necessary things from honey. For example, a conditioner and a hair mask. Some Hollywood stars claim that honey will make your hair shiny and smooth in just half an hour.

Mix a tablespoon of honey, egg yolk and a few drops of oil (olives, avocado, coconut, almonds or any other). Massage into hair and scalp for 30 minutes, then rinse with shampoo and cool water. This recipe will also help fight dandruff.



PROGRAMMES FOR TOURISTS

For guests and tourists, a special master class is held at the apiary, during which you can learn how to make beautiful and environmentally friendly candles from beeswax. Such candles are better, because they do not emit harmful carbon monoxide. It is especially important in small spaces, in homes with pets or small children.

Candles come in a wide variety of shapes and themes, from classic honeycomb patterns to holiday or Catholic motifs, so there is plenty to choose from. The brothers even make beautiful Christmas tree decorations from wax.

Tourists will also be able to get to know more about the life of bees and honey products, and then they will have a tasting, as well as a gift in the original branded packaging.

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Broliu Medus is much more than honey. This is family warmth and communication, mutual assistance, respect for bees and honey, love for Lithuania and people.





13 Homemade Bread – the Simpler the Better

ANCIENT TRADITIONS

Rimute Paliulienė is one of those craftsmen who respect the ancient bakery craft. She continues her family's tradition and notes: "Our fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers used to make homemade bread." Black rye bread is the main product today. However, there are buns and various cookies too. This bread has a pleasant sweet and sour taste. The owners bake bread and buns in an old stove. The entire process from the beginning to finish is a manual job that takes four days. The baking process itself is an ancient tradition and is a part of the national heritage. Rimute Paliulienė hopes to pass on the exact recipe to her children. Visitors always have a great opportunity to purchase fresh and tasty products, as well as get personal advice from the hostess.



A Recipe From the Hostess

The ingredients are very simple: flour, water, sourdough, salt and some sugar.

A Piece of Advice From the Hostess

It is recommended to store bread in a cool dry place. Wrap it in a linen towel.



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14 Culinary Programs at the Monastery

COMMUNITY PALEVENYS

The rural community *Palevenys* is a non-governmental organization with 32 villagers that is based in the former Dominican monastery ensemble in Palevene. Laimute Juknevičienė is in charge of this community. The culinary and educational project in the monastery was launched relatively recently. The kitchen was equipped to cook food for tastings – dishes, which are typical for Kupiskis region and which will be especially interesting for tourists.

PROGRAMMES AND TASTINGS FOR GUESTS

When tourists come to the monastery, first of all, they get acquainted with its history. Together with a peasant guide (this role is played by the owner Laimute Juknevičienė) the guests visit mysterious cellars, learn the secrets of drying herbs and making herbal drinks. The guests have a great opportunity to taste herbal teas, wine and beer from the former monks' tavern. There are 2-3 hour long culinary programmes for groups of 15-40 people. Each programme is based on one special dish: fish soup and lobster, pork leg with sauerkraut and stewed cabbage, pancakes with sauce (mashed potatoes with cracklings), pancakes with jam, buns, cottage cheese, etc. There is also a special "dairy" programme for children. In addition to the tasting, you can order a humorous performance.



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A Recipe of Wholemeal Pancakes

Ingredients: 500 millilitres of water, salt to taste, 250 grams of whole wheat flour. Mix everything and wait 30-60 minutes until the mass thickens. Bake the pancakes as usual. Serve with a sauce that contains mashed potatoes, fried cracklings and crispy onions.



A Piece of Advice From the Chef

Mashed potatoes are prepared using the water in which the potatoes were boiled.



The Small Culinary Capital of Lithuania

THE RURAL COMMUNITY OF ADOMYNE



Virginija Pakalniskienė



Last year the community was named the Little Cultural Capital of Lithuania. And this is no coincidence. The community was established in 2002 and is one of the few in Lithuania that operates in a manor house recognized as a cultural heritage. This mansion is an extremely rare example of wooden classicism. The representative of the community Virginija Pakalniskienė is confident that the manor has been revived owing to the activity, enterprise and hard work of residents. The main concern of the community is to preserve the manor for future generations and to attract tourists. Particular attention is paid to the



preservation of ethnocultural and culinary traditions.

