

instant

# KLAIPĖDA

## inyourpocket

June 2008 - May 2009



## Introducing Klaipėda

Klaipėda is like the contents of your underwear drawer – always changing, but somehow always the same. And with a few surprising highlights for special occasions.

In the port area at the mouth of the river there are three new restaurants, a new hotel, a new ferry, some fresh piles of dirt and a fat man with a hard hat and a whistle. By the time you read this, however, anything could have happened there. In the centre of town, things are staying pretty much the same. There's the same relaxed atmosphere and Klaipėda still offers the same quiet fascination.

Palanga and Nida are also offering reliability and predictability in their own unique ways. Palanga is still whey-hey, slap-and-tickle, zing-bling and charmless fun, while Nida is still asleep, which is why everyone goes there. Palanga airport is getting more use and now offers direct flights to London, but at least at the time we were researching this guide, that had had little effect. We're not sure if it's deliberate or not, but the flight schedule discourages weekend booze-fuelled flings, which is probably a good thing.

As always, if you have feedback, comments or suggestions, write to [klaipeda@inyourpocket.com](mailto:klaipeda@inyourpocket.com), or add comments to the reviews on our website: [www.inyourpocket.com](http://www.inyourpocket.com).

Restaurants  
Bars  
Clubs  
Sights  
Hotels  
Transport

and a whole host of other useful information

This small .pdf guide has been written to aid the traveller to Klaipėda who doesn't need or want to carry an encyclopedia-sized guidebook around in their pocket. A bold experiment in travel writing, the best (and the worst) bits of the city have been boiled down and condensed into one fun-sized read for the lightweight traveller.

## Customs

Criminal masterminds take note: Lithuanian customs officers have recently demonstrated that one cannot expect to arrive on a plane with a crocodile, hide a late model Mercedes under a pile of onions on the back of a truck, carry cocaine in your handbag or get away with saying that you're going to use all those cannabis plants to make herbal tea. All such cunning schemes have been foiled at the border. Other than such obvious considerations, those arriving from EU countries have no import restrictions placed upon them – although you will need to make it known if you are arriving with €10,000 or more in cold, hard cash.

When arriving from non-EU countries, you are entitled to bring in one litre of spirits or two litres of wine or beer and 200 cigarettes, 100 cigarillos, 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco. You can bring 50g of perfume and 250ml of eau de toilette (that's just diluted perfume, for those men among you who don't speak poof). You can't bring plants, meat, milk or dairy products from outside the EU except under certain circumstances. Dogs require vaccinations and passports (or other proof of vaccination).

You can take home as much art as you wish tax free unless it's over 50 years old, in which case expect to pay 10-20 per cent duty. Take two photos of the art piece and your passport to the Committee of Cultural Heritage, Snipiškių 3, tel. 273 42 56. Many of the better antique shops in Klaipėda (see page 40) can take care of all the paperwork for you. For more detailed information check [www.cust.lt](http://www.cust.lt), and for information on animal related arrivals, check [www.vet.lt](http://www.vet.lt).

## Disabled travellers

While things have greatly improved for the disabled over the past few years, Lithuania is still a tough place to get around on anything other than two wellfunctioning legs. Even places that claim to be wheelchair friendly are often flanked by deep kerbs or stairs, or are located on cobbled streets. Outside of the capital, you'll be lucky to find any thought given to wheelchair accessibility at all.

## Electricity

Lithuania has a nuclear power plant of the same questionable design as the one that chucked a monumental wobbly in Chernobyl. It's still gently humming away about 80km north-east of Vilnius, but will be shut down as a condition of Lithuania's EU membership. The first of two reactors was shut down as promised at the end of December 2004, and the second must go offline by the end of 2009. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have agreed to join forces and build a new nuclear power plant in Lithuania which should go online by 2015, but don't hold your breath.

Regardless of where the electricity is produced, it pours out of European style two-pin sockets at 220V, 50Hz AC. Travellers from outside Europe, or from that strange little island in Europe that still uses big three-prong monster plugs, should bring an adaptor. The best place to look for adaptors would be the Akropolis shopping centre, where Elektronikos Pasaulis and a nearby geek bits store may be able to help you.

## Money

The unit of currency in Lithuanian is the litas (Lt), which comes in denominations of 10Lt, 20Lt, 50Lt, 100Lt, 200Lt and 500Lt notes. The coins can be divided into two categories: the significant 1, 2, and 5Lt coins; and the nearly weightless and worthless centas/centai/centų coins of which there are 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1. The value of the litas is locked to that of the euro (€) at 3.4528Lt to €1. Most places of any note in cities now happily accept credit cards, and ATMs dot the streets ensuring cash for everyone with money in their account and a card attached to the Cirrus or Visa network. Travellers' cheques can be redeemed for cash in hotels and banks. If you're heading out of town, cash-up before you go – it can be as hard to find an ATM in Kapčiamiestis or Skaistgirys as it can be to pronounce the name.

## Safety

Exercise common sense. Don't flaunt your wealth and flash your cash. Don't walk home from a nightclub along dark alleys while draped in bling-bling jewellery or blinking technology. Stay cautious, look like you know where you are going (zigzagging won't help) and you will be fine. Truly heinous crimes are rare here, but theft is becoming increasingly more common. Do not leave mobile phones, wallets, purses, or fashion-accessory pooches unattended or out of your direct reach. Especially at street side cafés or in bars. Green-uniformed police are supposed to be keeping the peace in Old Town, although finding one when you need one is like looking for a cucumber in a haystack.

