HOLIDAYS IN HANSEATIC CITIES
The Hansa

That the Hansa was a powerful network in medieval times, we all learnt at school, it is so to say a medieval forerunner to the European Union. But it still not very well known that the Hansa today is a very active network with 187 member cities in 16 countries. Cities that share a common heritage, cities that often still today offer the spirit of the Hansa. Every year Hanseatic cities come together at the International Hanseatic Day. But all over Europe you can also every year enjoy regional and national Hanseatic festivals.

The Hanseatic cities are very appropriate for different fields of tourism. A cosy weekend trip to enjoy good food and explore a place you might not have heard of. An active holiday by biking, walking or trekking. Festivals that present modern or historic themes. When visiting a Hanseatic city there is always something new to explore.

Due to the cultural values of Hanseatic cities, the Hansa is a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. Here Hanseatic cities in Sweden (Visby), Estonia (Pärnu and Viljandi) and Latvia (Cesis, Koknese, Kuldiga, Limbazi, Straupe and Valmiera) cooperate to make you discover some cities you perhaps not visited before.

Welcome to visit us and enjoy!

You find more information about the modern Hansa at:

WWW.HANSE.ORG
The landscape and scenery around our Hanseatic cities is perfect for biking. Everybody can bike here. There are no mountains, just pleasant slopes. Distances are short. Interesting sights enrich your tour.

**Biketours in Straupe**
Straupe offers a 25 km long day tour where you visit the village and its surroundings. In Straupe itself the history about the family von Rosen is splendid and true evidence of storytelling.

*For more information and reservations: [www.hansa.pargaujasnovads.lv](http://www.hansa.pargaujasnovads.lv)*

**Biketours in Kuldiga**
Kuldiga offers a tour to the Riežupe Sand Caves, the largest underground cave labyrinth in Latvia. During Hanseatic times the sand from Riežupe sand caves was taken by ships abroad for fine glass production.

*For more information and reservations: [tourinfo@kuldaiga.lv](mailto:tourinfo@kuldaiga.lv)*

**Biketours on Gotland**
In Visby and on the island of Gotland you find a broad selection of different biking tours. Bike rentals offer bikes of all kinds. You can stay in one place and make different day tours; you can choose to bike on one special part of the island or you can make the big tour: bike all around the island. Accommodation is foreseen or in Visby or in charming boarding houses and small hotels in the countryside.

*For more information and reservations: [www.gogotland.com](http://www.gogotland.com)  
[www.gotlandactive.se](http://www.gotlandactive.se)  
[www.upplevelsepaket.se](http://www.upplevelsepaket.se)*
Walking and hiking on Gotland
On Gotland you can follow the St Olav pilgrims route from north eastern Gotland to Visby, following the footsteps of the Norwegian king who according to our tradition christened the island on his way from Russia back to Norway.

For more information please contact: info@gotland.com
You can also join guided walking tours, starting from Visby, accompanied by expert nature guides. The daily hikes vary in distance between 10 and 15 km. Focus is Gotland’s marvellous coastline.

For more information and reservations: www.gotlandactive.se

Walking and hiking in Kuldiga
Kuldiga offers a walking tour into the unspoiled nature outside the city including the Riežupe Sand Caves from where sand was brought in Hanseatic time for fine glass production.

For more information and reservations: tourinfo@kuldiga.lv

Walking and hiking in Straupe
You can stroll around the village of Straupe and get information about the castle that for 800 years was the property of the family von Rosen but also explore more from the city’s past.

For more information and reservations: www.hansa.pargaujasnovads.lv

Walking and hiking in Valmiera
In Valmiera you can follow the ancient “Knight Path”, the historic path that connected the Hanseatic cities Valmiera and Cesis. This self-guided tour leads you through beautiful nature, passing interesting sights.

For more information and reservations: tic@valmiera.lv

Walking and hiking in Estonia
In Estonia, in both Pärnu and Viljandi you can join combined bus and walking tours with one overnight stay, a tour for everyone. You get information about the cities’ rich past at the same time as you enjoy the scenic landscape.

For more information and reservations: parnuconvention@reiser.ee fringe@parnufringe.ee
Hanseatic festivals

In all cities you can experience local Hanseatic festivals which refer to the historic heritage.

The visitors do not only see, listen, taste and smell - there are also innumerable possibilities to participate actively and try old skills of all kinds. The festivals take place from spring until Christmas. The biggest of them all is the Medieval Week in Visby with more than 500 events, always taking place during the W32 (first week of August).

To see when each city celebrates their festival, please, check the tourism information webpage of each city.
Today’s cuisine focuses to great extent on products grown or bred by local producers. Top chefs know how to look for species from nature itself. Regional entrepreneurs try to find old recipes, some of them dating back to medieval times. Many go along with true story telling. Other traditional recipes get a new touch by adding modern flavours. In the neighbourhood of the Hanseatic cities you can visit farms that offer merchandise produced on the farm. You find farmers’ markets everywhere and there is a richness in restaurants based on local food. And could you find better souvenirs than a local speciality as a tasteful memory of your visit to a Hanseatic city?
The main aim of the project HANSA is to promote the values of the historical Hanseatic League, which still can be found among the member cities. After detailed research of local history partners work together to create and develop and promote new tourism products to make HANSA the leading tourism brand within the Baltic Sea Region.

Project HANSA brings together small Hanseatic cities and helps them gain impact in tourism market. Local citizens and different stakeholders (like entrepreneurs, NGO’s, activists) benefit from the project, since their ideas can spread far beyond their region and their activities have more audience – therefore economy gains, too. By working together Hanseatic cities strengthen the common values and make them more apparent to locals and visitors.

Wider European perspective is very important – project HANSA seeks to link with the reborn Hanseatic League (Die Hanse) and to have a rightful place in the European culture and tourism offers. Project HANSA is implemented with the support of European Regional Development Fund Central Baltic Programme 2014-2020.