



TRIP OVERVIEW

Escape from your everyday and discover the open calm countryside of Lithuania on this freshwater swimming holiday in the country's beautiful Aukštaitija National Park. With a combination of swims and walks amongst some of the area's most spectacular scenery, this is the perfect way to discover these more secluded part of Lithuania.

One hundred and twenty six lakes and 200-year-old pine forests form the Aukštaitija National Park, (the oldest of Lithuania's five national parks) which we call home for four days. Through a combination of swimming and hiking, we enjoy a 25-kilometre circular journey through the freshwater lakes and majestic pine-woodland landscape.

Our accommodation is the remotely located Tiki Inn, our charming and spacious lakeside guesthouse. The Inn also boasts its own sauna, hot tubs and a range of watersports equipment including kayaks and stand-up paddle boards, available for use throughout your stay. Situated just metres from the water's edge, the Tiki Inn is run by our charismatic partner, Matthew, and his wonderful family who are sure to make your stay in Lithuania an unforgettable experience.

WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip is designed for the curious explorer who loves to combine swims in stunning freshwater lakes with hikes through beautiful and remote woodlands. Swimmers should have a basic understanding of open water swimming and be capable of completing the average daily swim distance of around 5 km (split over a minimum of two swims) prior to the start of the trip.

LOCATION SUMMARIES

Ignalina

The main town in the Aukštaitija National Park, it is said that Ignalina name got its name from two lovers named Ignas and Lina. It lies on Lake Paplovinio and Gavys and the town used to be the main ski jumping venue in Lithuania until the 1970's.

Ladakalnis Hill

One of the most famous sights in the Aukštaitija National Park is Ladakalnis Hill, from the top of which six lakes can be seen. It is a geomorphological monument.

Lake Baluošas

Lake Baluošas contains seven islands, one of which has a small lake of its own. A small stream flows from this lake into Baluošas, an unusual sight in Lithuania.

Aukštaitija National Park

Aukštaitija National Park is one of Lithuania's most beautiful natural areas where you can take part in a huge range of outdoor activities. From hiking and mountain biking to stand-up paddle boarding and other watersports, spending a few days in the National Park before or after your trip is a wonderful way to experience this spectacular part of the world.

TRIP SCHEDULE

Start Point	Tiki Inn, Paluse www.tikiinn.com
Start Time	17:30 on Day 1
Finish Point	Tiki Inn, Paluse
Finish Time	14:00 on Day 4

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during the course of your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and lake conditions. Your SwimTrek guides will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

Day 1

We meet at the Tiki Inn for a short briefing on the plans for the rest of the trip before we head down to the lake for an evening acclimatisation swim. This is followed by a welcome drink and then dinner at the Tiki Inn.

Day 2

Our first swim starts from directly in front of our accommodation. We swim the 1km distance across Lake Lūšiai to Prieplauka on the lake's northern shore. From here, it's a scenic walk through the forest to Lake Dringis where we stop for lunch. After lunch, we start our next swim; a 4km traverse of the entire lake. Once we reach the opposite shore of Lake Dringis our minibus returns us to the Tiki Inn in time for a beautiful Lithuanian sunset over the water and dinner.

Day 3

After breakfast, we are taken by minibus to the eastern shore of Lake Baluošas. From here, we island-hop across some of the lake's seven islands until we reach the small hamlet of Vaidžiuškes on the lake's southern shore. The grass banks which sweep down to the lake's shore are an excellent place to unwind from the swim. After a break, it's a short but rewarding hike to the village of Ginučiai, whose water mill is a 19th century technical monument. We stop here for lunch and after a quick rest, we head off on foot to Lake Linkmenas. After swimming across this lake we get out of the water and get changed before hiking up Ladakalnis Hill to enjoy the panoramic views across the National Park. After this, we are transported back to the Tiki Inn where we enjoy another evening meal, followed by the opportunity to have a traditional Lithuanian sauna.

Day 4

Our last day features a swim across the lakes of Asalnai and Lūšiai. The scenery across these lakes and their shores is a striking sight on our longest swim of the trip, which takes us all the way back to the Tiki Inn. After the swim, there is time for a well-earned lunch together before the trip ends.