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### Instant Klaipėda

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Whether it will be drinking, dancing, or trying to do both at once and while not wearing your beer, there are plenty of venues for a night out in Klaipėda. Here's our list of all the best places, as well as some of the, erm ... other places (which can be fun to visit in a rubber-necking traffic-accident kind of a way). There are two kinds of night venues in Klaipėda - those that are in the centre, and those that are a short walk or taxi ride away. The central places tend to be classy, comfortable and safe, while those on the outskirts tend to be shabby and mildly dangerous. The problem is that the central clubs seem to struggle to attract a crowd, so if you want guaranteed action, especially early in the week, get set for a suburban seaside sortie.

## Casinos

**Nesė Turgaus 1/Teatro 9, tel. (8-700) 555 55, www.nesecasino.lt.** With high rollers from Kaliningrad, Scandinavia and Western Europe, the dealers are the most skilled in town. And for a change in Lithuania, they seem happy when you win. Win or lose, this is a very good casino. And you can always retreat to the relaxing club below. Also at Manto 13/Daukanto 10. Taikos 105. ▶ Open 24hrs. ☎

**Nesė Casino & Buon Appetito Restaurant H. Manto 11a, tel. 31 40 46, www.pramogubankas.lt.** Many come here to catch a glance of the sad stripper while they suck down 3Lt beers. Others come to gamble the night and their money away. With cheap beer, a sexy pole dancer and the rest of the vices on hand, it does not draw in the best of crowds. We suggest you keep your eyes on the cards and not the lady dancing behind them. ▶ Casino open 09:00-05:00, restaurant 09:00-24:00. Sat, Sun 11:00-24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎

**Olympic Casino Naujojo Sodo 1, tel. 49 23 10, www.olympic-casino.lt.** A tasselled Arabian themed venue with seven tables (two roulettes, the rest for cards) 33 slot machines, a VIP room and a spacious bar. As a part of the Olympic Casino group, they offer precision and professionalism. ▶ 24hrs. ☎

**Pokervergas Janonio 11, tel. 40 11 21.** Like a classic gambling hall, with less panache and more action, Pokervergas is more authentic than other casinos in town. Tucked into its own space on the ground floor of the Magnisima hotel, gamblers can try their hand at poker, blackjack, and American roulette or drop their coins into a host of slot machines. ▶ 24hrs. ☎ ☎



## Bars

**Europa Tiltų 13, tel. 41 20 59.** This is the sort of place that poorly paid public servants come to after a hard day of scowling and frowning and being grumpy. It's cheap, it's simple, it's cheap, it makes no expectations about whether the legs on your tracksuit pants are the same length or what colour of socks you wear under your brown sandals, and... did we already mention that it's cheap? One of the walls seems to be a giant scrapbook, with bits of miscellaneous rubbish stuck to it, while one of the corners doubles as a retirement home and a psychological hospital. Interesting, at least. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Friedricho Smuklė Tiltų 6 (entrance on Kepėju), tel. +370 647 444 70, info@miestosmukle.lt, www.miestosmukle.lt.** Like visiting a great friend who wears jeans and a t-shirt but has a cellar full of decent wine, isn't afraid to eat snails and has a very casual approach to the good life. This looks like a pretty typical dark and woody bar but manages a kind of scruffy class that sets it apart. The menu ranges from frogs' legs to pigs' ears. The outdoor seating area in summer is the quite the place to be forcibly removed from at closing time. ▶ Open 09:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri 09:00 - 01:00, Sat 10:00 - 01:00, Sun 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Perlas Turgaus 1/Teatro 9, tel. (8-700) 555 55, www.pramogubankas.lt.** Drink quickly. The novelty of sitting at a big clam-theme bar is either going to wear off quickly or be enhanced by alcohol. This is certainly one of the more unique venues in town, and diving in is worthwhile just so you can add to your collection of interesting stories to take home. ▶ 24hrs. ☎

**Skandalas I. Kanto 44, tel. 41 15 85/+370 698 399 60, www.skandalas.info.** While they claim that only shiny happy people are welcome, we did notice an insidious smirk the last time we entered. Seriously, it is a fun concept full of fun people who clearly like their jobs. And after all, that is what makes a good bar great. Expect lots of revelry, hard drinks and good food. Not central, but certainly worth a cab ride, especially in winter. ▶ Open 12:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 02:00, Sun 12:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Šikšnosparnio Lizdas (Bat&S Nest) Tiltų 5-kepeju 16, tel. 31 34 12/31 18 65.** Holy flying rodents, Batman! It's a clandestine cave of cavorting with thematic interior design! They've vamped up this basement with wonderfully crazy, creepy and creative touches. There are gothic gadgets set into the tables, a water feature and moody moon-blue lighting. If the dim caverns become too claustrophobic you can retreat to the airy atrium for a breath of humanity. The menu offers so much to sink your fangs into that we suggest you order with the assistance of an Ouija board. ▶ Open 11:00 - 06:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Tappo D'oro Vyninė Sukilėlių 10, tel. +370 620 811 69, www.tempolibero.lt.** This charming little wine bar is a Vilnius-favourite and will no doubt be a Klaipėda-favourite, too. A fine selection of Italian wines is complemented by a range of decent Italian cheeses and olives. In summer there is lovely outdoor seating in the picturesque square. ▶ Open 11:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