The community has revived one of the largest traditional vocal festivals Antanimus and holds an annual festival of non-traditional types of cheese, where you can taste sweet cheese, cheese with cottage cheese, apples, meat, carrots, etc.

RITUAL BUNS AND TREASURE HUNTING

Manor Adomynės dvaras is famous for its educational programmes adapted to a certain period and holidays (Advent, Easter and much more). Some of the main ones are baking Ritual Buns for adults and playing the Treasure Hunt for children and teenagers. Only here guests can taste delicious funeral buns stuffed with cottage cheese, a certified product of the Lithuanian culinary heritage, and learn how to cook them. You should not



be afraid of an unusual name. These buns are suitable for all occasions. It is believed that the buns appeared 150 years ago. They were baked in Adomyne only. The recipes and traditions of baking were passed on from generation to generation. Tastings are accompanied by performances by an ethnographic group. Visitors can take a tour of the manor – it is a kind of a museum, where each item has its history. Guests will be shown a collection of folk art and the pride of the manor – fragments of authentic room decor, original tiled stoves and old oak parquet. The manor also hosts other cultural events: en plein air, concerts, poetry readings, lectures, etc. Often, the “residents” of the mansion – gentlemen and maids in suits – come to the guests. The manor and the park host weddings and other private events, including photoshoots in vintage clothing.



A Recipe from the Hostess

Ritual buns are special because they are eaten hot with an original sauce as a second course. In the past, these buns were prepared for funerals to serve a large group of people. Later people began to use this dish during other celebrations: weddings and christenings. We have revived this tradition at the manor, but the recipe itself is our secret.



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16 Confectionery Beauty

THE TASTY MANOR

As a child, Aurelia Dudeniene watched her grandmother bake goodies. Today Aurelia is a confectioner and uses her grandmother's recipes. Aurelia has fulfilled a dream of her own business and now she is the head of Anykščių dvaras. Several years spent with her husband in England allowed her to make an important decision, i.e. to return to her homeland and to continue the family traditions.

"Having got acquainted with other countries and their inhabitants, you begin to see the world differently, you understand the differences between states and people. But everyone makes his own decisions," Aurelia notes.

The plans include the development of new recipes and an educational programme dedicated to the baking of a "branchy" cake.



A Secret of the Hostess

Aurelia Dudeniene uses butter, not margarine. Sometimes she decorates shakotis with chocolate or floral ornaments. However, the cake is as beautiful as it is.

A TREE WITH BRANCHES

Aurelia Dudeniene creates the culinary masterpieces from the most common ingredients: eggs, sugar, flour, chocolate and cream. Among them, a special place should be given to a confection called shakotis or a tree with branches that is included in the national culinary heritage of Lithuania.

There are some stories that shakotis was the most favourite dessert of Barbora Radvilaite, a queen of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania (16th century). The main ingredients of the cake are very simple: eggs, sugar, cream and flour. It sounds easy, but the most important part of the shakotis preparation is to cook it on a rotating spit over an open fire. One more thing: for two kilos of cake you will need 30-50 eggs and it can take a whole day to bake it. By the way, in 2008, Lithuanian pastry chefs set a record by creating a 2 meters 30 centimetres high shakotis using 1200 eggs. The weight of the cake was almost 74 kilograms.

Love your business and devote a lot of time to it. Aurelia knows it for sure. The name *Anykščių dvaras* was chosen to preserve and disseminate ancient recipes for shakotis and other confectionery products so that Anykščiai is also associated with culinary skills. The name of the product is DVARO shakotis. In addition to shakotis, Aurelia bakes another handmade cake skruzdėlynas, as well as canele, biscuit squirrels and mushrooms.



A Recipe of Shakotis

There are about 60 recipes of shakotis. You can try one of the most popular.

Ingredients: 50 chicken eggs, 1250 grams of flour and the same amount of butter, 800 grams of sugar, 6 glasses of 20% cream. You can also add 10 grams of lemon essence and 100 grams of cognac (or water, like in old recipes).

