

WATER TOURISM IN THE BALTICS

A season of adventure and discovery

On May 3, Latvia's Salaca River will host the 100km SUP King Marathon.

As spring breathes new life into the Baltic region, the waterways of Latvia and Estonia transform into a playground for adventure seekers and nature lovers alike. With more than 12,000 rivers – only a handful longer than 100 kilometres – and more than 3000 shimmering lakes, Latvia is a haven for serene paddling and wildlife spotting. Meanwhile, Estonia's 2300 islands and islets offer an unparalleled coastal escape, from the vast landscapes of Saaremaa to countless hidden coves waiting to be explored.

It's no wonder that water tourism reigns supreme in the Baltics. Whether you're gliding across tranquil lakes on a stand-up paddleboard (SUP), kayaking on meandering rivers, or sailing along the picturesque coastline, there's an experience for every traveller. Thrill-seekers can dive into the depths on an underwater adventure or take on the river rapids for an adrenaline rush, while those craving tranquillity can soak up the beauty of nature from the water's edge.

For those eager to immerse themselves in the region's great outdoors, the Baltic

Nature Tourism consortium curates experiences with more than 120 local specialists across Estonia and Latvia. Whether it's wildlife watching, foraging, photography, or extreme adventures, this platform opens the door to the ultimate Baltic escape – one in which nature is the true luxury.

If you're looking for an unforgettable way to explore Latvia's breathtaking landscapes, the country's waterways offer the perfect escape, inviting you to explore winding rivers, misty marshes, and vibrant urban canals.

Exploring Riga's canals from the water is a unique way to see Latvia's capital. With *Lūzumpunkts Laivas*, glide through the Zunda Canal, past the Old Town, or towards the Riga Shipyard in a single or double sea kayak, a SUP board, or even a team-sized SUP for a fun group experience. The city's historical architecture and modern skyline provide a stunning backdrop for this urban water adventure.

Looking for more nature? Canoeing along the Irbe River with *DabaLaba* is

a journey through unspoilt landscapes. Flowing through western Latvia to the Baltic Sea, this scenic route winds past steep, sandy banks and lush forests. The adventure begins at the Irbene Radio Telescope, one of the largest of its kind in Europe, and continues for 14 kilometres, with the option of extending the trip for a further 13 kilometres to reach the sea. For something more mystical, *Boards You* offers a SUP experience in the Smārde Bog, where mist-shrouded waterways intermingle with eerie stands of twisted trees. Cormorants flying overhead add to the dreamlike atmosphere, making the trip an almost surreal escape.

For those looking for a challenge, the ultimate test of endurance takes place on May 3. On that day, the 100-kilometre SUP King Marathon will push paddlers to their limits through some of Latvia's most beautiful riverscapes. Every 20 to 30 kilometres, 'settlements of kings' will offer athletes a place to rest, refuel, and socialise with fellow adventurers. This event is about more than distance – it's about resilience, determination, and



Estonia's hidden gem, Rummu Quarry, offers peaceful exploration on SUP boards and pedal boats.



Explore Riga's urban waterways with *Lūzumpunkts Laivas*.



Canoeing along the Irbe River with *DabaLaba* is a journey through unspoilt landscapes.



The legendary Võhandu Marathon celebrates 20 years on April 19.

the thrill of the finish line. Register now at salaca100marathon.lv and accept the challenge!

Estonia's rugged coastline and pristine waters offer some of the most breathtaking kayaking in the Baltics. One of the best ways to explore this stunning landscape is by sea kayak, hopping between remote, unspoilt islands. *Sea Kayaking Estonia* offers an unforgettable adventure, combining wild camping, good food, and great company for a truly immersive and sustainable outdoor experience.

For something even more unique, Estonia offers an unexpected whitewater adventure – right in the heart of Tallinn. Every spring, as the snow melts, the Piritä River swells to more than twice its normal level, creating an exciting nine-kilometre white-water kayaking route

through the city. Available until the end of April, this fast-flowing stretch provides an exhilarating ride for adventure-seekers with basic balance and physical ability. *Indietours* makes it easy to take part in this rare seasonal experience.

Another hidden gem is Rummu Quarry, where SUP boards and pedal boats offer a peaceful yet fascinating way to explore a crystal-clear azure blue lake. Once a limestone quarry that employed prison inmates, Rummu's eerie underwater ruins now serve as a fascinating submerged time capsule. Up to four people can hop aboard a pedal boat for a fantastic group adventure in one of Estonia's most surreal landscapes.

For those who thrive on competition and endurance, the legendary Võhandu Marathon is the ultimate challenge. Celebrating its 20th anniversary on

April 19, this iconic race welcomes 2800 paddlers from 30 countries, all eager to push their limits on Estonia's wild waterways. The 100-kilometre journey from Tamula Lake to the Võõpsu Marina is more than just a race – it's a personal odyssey through breathtaking scenery, relentless currents, and moments of pure determination. Ready to test your limits and create your own adventure story? Estonia's waterways are calling. balticnaturetourism.com
[FB/balticnaturetourism](https://www.facebook.com/balticnaturetourism)
[IG/balticnaturetourism](https://www.instagram.com/balticnaturetourism)



This publication is part of the campaign for the promotion of Baltic nature tourism within the project 'Baltic Nature Tourism – Exporting Baltic Nature Tourism to the UK (CB0100030)', which is implemented with the support of the Central Baltic Programme of the European Union and the European Regional Development Fund for 2021–2027. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Latvian rural tourism association 'Lauku ceļotājs' and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.