 The Klaipėda telephone code is +370 46

## Clubs

**Dr. Who Naujojo Sodo 1, tel. +370 640 444 84, ricardas@drwho.lt.** (Review to be read with music accompaniment: *Dang-daka-dang-daka-dang ... whoooo-oooo-ooooo ... etc.*) Klaipėda's newest and slickest club actually has little to do with time lord phone box antics, but is out of this world. There's a lavish charcoal, grey and silver decor dripping with sparkly chandeliers, mirrors and - we won't beat about the universe with this bit - some of the most amazingly gorgeous women you're likely to see this side of planet Gallifrey. The layout is excellent, encouraging both mingling and perching, and the slick beats pound out to keep the dance floor moving. The hottest club for posers and fashionistas heading into the summer of 2008. Note that they were talking about being open on Thursday nights in July. ▶ Open , Fri, Sat 10:30 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**El Calor Kepėju 10 (enter from Jono), tel. +370 671 598 99, info@elcalor.lt, www.elcalor.lt.** The only night-club located in the Old Town, and sticking to the tried and tested old formula of Latino-themed decoration, Latino-ish music mixed with mindless pop, plenty of places for sitting or standing about and not enough room to dance. They mix little competitions and dancing lessons (neither of which you will understand) with the evening's proceedings to keep a cheesy fun factor frothing along. It's small, poorly designed, has overpriced drinks and not enough ventilation and is a wonderful success. ▶ Open 22:00 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun (but may work Sundays in summer). ☎ ☎ ☎

**Global Janonio 27, tel. 39 95 79, info@globalclub.lt, www.globalclub.lt.** This place is full of people who are either very young or very stupid. Or both. If either adjective applies to you, get along to get involved in chest-out bravado and some kind of epileptic spaz-dancing. Tracksuit and supermarket fashion are the go here, as is blundering around rudely bumping into everyone. All this can make it fun in an anthropological or zoological kind of way, but we can only recommend it to groups or unobtrusive wallflowers. ▶ Open 22:00 - 05:00, Fri 22:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun. ☎ ☎ ☎

**Kalifornija Laukininkų 17, tel. 22 97 35.** About as stylish as a tin foil hat but, amazingly, very popular. It really is a tatty and run-down dump which, like any good dump, is constantly frequented by a squabbling flock of sea birds and mangy cats (so to speak). It is therefore the only reliable option for joining a young grooving crowd at any time. It can get a bit tense, and is always as grim and tacky as a rusty bucket of hot tar. Lash out on a taxi (about 10Lt from Old Town) and dip in if you dare. ▶ Open 22:00 - 07:00. ☎ ☎ ☎

**Martini Taikos 64/24b, tel. 31 40 79, fax 23 40 85, klaipeda@martini-club.lt.** It's early days for this new venue, but we reckon they've got a good chance of capturing the sophisticated market: blokes with black BMWs, thick necks, short fuses, man bags and arm candy girlfriends. If that sounds like your kind of scene, by all means go along for this shiny new cocktail of fun. It's not in the centre, however, and given that there are better options closer to the middle of town we can't see much attraction here for foreigners. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 06:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Memelis Žvejų 4, tel. 40 30 40, info@memelis.lt, www.memelis.lt.** The barn dance is back. Management of this place lost the plot last season and people stayed away in droves. Now they're back to the usual no-nonsense fun with come-one-come-all entrance prices, the sort of

DJ who isn't ashamed to play Macarena, in-house brewed beer that isn't awful and an easy-going crowd that are out to have fun more than to play competitive fashion games. Don't bother tucking your shirt in, leave your trainers on, and come along and join the fun. A good place if you can't dance but insist on trying anyway. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Wed, Sun 12:00 - 24:00, Thu 12:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Memelis VIP Žvejų 4, tel. 40 30 40, fax 40 30 41, info@memelis.lt, www.memelis.lt.** The attic antics on the top floor of the Memelis warehouse just get stranger and stranger. It was a Latino disco boudoir at one stage, then it was just closed, and now they call it a VIP vee-jay bar or some such thing. Can't be too VIP, however, because they let us in. While there's really nothing special here, consisting specifically of a small dance patch, a few couches and poufs, a few video screens and an MTV style playlist, it can be a decent place to climb up to if things get a bit yucky downstairs. (You have to pay a bit extra to come up here, so it keeps the riff-raff out.) ▶ Open , Thu 22:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 22:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Paradox Minijos 2, tel. +370 6877 7001, www.clubparadox.lt.** Sexy in a cheap, grubby and tacky kind of way, and possibly a bit dangerous for those with more hormones than common sense. Pretty young things flit about waiting for someone to ask them to dance or buy them a drink, while cheapskate morons sit around waiting to get drunk enough to comply or get in a fight. There's a 21-years age limit but the security goons seem to think that means 'up to 21' and hence the place is crawling with jailbait. Cheap thrills, for some. ▶ Open 21:00 - 07:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Relax Turgaus 1/Teatro 9, tel. (8-700) 555 55, www.pramogubankas.lt.** Slip into your flash pants, iron your hair and hustle along for high-priced cheap thrills. It's a ditzzy, glitzy, whey-hey, pop noodle kind of place that is reliably lively and frequently fizzing with pretty fun types. Whether you have a good night or a great night will depend on the crowd, so stick your nose against the window to peek inside and see what's happening before you pay to go in. ▶ Open 08:00 - 03:00. ☎ ☎