Mix the butter and sugar, grind until smooth, beat, gradually adding eggs (one or two). Combine the resulting mixture with flour, cream, cognac (water) and lemon essence.

Shakotis is baked either on an open fire or in special ovens at a low temperature of 80 °C. Nowadays, especially on an industrial scale, cardboard cones are used for the base to form the "trunk" of the tree.

Manor Anykščių Dvaras

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☀ Irena's Sunny Pancakes

Since ancient times, pancakes have been a symbol of the sun. Today you can try such "sunny pancakes" at the manor *Saulės blynas*.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Irena Adomoniene, the owner of the manor, has always dreamed of her own business. After the collapse of the collective farms, she began to work in the house of culture. For many years, she went to ancient manors and looked for people who danced, sang or knew interesting legends. The locals began to offer different antiques. This is how about 5000 exhibits of the museum gathered, including various artefacts, photos, documents, books and medals. A pair of bast shoes or lapy is the oldest exhibit. It is 400 years old! Some rakes are about 200 years old and even older chests. Some items are brought from Germany. Irena is a historian, so history and cultural heritage are closely intertwined in her work. To develop her business, Irena has also added a gastronomic component.



Irena Adomoniene

A Piece of Advice From the Entrepreneur

"The pancakes with potato sauce are the culinary heritage of Lithuania. I used to buy potatoes, bacon, eggs from farmers, but many of them sold their livestock and chickens. Others did not agree to give me checks. That was extremely important for me, so I had to buy everything in stores. Pancakes appeared not so long ago and were the privilege of the rich. Today we serve baked pancakes with potato sauce to tourists and eat them with fingers," Irena jokes.

She also adds that she loves tourists who are interested in their country, its past, medicinal herbs and culinary heritage.



FOR TOURISTS

The programme Sunny Pancakes lasts three hours. The group can be small or large — up to 50 people. The programme includes an educational herbal competition with a prize — a set of medicinal herbs, a visit to an ethnographic museum, herbal tea and a treat — tasting pancakes with potato sauce. You can also order lunch for 8–10 people and more. There are about 32 types of medicinal herbs growing around the manor. Irena's grandmother was a herbalist, so now Irena needs to pass on her knowledge. Recently, a new service has appeared: the rental of elegant dresses in the style of the 19th century. Irena sews them herself. You can take pictures and take a walk in the park of the manor Burbiskis. There is a large Lake Rubikiai nearby. It is famous for the area of about 1000 hectares and 16 islands that cover 1.1 square kilometres. Irena often goes there with her guests, swims and tells legends, as well as enjoys the picturesque views of the lake from the observation tower.

The manor can host hen nights and bachelor parties, birthdays and christenings, corporate events and much more.



A RECIPE FROM IRENA – SUNNY PANCAKES

For 6–7 servings:

- 2 cups of premium flour,
- 2 eggs,
- a small amount of salt,
- 1–2 tablespoons of butter,
- 1 cup of milk.

Mix all the ingredients, heat the milk and pour it into the dough to change its consistency. Dilute until the mixture becomes liquid. Bake over medium heat, turning over with a wooden flipper. Remove the pancake from the pan, roll up and fry again.



Ingredients for potato sauce:

- 1 kilogram of potatoes,
- a small amount of dill,
- a small amount of smoked bacon,
- an onion,
- 1 litre of milk.

Bring the peeled potatoes to a boil. Finely chop the bacon, fry with the onions and leave in the pan. Boil milk. Chop the dill. Crush boiled potatoes. Mix everything: potatoes, dill, bacon and onions, then dilute with hot milk until the puree becomes more liquid and acquires its characteristic colour.

Manor Saulės Blynas

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18 Lace Patterned Pies, Pancakes and More

THE ORIGINS

Elena has loved baking since her childhood. Her grandmother and mother were famous for their delicious pies. Elena is proud to use their recipes. Her lace patterned pies and buns, classic pies with filling are very popular. Elena cooks for herself and her friends, but she will not refuse if someone asks for a beautiful and delicious cake for guests or delegations.

