

Incentive and conference
tourism in Estonia

Playground for success



Estonia
Positively surprising.

Small, but rich in variety

At first glance, Estonia with its 1.3 million people may not be easily found on the map of Europe. But believe that it's worth the effort. This small nation below the edge of Scandinavia amazes with its rich culture and entertainment, modern conference facilities, enchanting nature and welcoming people.

After arriving in Tallinn, it doesn't matter which direction is turned — exciting places, adventures and experiences are everywhere. Although

Tallinn is very old, it's always new. Right next to the UNESCO-listed authentic and romantic medieval Old Town stands a new, modern city of glass.

Visit Europe's newest, coolest art museum or organise a company event in a Soviet-era prison. Be entertained with excellent shopping, colourful nightlife, or journey out of the city for unspoiled nature where lakes, mires, bogs and thick forest await.



In the centre of the medieval Old Town



The golden chanterelles in the Rotermanni market

In Tallinn's Old Town there are exclusive and historical seminar locations where event organisation would be impossible in other countries. But it's possible in Estonia, for example, in the 13th-century St. Nicholas Church or in the House of the Blackheads, the building which was home to the brotherhood of medieval merchants and ship-owners.

St. Olaf's Church was Europe's tallest during the middle ages. It's still possible to climb the church's 123.7-meter bell tower and view the whole city. Tallinn is both a green city and a sea city, where it's very easy to find inspiration, energy, and new ideas.

The countryside with its picturesque nature and bucolic lifestyle is only a twenty-minute drive from the heart of the city. The countryside offers authentic village life, adventure trails, tourist farms, and even modern golf courses and cultural centres.

And of course there are islands and lakes — tiny Estonia has around 1,500 islands and an equal number of lakes, each more enchanting than the

last. Choose an island and get acquainted with its nature. Some are inhabited by very few people and are ideal for team-building exercises. Go to sea and haul nets with the local fishermen and afterwards, as the fish cooks on the fire, relax and see where the conversation leads.



A moment in the silence of Nigula bog

Everything close by

In Estonia, it's quite feasible to organise a tightly-packed and diverse programme. Due to close proximity and easy access, this is a country where you can get full value from your time, from morning to evening, and even through the night. Here there are no boring waits, no long transfers, and no traffic jams of any sort. Time can be productively spent on the chosen activities and programme. The airport, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, parks, shops, or even our untouched nature are, if not within walking distance, only a few minutes away by car.

In other countries it can take hours to get from the airport to the hotel. But Tallinn's airport is

literally a walkable distance from the city centre. Stepping out of the airport door, a hotel room is reached in ten minutes with guests ready to start a seminar after only half an hour. If relaxation is needed, drive only 20 minutes from the city to bogs or for a brisk trek on ice skates over natural waterways. Or remain in town and tour the Old City on a Segway scooter. Every option is equally as close!

On the next day, travel from one end of the country to the other; it's only a few hours from north to south. Just two hours by car from the capital city is Estonia's seat of academic knowledge, the university town of Tartu, which is another conference destination. Also two hours

from Tallinn is the summer resort town of Pärnu, an ideal place to relax in a spa after a day of seminars.

Or experience the nostalgic air of Narva and stroll in the fortress gardens along medieval streets. From Narva, Russia is visible directly over the river, though a visa is required to travel there.

Our neighbouring capital city is Helsinki, only a two-hour journey by ferry. There's no reason to waste time even on the boat, since they also provide comfortable conference rooms for meetings or seminars. The cities of Riga and St. Petersburg are also only hours away and are accessible by business-class buses with constant communication with the world available via free wireless internet.

The majority of western European capitals are reachable by plane in an average of three hours. Flights between Tallinn and the northern European cities are especially frequent.



Back to history on an electric vehicle

Inexpensive quality

Value for money is remarkable in Estonia when compared to other European countries. Try to find elsewhere the great price-quality ratio available here. Estonia offers Scandinavian quality at Eastern European prices.