## Expat

**Juoduo Katino Smuklė 2 Žvejų 21/Teatro 1, tel. 41 11 67, juodasiskatinas@gmail.com.** A mildly classy bar and always a reliable fallback option for foreigners who are working towards falling over. It's clean, smart, safe and high standards ensure that you might actually be able to drink beer that is cold and isn't 80 per cent froth. Meals are pretty simple but sufficient to bolster you up for another drink. Or three. The name is a bit misleading, as you're unlikely to find much feline action in here. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

**Kurpių Kurpių 1a, tel. 41 05 55, www.jazz.lt.** Someone who designs baffling 3D computer game mazes took a day off and designed this place, with a little help from Escher. The platforms and levels mean that even when empty it's amazing, but (and this is the cool thing,) it's hardly ever empty. It's sometimes mellow, sometimes mad, but almost always overflowing with fun. With a great crowd and the best live Jazz in Lithuania, this a legendary place. Don't miss it. ▶ Open 12:00 - 02:00, Mon, Sun 12:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

## Beaches

Is there anything better than lazing about in the sun and strolling along the shore? No, there isn't. So hurry up and get a spot while you can. More active types will enjoy the beachgoers playing games of volleyball, footie and tearing up the serene atmosphere with their water scooters. Numerous outdoor cafés and restaurants line the beaches. The beaches often host various entertainment events. Melnragė beach is located about ten minutes away from the city centre by car or microbus. Tack on another five minutes to the journey and head north to reach Giruliai beach. Also in the area one can enjoy Smiltynė beach, where you need to take the ferry across the spit. Once you disembark either continue by car or flag down a microbus to farther-flung areas like Juodkrantė (18km) or Nida (50km).

## Churches

**Mary, Queen of Peace Rumpšišės 6a, tel. 41 01 20.** Using private funds this fairly modern house of worship was built between 1960 and 1962, and since the grand struggle was completed, the Soviets (bless them) closed it, ripped off the spire, and turned it into a concert hall. With a history just slightly more colourful than the cheap-chocolate-brown building itself, the church was restored to its original purpose on November 25, 1988. ▶ Services 18:00, 20:00, Sat 08:00, 09:00, 10:00, 18:00, Sun 08:00, 09:00, 10:00, 12:00, 18:00.

**St John's Pylimo 2.** Once a prominent arrow jutting out over the Old Town rooftops, all that remains of the original 75-metre tower is a collection of faded memories and equally faded black and white photographs. Dating back to 1696, the church was damaged in World War II and thoughtfully levelled and turned into a shopping centre by the Soviets. A new church with the same name now does the pious Evangelical-Lutheran work of its namesake, with services in German. ☒

## Museums

**Blacksmith's Museum (Kalvystės Muziejus) Šaitkalvių 2, tel. 41 05 26.** Museums can roughly be grouped into two main types, the active and the passive. Whereas the passive types are often 'hit and miss' affairs, the active ones are always worth a visit. This one is no exception, a real working forge combined with a museum, and the effect is lovely. Hot and sweaty, perhaps, but lovely. Opened in 1993, come and watch glistering gentlemen at work, or just glide around the exhibits. The largest of which is comprised of iron crosses, gates, fences and weathervanes from churches in Klaipėda and parts of Lithuania Minor all of which were salvaged by Dionizas Varkalis. Some pieces of metalwork were salvaged from the old cemetery where now stands the Mažvydas Sculpture Park. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:30. Closed Mon, Sun. ☒

**Castle Museum Pilies 4, tel. 41 05 27/41 05 24.** Opened in 2002 the castle museum boats a great hall chockfull of authentic objects and furnishings from the 16-18th centuries. Make sure to feast your eyes on the gold Renaissance-era ring encrusted with diamonds. (Every year residents of the city who distinguish themselves by their contributions to the city are awarded a replica of this ring.) There are also some frighteningly bad dummies with bug eyes and alarming furniture-stuffing hair. Outside the castle the poterns, or ammunitions storage areas, also house small exhibitions explaining the importance of the city and castle in the city's history. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon, Sun. ☒



**Clock Museum (Klaipėdos Laikrodžių Muziejus) Liepų 12, tel. 41 04 13.** If you want to while away some time, or find out more about it, you can't go past this place. The history of recording time has been laid out in various rooms of a historic building. There are water clocks, clocks made from candles, sundials (useless in this part of the world on most days) and a vast collection of mechanical clocks splayed open so you can see their innards shuffling away. If it ticks or tocks or spins or whirs, it's probably in here somewhere. The garden behind the building is also well worth a visit. You don't even have to be a Poindexter to enjoy it. But it helps. ▶ Open 12:00 - 17:30, Sun 12:00 - 16:30. Closed Mon. ☒