TRIP INFORMATION

Essential Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

✓	ITEM	✓	ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Costume (x 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweater / Fleece
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Goggles (x 2)*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat and Sunglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long-sleeved top for walks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Sun Cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking Shoes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aqua Shoes / Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Daypack	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect Repellent

*Try to bring one clear lens and one tinted lens for different light conditions.

Please note that SwimTrek will supply swim hats and provide water and electrolyte drinks in shared water bottles on your safety boat. If you prefer to use your own drink bottle, please feel free to bring one along. If you would like to use a wetsuit, rash vest or fins during your swims, please ensure that you bring these with you.

Swimming Distances

SWIM*	DISTANCE	SWIM*	DISTANCE
Lake Lūšiai	1km	Linkmenas Lake	1km
Lake Dringis	4km	Asalnai to Lūšiai	5½km
Lake Baluošas	3½km		

*The shorelines of most of these lakes are very grassy and reedy. It is advisable to only enter and exit the lakes at the designated entry and exit points in order to avoid these. It should also be noted that there are no shoreline tracks for non-swimmers to follow the group.

Swimming Conditions

These lakes are some of the world's cleanest freshwater lakes, however, water quality can be an issue due to water run-off from the fields. Blue-green algae and Weil's disease are two possible contaminants. If you do feel unwell at any stage during or after the trip, you should go to your GP immediately, telling them you have been lake swimming.

Walking Conditions

Most walks take place on recognised paths and tracks, however, there may be cases where we walk along trails or other unsealed surfaces and care should be taken in these areas.

Temperatures

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE*	AIR TEMPERATURE*
July	20 - 22°C 68 - 72°F	21 - 23°C 70 - 73°F

*Please note that these temperatures are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. As a consequence, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible. The itinerary may vary depending on weather, as may the lakes temperatures. Therefore, you may need a wetsuit for some swims, but not others.

Group Size and Boat Support

This trip has a maximum group size of 15. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups, based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat support on this trip includes a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) and two canoe boats to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and Safety Support Crew. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

GETTING THERE

There are several ways to travel to Paluse, however, the most common route is to fly into Vilnius Airport and book a transfer service via our accommodation partners at the Tiki Inn. It is also possible to travel to the Tiki Inn via public transport.

Alternatively, you can also fly into Kaunas Airport followed by a road transfer to your accommodation, however, please note the transfer time is longer when using this option.

While we have outlined various travel options below, they are subject to change and should be used as a guide only. Whichever route you choose to take, we recommend confirming your flights and other travel bookings as early as possible in order to avoid price rises and availability issues.

Option 1: Travel via Vilnius

Flights to Vilnius

To search for available flights into Vilnius Airport, we suggest that you use www.skyscanner.net.



Public Transport From Vilnius Airport To Paluse

The cheapest option of travelling from the airport to the Tiki inn is to take a train to Ignalina via Vilnius and connect with the complimentary transfer to the Tiki Inn.

Please note that if you do choose this option, please contact Matthew at the Tiki Inn and let him know your expected arrival time into Ignalina so that a transfer from the station to the Tiki Inn can be arranged for you. You can contact Matthew to let him know your arrival time via email at matas@tikiinn.com.

As you come out of arrivals from the airport, the train station is approximately 400m to the right of the bus stops in front of you. Take the elevator down to the tracks and hop on the train to Vilnius. This takes around eight minutes and costs approximately €1. Tickets can be purchased on the train, however please make sure you have some change with you. Train timetables can be viewed at www.traukiniobilietas.lt/portal/en. Alternatively, you can take bus number 1 which runs to Vilnius station from directly outside the airport terminal and costs approximately €1. A timetable and map of this bus route can be found at www.stops.lt/vilnius/#bus/1/a-b/0530k/map.

Once you reach Vilnius you will need to catch a train to continue onto Ignalina. From Vilnius station it takes roughly 1½ - 2 hours and will cost between €4 - €7. When you arrive in Ignalina, your complimentary transfer will meet you and take you to the Tiki Inn. A full itinerary of the journey can be found on the Lit Rail website at www.traukiniobilietas.lt/portal/routes-schedules.

Transfer From Vilnius Airport To Paluse

The Tiki Inn offers a transfer service from Vilnius Airport to Paluse which takes approximately 1.5-2 hours. The transfer can accommodate up to eight guests and costs €135. Please note that this transfer must be booked at least seven days in advance by contacting Matthew at the Tiki Inn to advise of your flight number and arrival time via email at matas@tikiinn.com.