For the same money needed to stay in a three-star western European hotel, five-star luxury may be enjoyed in Estonia.

Conference services, catering, and incentive programmes are also very affordable.

A delicious and healthy lunch can be had for as little as 10 euros. The entire city can be travelled by taxi, since each kilometre travelled costs as little as one-half euro.

Choose from a variety of fine-dining restaurants located in the Old Town, none of which will do extensive damage to a credit card. The choice and variety of restaurants Tallinn offers is amazing.

And the good buys don't end with the restaurants. Visit an Estonian hair salon or take a beau-



Relaxing spa treatment

ty or spa treatment. These, too, are available for relatively low prices compared with Western Europe.

Well-developed shopping centres and supermarket chains allow purchases using secure and efficient e-payments.



Dinner in medieval restaurant



Ethnic music interlude

A true e-country

Estonia is an e-state, and that's not just empty talk. Half of life here truly takes place in the virtual realm. The majority of Estonians use internet banking, communicate with government electronically, and even do their tax declarations (in under five minutes!) by computer. Estonians pay for their parking with mobile telephones, and voting via computer for parliament or local government elections is truly old news here. The web is oxygen for Estonians. The internet is accessible practically everywhere: every hotel room, every conference centre, airport, terminal, café, every street.

While in western and northern Europe payment is required for the internet, in Estonia it's viewed as the equivalent of a human right and it's absolutely free. With no catches whatsoever.

Open a laptop on any park bench or in any café, and find a wireless network.

Hold a conference on a stump in Lahemaa National Park, and wideband internet is there!

And Tallinn's airport is the first airport in the world to offer every traveller in every terminal absolutely free internet.

Conference centres offer the most modern technical presentation equipment, and Skype telephone calls and video conferencing are available from hotel rooms to anywhere in the world at absolutely no charge. The revolutionary Skype is



Surfing the world wide web

an Estonian product, and Estonians show visible pride that their country is as innovative as this product.

For anyone who organises conferences, incentive programmes, or seminars, the highest technical support is available. The entire event can be organised via the internet, from registration to the booking of pre- and post-conference tours.

Positively surprising

Estonia is a new and exciting destination. Relatively undiscovered but easily accessible, it's a positively surprising land!

Estonia is a NATO and European Union member, a northern nation known for its rational mindset.

Maybe something new is in order? Vienna, Barcelona and London can also be exciting destinations but they are frequently visited. Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu, and other locations in Estonia offer something different, unique, and authentic.

Here it's impossible to feel caught up in the tide of commercial tourism. Estonia is small and peaceful. The cities are moderately large and in the countryside houses are set quite far from one another.



Handicraft market on the Old Town Square

Become acquainted with life in an historic Estonian village at the Open Air Museum; bake bread or make butter. Wear marsh shoes and walk through untouched bogs or lakes in Soomaa. Take a Jeep trip from the mainland to an island using an ice road, or simply float in a barrel on Porkuni Lake.

Rest undisturbed in the city, too, when a stressful work life is met seamlessly with routine-free, healthy, restful relaxation. In the countryside, be alone with nature.



After a fun trip on snow-shoes

An Estonian communicates freely

Feel free to begin a conversation in English with every Estonian, even the elderly, since English to an Estonian is practically a second mother tongue, which he can use just as well in a service situation as he can on the street.

Since Estonia is home to a Russian minority, almost every Estonian also speaks Russian. Also, the Finnish, German, French, and Spanish languages are fairly commonly spoken. And if an Estonian doesn't speak a foreign language, he'll find another Estonian nearby and enlist his help.

Estonians are open, tolerant, and helpful people. In the beginning, an Estonian might seem uncommunicative, he does not often smile. But once engaged in conversation and a guest is invited home... For relaxation an Estonian likes to sit in a 120-degree Celsius sauna and beat himself with birch branches!

Being proud of their heritage and having a desire to present their best side, Estonians will always give their all. Estonians have fared wonderfully



Barrel-sauna in the Estonian winter

in the Eurovision Song Contest as well as world-calibre cross country skiing competitions, not to mention a track record of success at conference organisation!