**History Museum of Lithuania Minor (Mažosios Lietuvos Istorijos Muziejus) Didžioji Vandens 6, tel. 41 05 24.** A beautifully laid-out array of old bits and pieces that cobble together the history of this region. Unfortunately there are no English explanations, or just brief single-word labels to describe what is already obvious, but with things like old pots, tiles, coins, bank notes and so on it's not hard to work out what it's all about. One room is dedicated to the local lifestyle of days gone by, and the collection of tools, trinkets and creepy-looking dummies dressed up in old clothes is quite interesting. Come to this place and you'll be able to understand all the bits of junk dangling from the ceiling of those 'traditional' themed restaurants. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon, Sun. ☒

**P. Domšaitis' Gallery Liepų 33, tel. 41 04 12.** Outside find a courtyard featuring a host of modern sculptures, whilst inside, feast your eyes on a relatively extensive collection of 20th century Lithuanian creations, from early impressionist works through to the more modern and non-identifiable contemporary pieces. The museum's permanent exhibit, entitled Lithuanian Art from 1920-1940, is located in seven galleries of the west wing. Also hidden away inside are a cool collection of pre-World War II postcards and some domestic detritus as collected by local history guru Dionizas Varkalis. ▶ Open 12:00 - 18:00, Sun 12:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. ☒

## Statues & Sights

**Ännchen von Tarau (Taravos Anikė) Teatro alkštė.** The original girl standing in front of the Drama Theatre was dedicated to the German poet Simon Dach (1605-1659), and was erected in 1912 by the Berlin sculptor Alfred Kune. The poor lass disappeared at some unknown time during World War II, possibly by the Nazis (who were supposedly upset that she had her back turned towards a ranting Führer, shouting at the masses from the theatre balcony in 1939), possibly by the Soviets (who stole just about every thing that wasn't

nailed down during their unwelcome stay in the country). In any event, a replacement was constructed from old photographs in 1990, and the girl, of whom Dach wrote a famous folk song about, is now back where she belongs. ☒

**Friedricho Pasažas Tiltų 26a, tel. 30 10 70/41 10 76, fax 41 10 76, info@pasazas.lt, www.pasazas.lt.** What used to be a somewhat creepy and rundown little alley has been turned into a charming little passage bristling with life. It's now the sort of place where well-to-do blondies come to show off their fashion accessory poodles and hip dudes who are too cool for the office come to crack open their laptops. Families filter through, friends chat at outdoor tables, and it has quickly become Klaipėda's most cosmopolitan little corner. There's a bar, café, pizza restaurant, Mediterranean restaurant and a couple of empty shops waiting for clever entrepreneurs to come along and do something wonderful. It's all jolly marvellous and one of the must-see streets in Klaipėda. The history of this little nook goes back to the early 17th century when it was granted town rights, but while that's all very interesting this is a place that is much more interesting for its future than its past. ☒

**Mažvydas Sculpture Park (Mažvydo Skulptūrų Parkas) Between Liepų and Daukanto.** Until 1977 this was the site of the city's main cemetery, when the Soviets ordered the place destroyed and set about stealing everything in it (they failed by the way, and the salvaged crosses can now be found in the Blacksmith's Museum). Not much remains of the original cemetery, but this sculpture park, rather than the mournful environment that it could be, is a happy area full of all manner of gregarious sculptures of all persuasions. ☒

**Memorial to Martynas Mažvydas (Martyno Mažvydo paminklas) Lietuvininkų alkštė.** This statue, erected in 1997 by R. Midvikis, honours the man accredited with writing the first book to be published in the Lithuanian language, the 1547 Catechisms. Mathematicians will quickly spot that the statue was placed to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the book, and the unveiling (on the spot previously occupied by a monument celebrating the Red Army) was a very serious affair indeed, spread out as it was over period of 12 months, and involving many other related celebrations. ☒

**Meridianas Ship** The behemoth in the Danės river is a short lesson on reparations and entrepreneurship. First built in 1948 the Meridianas was originally owned by the Finns and was used by their naval navigation school. The ship was turned over to the Soviets as reparation for World War II. Once iron boats replaced wooden vessels the ship was placed into retirement as a restaurant along the river. Over the years the ship deteriorated. A few years ago an upstart lawyer, Artūras Žickus bought it for one litas. Besides renovations, the new owner smartly dressed the ship with sails provided by the Švyturys beer company.

**Cat & Mouse** Tucked away in the little maze of Old Town, and somewhat worryingly close to each other, are a cat and a mouse. These little statues recently appeared although, in the case of the cat, not for the first time. Locals tell us that there was another cat prowling the streets many years ago, but it mysteriously disappeared. Cat burglars. Now the cat is back, caught in the act of gently stalking the mouse not more than a block away. The mouse has her own secrets. Whisper a wish in the mouse's ear and not only will you look a bit foolish bending down talking to an inanimate object, but your wish will be granted. Exactly what a mouse is going to be able to pull-off on your behalf, however, is questionable. The cat and mouse are cute and fun additions to Old Town. Look out for them as you wander around. ☒

## Go along swimmingly

Smiltynė (known previously as Sandberg and Sandkrug) was established as a post along the road from Königsberg to Klaipėda.

This sliver of land was less than hospitable to those who tried to settle it. The shifting sands coupled with the determined forces of Swedish, Russian and eventually Soviet troops who all saw the area as an important claim insured that life on the spit was harsh.

During the 1900s the area was first developed for tourism, mostly serving the near-by Klaipėda residents wishing for a summer break from the city. Adjacent to Smiltynė is the Koppalis (previously known as Suderspitze) village.