Option 2: Travel via Kaunas

Flights to Kaunas

To search for available flights into Kaunas Airport, we suggest that you use www.skyscanner.net.

Public Transport From Kaunas Airport To Paluse

The cheapest option of travelling from the airport to the Tiki Inn is via Express Microbus to Vilnius, taking the connecting train to Ignalina and then join the complimentary transfer service to Tiki Inn.

Please note that if you do choose this option, please contact Matthew at the Tiki Inn and let him know your expected arrival time into Ignalina so that a transfer from the station to the Tiki Inn can be arranged for you. You can contact Matthew to let him know your arrival time via email at matas@tikiinn.com.

The Express Microbus service goes from Kaunas Airport to Vilnius train station and costs approximately €10. The journey time is approximately 2½ hours and is a great way to see the Lithuanian countryside. For further information, please visit www.ollex.lt/en/express/Kaunas-airport/buy-a-ticket.



Once you reach Vilnius, you will need to catch a train to continue onto Ignalina. From Vilnius station it takes roughly 1½ - 2 hours and will cost between €4 - €7. When you arrive in Ignalina, your complimentary transfer will meet you and take you to the Tiki Inn. A full itinerary of the journey can be found on the Lit Rail website at www.traukiniobilietas.lt/portal/routes-schedules.

Alternatively, a bus service runs twice a day from Kaunas Airport to Paluse. This service can take 3-3½ hours and costs approximately €12. The Tiki Inn is situated less than a 5 minute walk from the bus stop in Paluse. Tickets are not available online and must be purchased at the booking office. For timetables, please visit www.autobusubilietai.lt.

Transfer From Kaunas Airport to The Tiki Inn

The Tiki Inn offers a transfer from Kaunas Airport to Paluse which takes approximately 2-2½ hours. The transfer can accommodate up to eight guests and costs €150 for a transfer. Please note that this transfer must be booked at least seven days in advance by contacting Matthew at the Tiki Inn to advise of your flight number and arrival time via email at matas@tikiinn.com.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Accommodation

Nestled between trees on the banks of the Lake Lusiai, the Tiki Inn offers a unique accommodation experience. The guesthouse features a Hawaiian theme and is run by Matthew Olsen and his family, who are welcoming hosts and provide delicious, homemade meals which are included as part of your holiday. The 'community' rooms are used as twin-share accommodation with shared showers and bathrooms, while standard single, twin and double rooms with en suite bathrooms are also available and can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

If you require additional nights' accommodation before or after the SwimTrek tour, this can be arranged directly through Matthew at the Tiki Inn via email at matas@tikiinn.com.

Extra Activities

As a SwimTrek guest, swimmers and non-swimmers alike, you have access to a range of watersports equipment and other facilities to use during the course of your trip at no extra charge. This equipment includes stand-up paddle boards, bicycles, canoes and hammocks. The use of this equipment can be arranged directly with the Tiki Inn staff during your stay.

Meals

All breakfasts, lunches and dinners are included for both swimmers and non-swimmers. The Tiki Inn has more than one kitchen allowing anyone to prepare their own meals if they wish. For those with strict dietary requirements, we will try to accommodate these if notified at the time of booking. However, if you do prefer certain specialist food, it is advisable to bring these with you, as it is not always possible to source a wide range of options locally.



Extra Expenses

You should bring extra money with you to cover such items as dinners, drinks, entertainment, souvenirs, etc. There is also a €1 fee for the National Park which must be paid locally. The Local currency in Lithuania is the Euro (€). There are no cash machines near the Tiki Inn or at the nearest town of Paluse. There are cash machines in the town of Ignalina (3km from the Tiki Inn) but we advise you withdraw cash before you leave the airport.

Passports and Visas

Lithuania is part of the European Union. Non-residents of Lithuania require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all EU member states, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Lithuania. Please note that visa regulations are subject to change and we advise that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.

Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations

For comprehensive health information for people travelling to Lithuania, including all recommended and required vaccinations, please visit www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries. Please note that this information is subject to change and you should re-check this site regularly prior to your trip.

Travel Plugs & Electricity

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit <https://www.worldstandards.eu/>.