

BEST OF THE BALTICS: CITIES AND ISLANDS FROM TALLINN TO COPENHAGEN

8 Days | Expeditions in: |

Choose from an expertly curated menu of experiences and explore the beauty of the Baltics your way. The windmills and meteoric craters on Estonia's Muhu Island, a medieval castle or cycling tour on Saaremaa, and UNESCO World Heritage Site Art Nouveau Center in Riga, Latvia are just some of the offerings of this voyage. In Lithuania venture onto Curonian Spit, climb the "Hill of Witches," or visit the 100 year-old lighthouse of Vente Horn. Savor the art and architecture of Gdansk, Poland; visit the National Museum, Town Hall, and the Westerplatte where WWII first broke out. Hike to the cliff-top ruins of Hammershus Castle or explore the fishing port and white beaches of Bornholm Island, Denmark.



DAY 1: Tallinn, Estonia/Embark

Arrive in Tallinn, Estonia. After lunch, we have an overview of the walled, cobblestoned Old Town with its Kiek in de K ok, a 15th-century defensive tower. Embark *National Geographic Orion* and set sail towards one of Estonia's most beautiful islands. (L,D)



DAY 2: Saaremaa Island

Sail along the coast of Saaremaa Island this morning before docking near its capital Kuressaare. Head straight to Mati and Airi's private farm for a hearty traditional Estonian lunch in a rural setting complete with local music. Later, choose to take a hike to the north side of the island, where you'll encounter seabirds and interesting geological formations. Or, head to the countryside for a visit to the only working wooden windmill on the island. Either way, you'll stop at the Kaali meteorite craters for a photo opportunity. Later in the afternoon, feel free to stroll the streets of Kuressaare or visit its medieval castle and garden. (B,L,D)

Photo enthusiasts may wish to join your naturalist and National Geographic photographer for a panoramic walk along Saaremaa's beaches and the Panga cliffs.



DAY 3-4: Riga, Latvia

Explore the largest city in the Baltics on a walking tour through Riga's UNESCO-recognized center, passing wooden houses, art nouveau architecture, and funky caf es, and climbing to the top of St. Peter's Church tower for 360-degree views. Choose to bike across the Daugava River and explore the quiet island of Kipsala and its old fishermen's houses, or take a boat ride through the canals of Riga with free time before sailing to Lithuania. On one evening we venture into Riga to experience the sounds of "Ilgi," a famous Estonian folk music band. (B,L,D)

Explore with all your senses. Taste, see, and smell Latvian food specialties at the airy Central Market on an optional tour with your NG Orion chef and a local guide.





DAY 5: Klaipeda, Lithuania

Explore the wild barrier peninsula called the Curonian Spit, a UNESCO World Heritage site shared by Lithuania and Russia. Choose one of two options: Take a cultural tour to a seaside resort town to learn of folk tales at the Hill of Witches and see some of Europe's tallest sand dunes. Or, spend the afternoon at the Ventė Cape Ornithological Station to explore the lighthouse and dunes while learning about migratory bird populations. (B,L,D)

We've set up a cycling option, too, along the sea, down the wild Curonian Spit with its sand dunes, harbors and seaside wildlife.



DAY 6: Gdańsk, Poland

Arrive in Poland and take in Gdańsk's art and architectural highlights including the Gothic-Renaissance Town Hall and the National Museum, featuring the Last Judgment triptych by Hans Memling. Or, learn about the significance of ship building and trade at the Maritime Museum. Zodiacs take us through the shipyards of Gdańsk, an important area for the organized resistance against the communist regime in 1980. We take a guided tour of the European Solidarity Center, commemorating the trade union that made Lech Walesa a household name. (B,L,D)

History buffs may opt for a morning visit to the Westerplatte peninsula, where World War II began with the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, and the Polish Post Office Museum, still marked by signs of the attack. In order to maximize your time in Gdańsk, we've arranged an authentic Polish style lunch in town with open seating so you can arrive at your convenience.



DAY 7: Bornholm, Denmark

Stop at the small fishing port of Gudhjem on Bornholm Island. Hike up to the cliff-top ruins of Hammershus fortress or explore the island's round churches and white sandy beaches. Then do as the locals do with a taste of some of the island's famous smoked herring accompanied by a cold locally brewed beer. Celebrate your journey with a final dinner aboard *National Geographic Orion*. (B,L,D)



DAY 8: Copenhagen/Disembark

Disembark in Copenhagen and transfer to the airport for your flight home. Or, remain in Copenhagen for an added stay. (B)

Cost Includes:

All accommodations aboard ship, meals as indicated, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages aboard ship, excursions, sightseeing and entrance fees, special access permits, transfers to and from group flights, use of kayaks and snorkeling equipment, services of Lindblad Expeditions' Leader, National Geographic photographer, naturalist staff and expert guides, services of a ship physician, all gratuities, and all port charges and service taxes.

Note: All departures include alcoholic beverages and tips to the ship's crew.

Cost Not Included:

Air transportation, extensions, passport, visa, immigration fees, travel protection plan, internet, and laundry.