Klaipėda city officials tried unsuccessfully to populate the somewhat inhospitable area in order to enhance their port's capabilities. By 1821 the village had seven farmsteads thanks to tax breaks for locals by the Prussian government. Residents worked at the ballast yard, maintained the shoreline and fished the area.

In 1887 a hospital and quarantine area for diagnosing infectious diseases was built. Considered one of the first resorts on the Curonian spit, Koppalis by 1835 had women-only, men-only beaches and a restaurant complete with garden café. After World War II Soviet troops set up a border station along here. In 1978 the Soviets also had the good sense to demolish the last surviving pre-war home of the area, enabling a part of history to be lost.

As the sand often shifted over homes so did the politics and those in charge of the Smiltynė area, insuring that Swedish, Russian, German and Soviet troops had all tried to claim the area as their own.

Smiltynė hit the headlines in May 2006 when 150 hectares of the forest in the area was ablaze. It was the biggest fire in the area in recent history, and you'll probably still see the charred remains that it has left in the coming year.

Today the area on the edge of the spit is better known for its aquarium, but two lesser-known sites are the veteran vessels and a re-creation of a fisherman's farmstead. The latter both are located south of the aquarium complex.


Once you've explored how people lived and fished on this spit of land head over to the ever-popular aquarium.




**Aquarium & Dolphinarium (Lietuvos Jūrų Muziejus) Smiltynė 3, tel. 49 07 51, fax 49 07 50, ljm@juru.muziejus.lt, www.juru.muziejus.lt.** Despite the silly 'pay extra if you have a camera' policy, the Lithuanian Sea Museum is a delight, featuring history, an aquarium, and performing sea animals. The aquarium, housed in a reconstructed fort, features a big central pool surrounded by tanks of penguins, various bizarre fish, and other aquatic displays. Outside in summer, you can see shows featuring a jolly big sea lion who plays with balls, hoops and audience members. The nearby dolphinarium, however, is where the action really happens in even more spectacular shows with dolphins, sea lions, and, on summer evenings, synchronised swimmers. Highly recommended for families with children, and James Bond style villains who wish to dip enemies into a pool of hungry ... penguins. To get there, take the Smiltynė ferry and walk along the shore to the right as you leave the boat. ▶ Open 10:30 - 18:30. Closed Mon (June - August), 10:30 - 17:30. Closed Mon, Tue (May - September), 10:30 - 16:30. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri (October - April).

There's no shortage of accommodation in Klaipėda, and while the top end of the market has blossomed, there are still some, erm... interesting options for budget travellers. Keep in mind, however, that as Klaipėda is the gateway to some fun summer beachy type destinations, prices can rise to rip-off proportions in the holiday season, and bookings become increasingly necessary (especially for the budget and hostel options).








## Upmarket

**Europa Royale Klaipėda Žvejų 21/Teatro 1, tel. 40 44 44, fax 40 44 45, klaipeda@europaroyale.com, www.europaroyale.com.** Despite the strange sci-fi dome over the door, this is an oasis of taste and subtle refinement ideally located amid some of the not so subtle nightlife venues. There's even one apartment with a window by the bath from which you can watch people falling out of the third floor windows of the pub across the road while you go slowly wrinkly. Another has a lovely balcony and huge spa, complete with a sign warning against "incautious behaviour". All rooms have a classy cream and maroon theme that is somehow soothing and calming. It's a cocoon of peace, luxury and tranquillity right in the midst of all the action. Ideal. ▶ 50 rooms (10 singles €80 - 100, 24 doubles €100 - 120, 1 triple €130 - 150, 7 suites €120 - 160, 8 apartments €160 - 300).        ★★

**Euterpe Daržų 9/Aukštoji 15, tel. 47 47 03, fax 47 47 05, hotel@euterpe.lt, www.euterpe.lt.** A very smart and still relatively new hotel (opened November 2006) that offers spiffing little rooms that have plenty of nice, neat, neutral-tone charm as well as a full range of modern facilities. There are heated bathroom floors, well-stocked minibars, cable television, swish modern bathrooms and enormous beds. Security is superb (if you don't mind little cameras looking at you in the corridors) and the location is excellent. The place has a very nice feeling of calm, elegance and charm about it. Don't miss the original stonework showing the namesake muse that was found when foundations for the hotel were being dug - you'll find it in reception. ▶ 23 rooms (2 singles 200Lt, 13 doubles 260 - 320Lt, 2 triples 390Lt, 6 suites 400 - 480Lt).        ★★

**Klaipėda Naujojo Sodo 1, tel. 40 43 72, fax 40 43 73, hotel@klaipedahotel.lt, www.klaipedahotel.lt.** There's an old bit, and a new bit. The old bit is Soviet-sturdy but very comfortable. All eyes, however, are on the new bit. Which is a shame because it's falling apart. There's grout missing around the bath/shower, which gives mould somewhere to hide, the furniture is wonky, the light switches and power outlets are falling off and the paint has worn through on the walls where someone brushed past. Basically this is a beautifully designed hotel which was built on the cheap and it shows. Still, all services are on offer and if you look out the window you get the best views in town. ▶ 307 rooms (16 singles 280Lt, 251 doubles 300Lt, 38 suites 430 - 450Lt, 2 apartments 1000Lt).        ★★