CLASSIC PIE

As Elena says, the cake is not complicated at all – even novice cooks will master it.

Ingredients:

- 1 litre of milk (preferably fat),
- 100 grams of yeast,
- 200 grams butter,
- 100 grams of vegetable oil,
- 500–800 grams of sugar
- 4–6 eggs,
- half a tablespoon of salt,
- vanillin,
- 3–3.5 kilograms of flour.

Preparation:

Mix warm milk (100 grams), yeast, a spoonful of sugar and a little flour. While the dough is rising, pour the remaining milk into a saucepan, add sugar and stir until dissolved. Beat eggs with sugar. Mix milk and eggs. When mixed, add the dough. The main thing is to knead the dough thoroughly. Transfer the dough into a container and cover with a piece of gauze. Place in a warm place. You can knead the dough and let it rise again. Do it up to three times. Form a cake or buns. Or both. Bake in the preheated oven at 180 °C until well risen and golden brown.



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19 Following the Traditions

SPECIAL MENU

In the restaurant, you can taste dishes of both traditional and modern Belarusian cuisine. During the period of Christmas and Easter fasting, the menu is replenished with lent-friendly dishes. Zelvyanka menu contains dishes made from local products, including products from local farms. Here you can try potato and pumpkin pancakes, forest mushroom soup, carps baked in sour cream, berry desserts, cranberry juice and birch kvass.

The restaurant menu includes homemade bread too: fresh and aromatic village bread (with onions and garlic), Duhmyany (with garlic), Zernyshko (with flax seeds, sunflower and rye flakes) and Field (with flax seeds, corn, barley and oatmeal). The capacity of the restaurant is 80 seats located in two halls (20 and 60 seats).

ABOUT THE CHEFS

The chefs of the restaurant are active participants of culinary competitions. Svetlana Golovko is a winner of the regional competition Gatuem Svayo. The menu of the restaurant presents the dishes of the winner: bulbian kami z grybami and vyshki z grybami.



The Recipe of Potato and pumpkin pancakes with meat

Potato and pumpkin pancakes with meat. Grate one part of potatoes and one part of a pumpkin, add onions, flour and eggs. Grind a piece of pork. Bake a layer of dough. Put a layer of meat and another layer of dough. Fry on both sides and get satisfying pancakes with an unusual taste!

Restaurant Zelvyanka

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20 The Pioneers of the Belarusian Agricultural Tourism

VERES IS ONE OF THE LARGEST MANORS IN THE COUNTRY



Irina Makey and Mikhail Makey

It is no coincidence that Mikhail and Irina are called the pioneers of agricultural tourism in Belarus. The uniqueness of their manor is that it is part of a farm with infrastructure, which was created during twenty-five years. Today it is one of the largest agricultural manors in the country possessing comfortable housing, a unique arboretum with more than 250 species and varieties of trees and shrubs, magnificent stocked ponds, organic products grown in their fields and subsidiary plots. Here you can get a taste of the rural idyll, enjoy the silence and beauty of the landscape, touch authentic and collectable antiques and relax in real chic. Every year about three thousand people visit Veres; guests come from all over the world. The spacious 3-storey building with all amenities can accommodate up to 14 people. There are also apartments next to the café. The café for celebrations and dinners has two halls for 30 and 120 people. Today, Veres is the largest farm, where cereals, vegetables, potatoes are grown on 120 hectares. It has a large subsidiary farm, a smithy and a carpentry shop. As the spouses say, they work tirelessly every day, keep up with the times, take into account the opinions of their guests and are doing everything for the success of Veres.



A PEASANT'S SON

Mikhail says about the family business: "I am the son of a peasant, an agronomist. I love my land. Once upon a time, this place was the farm of my grandfather. Years later, I continued his work. The roots are nourished and firmly held in their native land."

Irina lived on a farm. She grew up in the Shchuchin region and is not afraid of farm work. Therefore, she supported her husband and went to build a farm, to develop the acquired land together with Mikhail and their children. The design, the comfort and the beauty of the manor are her merits. Irina conducts traditional rituals and organizes holidays for visitors: dozhinki or "green parties" and traditional weddings. Irina is in charge of the whole kitchen too.

