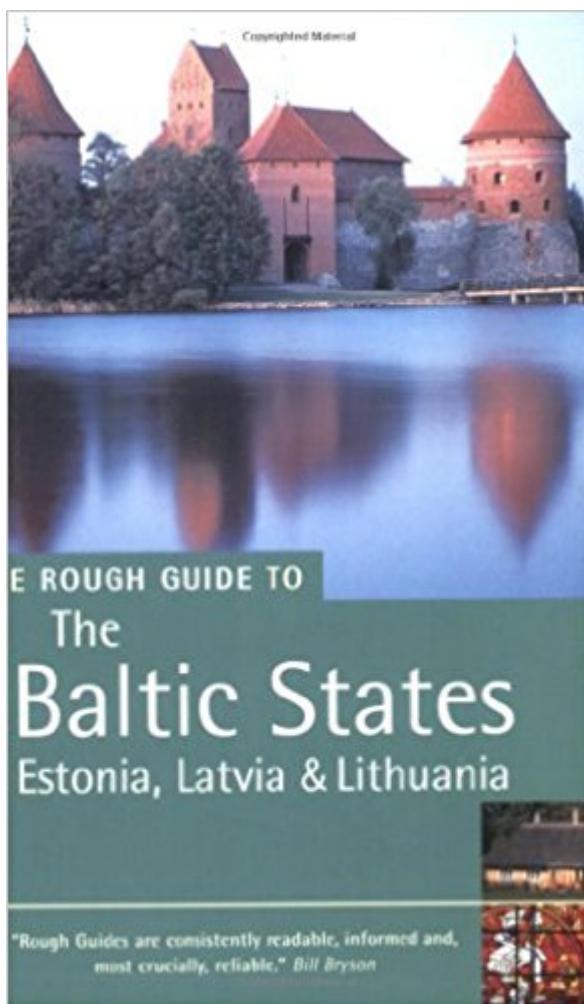


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The Rough Guide To The Baltic States (Rough Guide Travel Guides)



Synopsis

A comprehensive guide to one of Europe's most fascinating regions. There are definitive accounts of the up-and-coming city-break destinations of Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius as well as full coverage of the countries' unspoilt lakes, forests and national parks. For every city, town and village there are insider's reviews of accommodation, restaurants and nightlife and for outdoor enthusiasts there is practical advice on the best places for hiking, canoeing and birdwatching. Included are over 50 maps and 24 pages of colour photographs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Transport in the Baltic States presents no real hardships, providing you're prepared to put up with badly surfaced roads or don't mind travelling in rural buses that look as if they belong in a transport museum. Gloomy, Soviet-era hotels are everywhere outnumbered by spanking-new establishments offering high standards of accommodation at slightly less than Western-standard prices. Even though the three national capitals are beginning to take off as popular city-break destinations, the volume of visitors remains low by Western European standards, leaving you with the feeling that there's still much to be discovered. When to go Late spring and summer are the best times to visit the Baltic States, when there's usually enough fine weather to allow you to stroll around the cities and make significant forays into the great outdoors. On the whole though, the only thing that's predictable about the Baltic climate is the deep, dark winters; in all other seasons the weather can be changeable in the extreme. Summers are relatively short (roughly mid-June to late August), and although you may well experience a string of hot, dry days during this period, showers and chilly nights are equally likely. Remember to pack a waterproof jacket and

warm sweater alongside your favourite T-shirts. Temperatures cool down rapidly from mid-September onwards, although autumn can be an extraordinarily beautiful season in which to travel, with the golden-brown leaves of deciduous trees contrasting with the dark-green pines. The first snowfalls can come as early as mid-November, and by early to mid-December winter sets in with a vengeance. Average daytime temperatures can remain below zero right through until March, plummeting to minus 15°C in particularly cold spells. Winter can of course be a magical time, with lakes, rivers and large expanses of the Baltic Sea freezing over, and crunchy snow cover adding an air of enchantment to medieval city centres. However, rural areas can be difficult to get to without a 4WD vehicle (only the main highways are ploughed), and you'll have to be well togged up in order to endure anything but the shortest of walks. Wherever you are in winter, some form of hat or head covering is absolutely essential. Even when the spring thaw sets in, the countryside can remain grey and barren until well into April (or even May in northern Estonia), when a sudden explosion of colour transforms the landscape. The countryside takes on a green lushness, drawing cattle and horses out from their winter barns, while city dwellers indulge in a frenzied stampede for the pavement cafÃ©s.

Used this on trip to Estonia and Latvia. Had great historical info and very accurate listings of restaurants, museums, etc. Jam packed with pretty much any information you could want. Excellent assortment of places for all different \$ amounts. I was with a tour group, and our guide had a copy of this guidebook for his own reference. That's the second time I've been on an organized tour where the guide has constantly referred to his Rough Guide.

Useful guide to Baltic States (which I visited for a week, spending some time in the capitol of each as well as time elsewhere). I had a rental car.

Excellent condition. Arrived quickly. The Baltics are worth visiting. Very interesting.

The Rough Guides are usually written in a colorful, well-researched manner that makes them a joy to have along in order to learn about the places you are visiting while exploring the area, and this book delivers along those lines. Also true to Rough Guide form, however, the book lacks important details regarding transportation: how many buses, how often, where to buy tickets, best routes, etc. The Baltic countries have experienced a major boom in tourism since EU membership in May 2004, and hotel rooms are booked far in advance. As such, Rough needs to expand their listings to

include a larger percentage of hotels. In August 2004 we found all the hotels listed in the Rough Guide fully booked in all 3 Baltic capitals! Admittedly, we did not plan very far ahead, and to be fair to this book, we did not find a major guide with more complete hotel listings. The Listings section in each chapter also provides a handy reference. In general, however, Rough should expand this section to make it really useful, as listings are a bit limited. They should also start adding sections such as: Cyber cafes with digital photo downloads, Where to buy a GSM SIM chip, and similar sections for the digital traveler, to really make the listings complete. In each major destination, this book includes walking tours with some interesting information on buildings, churches and monuments, intertwined with history and cultural observations that makes for enjoyable reading and walks. We were glad to have this book along.

This book provides some interesting background information about the countries, but was not organized very well to serve as a reference on-the-fly. While you may be interested in reading about Latvian daina song-poems from your living room before leaving on your trip, you'll find yourself cursing all that information when you're just trying to find some specific tip on bus routes to the ethnographic museum. If your itinerary is going to focus mainly on the capital cities, as mine did, I would highly recommend the book Bradt Baltic Capitals. It was infinitely more useful than the Rough Guide, cheaper, and half the size and weight.

The product was in excellent shape when I received it. The book looked as if it were new and bought right off the book store shelf.

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