**Navalis H. Manto 23, tel. 40 42 00, fax 40 42 02, info@navalis.lt, www.navalis.lt.** The big looming boat bow that welcomes you in reception sets the scene of a crisp style that floats throughout this fine-tuned establishment. It's all about classy elegance here. If the interior designers who set it all up were hanging around, they would probably be selective about the types of guests that are allowed to enter. ('Sorry, darling, you're just not the right type.') Fortunately, they're off the scene, so if you can rustle up the litas, you can choose from either the mahogany








themed rooms (facing the street) or the beech-themed rooms (facing the car park). All rooms have a well stocked minibar, satellite television, tea and coffee making facilities, sweets on the pillows, and all the other little touches you would expect of a hotel of this class. ▶ 28 rooms (2 suites 650Lt, 3 apartments 800Lt, 4 business class room 550Lt, 19 standard rooms 380 - 414Lt).        ★★

**Radisson SAS Šaulių 28, tel. 49 08 00, fax 49 08 15, info.klaipeda@radissonsas.com, www.klaipeda.radissonsas.com.** With compasses on the carpet and signal flags on the walls, you won't get lost in this naval themed palace. With delightful staff, a sparkling new gym, and such well appointed rooms, you'd be quite happy if you did. Whether you write your ship's log on the big desk, or report your movements using the telephone in the toilet, you can do so in comfort and style. Nice touches include free wi-fi internet access, heated bathroom floor, well stocked minibar, free newspapers, and a range of flavoured and colourful shampoos, soaps, and other knick-knacks in a little basket by the sink. All this comes in a quiet street just a short drift from much of the action. ▶ 74 rooms (30 singles €95 - 150, 25 doubles €105 - 160, 3 suites €235, 1 apartment €300, 15 business class rooms €135 - 175).        ★★

**Vecekrug Jūros 23, tel. 30 10 02, fax 31 22 62, info@vecekrug.lt, www.vecekrug.lt.** Walking into reception is like walking into someone's lounge room. It's very homely and welcoming, and certainly unique. The innovation extends to the rooms, half of which are minty-fresh and bright, with huge windows facing the coast, while others are chocolate-box charming but a bit more old fashioned. The older rooms face a quiet street. Extras like huge bathrooms, the spa and sauna room, and the rooftop terrace all add to the value of this tucked-away treasure. Pleasant and helpful staff are the icing on the cake that make the place well worth consideration. ▶ 23 rooms (4 singles 300Lt, 15 doubles 350Lt, 3 suites 450Lt, 1 business class rooms 500Lt).        ★★

## Mid-range

**Aribė Bangu 17a, tel. 49 09 40, fax 49 09 42, hotel@aribe.lt, www.aribe.lt.** Soothing pastels, simple tidy furniture, and plenty of space so that you can bring your own medical equipment and pretend you are in a private hospital. This place has that unblemished yet bland and banal feeling that makes it a good place to recover from something or wait to die while whittling away your children's inheritance. Coincidentally, it is located just a short stumble from the Švyturys brewery, and not far from the market and all the Old Town action. ▶ 21 rooms (12 singles 160 - 170Lt, 8 doubles 210Lt, 1 suite 260Lt).        ★★

**Astra Pilies 2, tel. 31 38 49, fax 21 64 20, hotel@takas.lt.** They stubbornly refused to show us rooms when we visited, so we haven't got a clue what this place is like. Our Editor stayed there in 2002 and, at least from the looks of reception and the Soviet-style stuff you attitude, it seems nothing has changed. What we can say with confidence is that the location is excellent, right between Old Town and the ferry port that can whisk you across to Neringa. If you can haggle on price and put up with awful service, keep it in mind. Otherwise leave it for ... well, just leave it. ▶ 14 rooms (7 singles 185 - 200Lt, 7 doubles 200 - 260Lt, 4 suites 360Lt).        ★★

**Old Port Hotel Žvejų 20/22, tel. 47 47 64, fax 47 47 65, info@oldporthotel.lt, www.oldporthotel.lt.** Spanning two buildings on either side of a dinky swing bridge, this hotel offers a lovely compromise between cost and comfort in an excellent location. Chances are you'll be able to see water from your room, and possibly the ferry coming and going. The yellow building offers a more classic style, while things are a bit more designer-mod in the glassy fachwerk box on the other side of the bridge. Both offer facilities such as free internet, satellite television, heated bathroom floor and air conditioning. But there are no rooms with bathtubs, so if you want to take a bath with the hair dryer you'll have to go elsewhere. Basically, this is a new, interesting and well-located hotel, and should tempt those who are not on a budget. ▶ 46 rooms (7 singles, 29 doubles, 10 suites 260-450Lt).        ★★

**Parkas Liepojos 3, tel. 38 52 83, fax 38 52 80, buk@hotelparkas.com, www.hotelparkas.com.** At less than 10 years-old this small and pleasant hotel near a lake features all the modern amenities necessary for a comfortable stay, including televisions in every room, modern bathrooms, conference facilities and a restaurant. This is an excellent choice if one is looking for upmarket standards at affordable prices. ▶ 28 rooms (2 singles 130Lt, 20 doubles 170Lt, 2 suites 260Lt, 4 family rooms 200Lt).        ★★