The hostess says that the national cuisine of Belarus is the basis of the menu. But the owners also prepare any other dishes at the request of their guests. All dishes are cooked using the products grown and produced by the family or purchased from the neighbours.



SEVERAL RECIPES FROM THE HOSTS

Wheat and buckwheat flour pancakes

Mix 1 litre of milk, 300 grams of wheat and 100 grams of buckwheat flour, 2 eggs, salt and sugar to taste. Start baking.

Potato pancakes

Four potatoes, 500 millilitres of whey, 1 teaspoon of salt, flour, 1 teaspoon of soda, 2 tablespoons of sunflower oil.

A Recipe from the Makey Family - a Pie

Ingredients: 500 millilitres of milk, 2 tablespoons of semolina, 200 grams of butter, 2 cups of sugar, 22 grams of dry yeast, 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil, 100 grams of sour cream, 5 eggs, 1.3 kilograms of flour, zest of one lemon, 150 grams of raisins, salt and vanillin to taste.



Agricultural Manor "Veres"

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21 The Café That All Travellers Love

THE CAFÉ FOR TRAVELLERS

The roadside café *Lesnichovka* is located on the P99 highway, about 1 kilometre from the Synkovichi and 3 kilometres from the Veres manor. The owners of the manor and the café said: "We brought back the name of the café from the history of this place. Initially, it was a forester (hunting lodge) of the Puslovsky manor. Until 1939, a noble family had lived in this place, and after their forced departure to the west, a hospital was organized here."

The Makey family bought out an empty building. After the restoration work, they have been welcoming guests and serving delicious Belarusian cuisine for 15 years. The café can accommodate up to 120 people. It is often chosen for weddings, seminars and other large events.

LIKE AT HOME

The café offers homemade cuisine, following the best traditions of the region. The menu contains traditional soups (borsch, hodgepodge and mushroom), different types of draniki, machanka and pancakes. There are also specialties from the hostess, for example, penek – baked ribs with meat, rice and mushrooms.



A Signature Recipe

Birch Kvass

40 litres of birch juice,
1 lemon, 100 grams of
dried black bread crumbs,
200 grams of fried barley
grains, 20 grams of yeast,
1 kilogram of sugar. Infuse
for seven days.

Café "Lesnichovka"

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22 Specialties of the Manor

THE MANOR INVITES GUESTS

Elena Prudnyachenok, the owner of *Luka*, and her daughter Valeria maintain a large farm, work a lot on the garden plot and cook original dishes from natural products of their production. The agricultural manor Luka can accommodate up to 20 people.

There is also a banquet hall for 20 people, where lunches for tourist groups and celebrations are organized. The hostess of the farm invites local folklore groups to accompany the events. The owners of the manor have been working in the hospitality industry for over ten years. Tourists from Belarus and European countries regularly rest here. Recently, the manor has acquired another attraction – 12 handmade wooden carvings symbolizing the 12 signs of the zodiac. In addition to delicious food, the guests will be offered to plunge into the world of astrology, learn about character traits and even tell fortunes to fulfil their desires.

Elena and Valeria love cooking. The women know how to surprise their guests.



Elena Prudnyachenok

DRANIKI, NALIVASHKA AND OTHER TASTY THINGS

Try the traditional Belarusian dish *nalivashka* – pork intestine stuffed with potatoes, bacon and vegetables. Of course, classic Belarusian *draniki* with *machanka* will also be served here. Every fan of gastronomic experiments will love pancakes without flour according to Elena's recipe.



A Recipe From the Hostess

The delicious thin pancakes are prepared as follows: mix a glass of kefir, 4 tablespoons of cornstarch, 2 eggs, 40 grams of hot water, salt and sugar to taste. Fry and enjoy!

