

Capital: Riga
Population: 1.9 million
Currency: Euro (€ or EUR)

Language: Latvian
Time Zone: EST plus 7 hours
Electricity: 220V. 50Hz

Fun Facts



- Latvian Fridrich Cander (1887-1933) was an inventor who worked on the theory and design of jet engines and rockets.
- The first recorded display of a traditionally decorated Christmas tree was traced back to Riga, Latvia in the year 1510.
- On May 1, 2004, Latvia became a member of the European Union.

Latvia boasts a sparkling landscape of more than 4,000 lakes; a third of its territory of 24,000 square miles is covered in forest and is a haven for wildlife.

In 1988, part of the population helped to form a human protest chain of two million people linking Tallinn (capital of Estonia), the Latvian capital Riga, and Vilnius (capital of Lithuania), symbolizing a common desire of the Baltic people for independence from the Soviet Union. This was achieved in 1991, and Latvia experienced rapid economic growth. In May 2004, it became a member of the European Union. The capital, Riga, has especially enjoyed all the benefits of this success with sophisticated cafés, restaurants, and shops providing color and animation. Founded in 1201, Riga was once called the "Paris of the North." Situated on the Daugava River, 13 miles inland, it soon became the most important town in the Baltic area; its old quarter, Vecriga, is surrounded by ramparts and conjures up visions of the past.

A local Latvian dish to try is deep-fried fish filets stuffed with mushrooms and anchovy; cabbage is a year-round staple. When shopping, look for Baltic amber, a precious reminder of the region's primordial roots.

VISAS, PASSPORTS, AND OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS



Visas to Latvia are **not required** for US citizens. If you hold a passport from another country, please check with your local consulate about requirements for travel to Latvia. All passengers traveling internationally are required to have a passport. Please carry proper identification (your passport) on you and do not leave it in your suitcase or hotel room.

It is advisable to carry your passport with you at all times.

COUNTRY CODES



The country code for Latvia is 371. When calling to Latvia from overseas, dial your international access code (011 from the US/Canada), followed by the country code, area code, and phone number. Phone numbers in Latvia are eight digits in length. Dialing from the US/Canada: 011 371+##+#### #####.



CURRENCY

The official currency of Latvia is the Euro.

Bank hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Euro **coins** differ according to country, but they can be used in any Eurozone state. **Banknotes** are of uniform EU design (depicting European architectural styles throughout seven ages, from Classical to Modern times).

1 EURO (€) = 100 Cents (c)

- Banknote denominations: €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, €500
- Coin denominations: 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, €1, €2

For the most current exchange rates, please go to our website at Globusjourneys.com/Currency.

Credit cards are widely accepted (mostly Visa and MasterCard), and you should have no problems using them in larger shops and restaurants. Smaller shops may ask you to pay in cash or have a minimum amount required to use a credit card.



BUDGETING AND SHOPPING

The following budget guidelines are just approximate values or starting values for meals and are per person. Actual prices will vary widely by restaurant and city within a country but below are some averages as provided by our experienced personnel.

- The approximate cost of a soft drink/mineral water/coffee is €2-4.
- An average lunch consisting of a salad or sandwich and a soda or water starts at approximately €10-20.
- Dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and a non-alcoholic beverage starts at approximately €20-40.

Shopping specialties: Baltic amber.



TIPPING

For restaurant services, a tip of 10% is an acceptable amount if a service charge has not been included.

For taxis, round the fare to the nearest €1-2.

Tip hotel staff €1-2 for room service.

A few coins will be needed for public toilets.

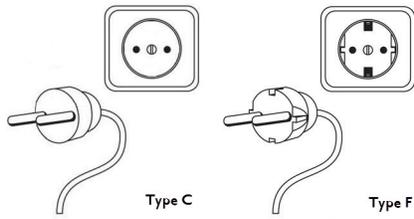


ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Outlets

Voltage for outlets is 220V. North American voltage is generally 110V. Therefore, you will need a converter for your travels. Adapters will be necessary to adapt your plug into the outlet, but these may not convert the voltage, so both devices are necessary.

Latvia uses a round 2-prong plug that looks like:



TEMPERATURES

Latvia has four-seasons of almost equal length. It usually has cool, humid and wet summers and relatively moderate winters.

To help you plan, below are average low and high temperatures for Latvia.

Riga

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
26/33°F	24/33°F	28/40°F	36/53°F	44/62°F	51/69°F	56/74°F	56/72°F	47/62°F	40/51°F	32/39°F	26/33°F

To convert to Celsius, subtract 30, then divide by 2. While not exact, this simple formula will give a close estimation.



FOOD SPECIALTIES

Deep-fried fish fillets with mushrooms and anchovy, cabbage dishes, and karums (curd cheese sweet snacks).



A FEW WORDS OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGE

Latvian:

Hello: Labdien, **Hi:** Sveiki, **Goodbye:** Uz redzešanas / Atā, **Please:** Lūdzu, **Thank you:** Paldies, **I'm sorry:** Atvainojiet, **That's all right:** Nekas, **Yes:** Jā, **No:** Nē, **1:** Viens, **2:** Divi, **3:** Trīs, **4:** Četri, **5:** Pieci, **6:** Seši, **7:** Septiņi, **8:** Astoņi, **9:** Deviņi, **10:** Desmit, **Where is...?:** Kur ir...?, **Telephone:** Telefons, **Bathroom:** Tualete, **Tea:** Tēja, **Coffee:** Kafija, **Wine:** Vīns, **Beer:** Alus, **Bottled water:** Minerālūdens, **Cheers!:** Uz veselību!

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE COUNTRY INFORMATION

Additional country-specific information for US citizens can be found on the US Government's website www.travel.state.gov. Here, you can find the most up-to-date information about destination descriptions, passports/visas, safety and security, transportation, travel local laws, alerts/warnings, vaccinations, and more. For citizens of other nations, we recommend you consult your local consulate for travel information, regulations, and requirements.

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