**Promenada Šaulių 41, tel. 40 30 20, fax 40 30 21, hotel@promenada.lt, www.promenada.lt.** Just a short promenade from the centre of town, but far enough away to boast a quiet, leafy and safe location. Rooms are nothing to strut about but offer a homely charm and all the comforts you could hope for: a choice of shower or bath, television, well-stocked minibar and internet access. A pleasant and relaxing home away from home. ▶ 22 rooms (8 singles 180 - 220Lt, 7 doubles 220 - 250Lt, 2 triples 300 - 330Lt, 5 suites 230 - 290Lt).        ★★

**Reval Inn Minijos 119, tel. 38 08 03, fax 48 20 30, klaipeda@revallinn.com, www.revallinn.com.** Just over the road from the international ferry terminal and also right on the main road that heads to Kaunas and Vilnius. It is, therefore ideal for anyone who has come with a car from across the sea and wishes to explore Klaipėda for a day or two before heading inland. The brief here is more business-like economy than luxury or charm, so it's just like a freshly scrubbed apprentice in a shiny new suit. There's everything you need, and not much that you don't. ▶ 84 rooms (78 standard rooms €45-75 for one person, €50-80 for two persons, 6 business class rooms €70-100 for one person, €75-105 for two persons).        ★★

## Budget

Klaipėda is easily done on the cheap with apartments and hotels outside of the centre providing reasonable lodging, but backpackers will be disappointed with only one hostel.

**Fortūna Poilsio 64, tel. 34 80 28, fax 36 01 74, fortuna@fortuna.lt, www.fortuna.lt.** The modest entrance to what can barely be referred to as a hotel is accented with a shaggy swine rug and an odd relic that is (or was) a shoeshine machine. But first impressions are not everything. Once inside you can choose between cigarette scented rooms or the ones recently freshened up with some cheap perfume. Bathrooms contain no shower curtains, so if you fancy a splash-splash, there are likely better options. Still, the people are friendly and the price is right for those on a budget. ▶ 8 rooms (3 singles 120 - 140Lt, 2 doubles 165Lt, 3 suites 160 - 190Lt).        ★★


## Guesthouses

**Litinterp Puodžių 17, tel. 41 06 44/+370 656 188 17, fax 42 01 76, klaipeda@litinterp.lt, www.litinterp.lt.** A charming old house in a convenient and central location has been converted into a cluster of cute little apartments. Some are just for one, others can house a family. Some have private bathrooms, others have to share. All have basic amenities supported by the friendly and ever-willing Litinterp team, and come at prices that are unbeatable in this location. ▶ 19 rooms (3 singles 70 - 100Lt, 10 doubles 120 - 160Lt, 2 triples 160 - 210Lt, 4 apartments 160 - 240Lt).     ★★

**Morena Audros 8a, Melnragė, tel. 35 13 14, fax 40 19 05, admin@morenahotel.lt, www.morenahotel.lt.** The stories filtering back from previous guests all tell the same tale of jolly times, relaxed atmosphere, and a rather wicked attic room. One of the few guesthouses around that offer room service this place is a real find, and if one is looking for a relaxing break away (but not too far away) from the city grind, give them a call today. As well as the accommodation in the main part of the building there's also a charming separate flat for those looking for something a little more private. Winter discounts. ▶ 26 rooms (5 singles 120-140Lt, 13 doubles from 160Lt, 1 quad from 200Lt, 7 suites from 200Lt).        ★★

**Preludija Kepėjų 7, tel. 31 00 77, preliudija@bnk.lt, www.preludija.com.** With a seemingly perfect setting very near the Theatre square, those who opt to stay in this new guesthouse will be resting in a building with a storied past and a bright future. The 150-year-old building has been restored to compliment the Klaipėda Old Town. The colour treatments in their six rooms are comforting, the bathrooms are modern and the beds are oh-so-comfortable. Considering all these design elements, the price is an exceptional bargain. ▶ 6 rooms (5 doubles 180 - 210Lt, 1 suite 240 - 280Lt).   ★★


## Hostels

**Klaipėda Old Town Hostel Butkų Juzės 7-4, tel. 21 18 79/+370 655 944 07, guestplace@yahoo.com, www.lithuanianhostels.org.** This place hasn't changed much in approximately forever and still gets away with cramming in happy hikers, making them take their shoes off (pew!) and offering bare-bones services (no lockers, no room, one shower for everyone, etc). It's the only hostel in town so cheapskates have nowhere else to go. Despite all that, or perhaps because of it, the place tends to have a pretty easy-going and friendly atmosphere. ▶ 3 rooms (32 - 44Lt/person).   ★★

## Apartment rental

**Anikė Apartment Rent Žvejų 15-5, tel. +370 612 082 99, taravos.anike@defi.lt.** ▶ 1 apartment €100.   ★★

**Apartmentų Nuoma Tel. +370 698 201 58, www.apartmentunuoma.lt.** Apartments for day or longer stays. ▶ (150-300Lt/night).  ★★

**Dream House Zanavykų 16, tel. 48 50 13/+370 600 764 42.** A dream house that is open all night, offering plush pink bedding and a Russian sauna for 100-120Lt.  ★★

**Jukunda Molo 71, Melnragė, tel. 30 07 00/+370 698 461 61, jukunda@takas.lt, www.jukunda.lt.** Several gorgeous self-contained apartments next to a pine forest and a minute's walk from the sea. ▶ 20 rooms (5 apartments €100-200/night).        ★★