Agricultural Manor "Luka"

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23 Centre of Attraction of Creative People

THE CENTRE OF CULTURE AND FOLK ARTS

The Cultural Centre of Polotsk District is a place for people interested in ethnography, cooking and Belarusian culture. The centre unites 20 club institutions that preserve and develop the traditional folk culture. Here, new creative projects are being implemented, the purpose of which is to show all the versatility and wealth of the Polotsk land, to revive original rituals and traditions, to tell about people, their work, talents and creativity. Today, various events are supported by the centre..

ETHNOGRAPHIC PROJECTS

The centre is actively involved in numerous ethnographic activities. More than 12 folklore and ethnic events are held annually under the name *Z narboki Polachchyny*. For example, the art weekend *Christmas carol*, the folk party *The fees of the mother-in-law*, the folk summer holiday *Kuzminki*, the cycle of youth ethnic parties *village Bride*, the holiday *Ivan Kupala, Reload!*, etc. The tendency of increasing interest in the authenticity of the Belarusian people has formed the preconditions for the implementation of a large-scale project of the centre under the name *Smachnaye padarozhzhya Nadzeyki*. The creative plot of the project is the following: a modern curious city girl Nadzeyka is tired of sushi, pizza and hot dogs. The girl wants to try something special



A Recipe of Tzar's Pancakes

This is a recipe of buckwheat pancakes found in a small town Kushliki in Polotsk district. People call them "Tzar's Pancakes". Galina Schumann, one of the local housewives, shared the recipe that she had received from her grandmother. Pour buckwheat with spring water overnight. Add salt, rye flour and eggs. Stir carefully, grease a frying pan with fat or oil, fry thick pancakes.



and went on a trip around Polotsk district. The project was attended by real village housewives, carriers of authentic material, who shared the secrets of the technology of cooking traditional Belarusian dishes. After each cycle of the project, Nadzeyka adapted all recipes and technologies to modern times and prepared similar dishes at home. The girl shared her impressions in virtual diaries and documented dozens of old recipes and the peculiarities of ancient rituals and traditions. *The School of Authentic Recipes* was created after the project. The main character of the project Nadzeyka has accounts on social networks: *Vkontakte* (<https://vk.com/public161328198>) and *Odnoklassniki* (<https://ok.ru/group/58893927448616>).

The project *Smachnaye padarozhzhya Nadzeyki* was preceded by a large preparatory part in the form of the accompanying research ethnographic subproject *Shlyakham prodkak*. This is a large preliminary work on the collection of folklore material from living carriers of the traditional folk culture of the region, the creation of a data bank of carriers and a card index of authentic dishes, rituals and traditions.



Zaozersk birch kvass

One of the special recipes that Nadzeyka met in Zaozersk (Polotsk district) is called Zaozersk birch kvass. Due to a large number of birch trees, the territory of the agricultural town is called the birch capital of Polotsk district. It is one of the most beautiful corners of the Polotsk district, the capital of delicious natural birch water, the richest forest gifts, cleanest lakes and various hobbies (fishing, collecting forest gifts and gardening). The festival of folk craftsmanship, traditional knowledge and good neighbourliness Zaozerskaya Beryozuha is held here annually. This is an exciting online journey into village life. The guests of the festival can taste local treats, remember the origins of village traditions, stroll along the Good Neighbourhood Alley, take part in a massive "battle" with birch branches called The Birch SPA and enjoy the

diversity of folk art genres. Birch kvass is the main drink and brand of the holiday.

Local housewives prepare it the following way:

Add toasted crusts of rye bread, raisins and dried apples to fresh birch juice water. Leave in a dark place for two weeks. Kvass is harvested in March and early April, so that by June, on the hottest summer days, you can enjoy the drink.



Regional Cultural Centre of Polotsk

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Taste Cheese and Traditional Drinks of Bella

LATVIA

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Try Bread, Pancakes and Kvass

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The goal of this project is to promote and preserve regional culinary heritage and craft traditions in Latgale region (LV), Anyksciai and Kupiskis districts (LT), Polotsk, Minsk and Zelva districts (BY), therefore strengthening regional identity, sense of belonging and positively affecting local economic activities. Total project budget – 792 657,69 EUR with 90% (713 391,92 EUR) funded by the European Union.

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The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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