Laziness is considered shameful in Estonia. Estonians have historically been diligent and industrious. Every couple of years Estonians organise a large-scale international song festival and in 2011 Tallinn will be host to Europe's Cultural Capital.



Estonian Song Festival on Tallinn Song Festival Grounds



Commercial buildings in downtown Tartu

Brand new accommodations, conference centres, and restaurants

Estonian hotels enjoy Nordic-inspired fresh design. International hotel chains are represented, but the Old City is full of boutique hotels. There are restaurants and conference hotels connected to relaxing spas, many of them built or renovated during the past five years.

Here are remarkable hotels, conference and relaxation venues with their own gourmet restaurants, all at reasonable prices. Spend the night in a manor house, a castle, or an old farmhouse.

Since everything in Tallinn is so close by, it's an exceptionally good place to have large conferences. Choose from a large selection of good three to five-star hotels, all close to one another.

Estonia's entire infrastructure is undergoing re-

newal, from information technology to road networks. International IT communication services work here perfectly.



Main building of Palmse Manor



Photo hunting in the forest

Simple, comfortable, safe

In Estonia, there's no reason to worry about safety. Estonians have never been violent. A good example of this is the Singing Revolution which brought Estonia its independence in 1991 without a single gunshot. The population came together and sang itself to freedom.

Tightly integrated with Scandinavia, our banking system enjoys the same secure wire transfers, payments and other financial transactions found in Sweden or Finland. Credit cards may be used in hotels, taxis, or shops without problems.

In Estonia, there are no earthquakes, avalanches, and sunburn isn't a serious factor either. A moderate climate brings pleasant summers and soft, snowy winters.

Here the crime rate is low, wars and uprisings are nonexistent. Walk the streets of Tallinn or our other large cities at night without worry.

Meet people who are fun and full of life, who on weekends relax in Tallinn Old Town pubs and clubs.



Tasty experience in Pärnu's hotel restaurant

Estonians are close to nature

Estonians are a tradition and nature loving people, even true city people go mushroom and berry picking, cut their own firewood in the forest, or watch wildlife and hike in the bogs to breathe fresh air.

This lifestyle of natural awareness and preservation is given to all our visitors from abroad. In all places of accommodation it isn't just seminars that are organised; relaxing and rejuvenating activities are offered, including trips to nature which are guaranteed to revive the mind and body.

Estonian cuisine uses plenty of natural ingredients. In many restaurants courses are available where the fruits and vegetables are grown in Estonian fields, where dairy products are from Estonian cows, and meats from local farmers.



Fruitful autumn in the fields of Estonia

Consuming healthy and ecologically sound foods is important to Estonians and they gladly offer the same quality to our guests.



Bread baking in the old manor kitchen

www.visitestonia.com

Estonian Convention Bureau
www.ecb.ee

Tallinn City Tourist Office & Convention Bureau
www.tourism.tallinn.ee

Tartu Convention Bureau
www.visittartu.com

Pärnu Convention Bureau
www.parnuconvention.ee



Estonia in Brief

<i>Official name:</i>	Republic of Estonia (Eesti Vabariik in Estonian)
<i>Area:</i>	45,227 km ²
<i>Inhabitants:</i>	1.36 million
<i>Capital:</i>	Tallinn (405,000 inhabitants)
<i>Official language:</i>	Estonian
<i>Form of government:</i>	parliamentary democracy
<i>National holiday:</i>	24 February (Independence Day)
<i>Distances:</i>	Tallinn-Pärnu 129 km Tallinn-Tartu 187 km Tallinn-Riga 311 km Tallinn-Helsinki 85 km

The Republic of Estonia is a member of the **European Union**; **Schengen area** and **NATO**.

Estonia is in the **East European time zone** (GMT/BST + 02:00).

Estonia's country code is + 372. To place an International call start by dialling 00.