

## 2-Day Ecotourism Route: "Along the Southern Coast of the Curonian Lagoon – the European Green Belt Trail"

### Detailed Route Description and Service Providers

**Logistical Information for the Route:** The total cycling distance is approximately 65 km over two days, with about 16 km on foot. The route is suitable for active travelers; the pace and distances can be adjusted as needed. All mentioned locations are publicly accessible. The Tyrų Peatland Trail is free of charge, as is the Dreverna Observation Tower, which is open 24/7. **Public Transportation:** Buses between Klaipėda and Priekulė run frequently (approximately every hour during the day). There is no public transport from Minija (Mingė) village, so this plan includes cycling back to Priekulė. Alternatively, you can book a **boat from Minija to Dreverna or Klaipėda** – making that leg part of your route via water. **Reservations:** It is recommended to book accommodation in Minija at least 1–2 weeks in advance, and if you are traveling in a group, to notify the "Mingė" tavern in advance of your visit. With good planning, this two-day journey in the coastal region will become an unforgettable adventure – a slow-paced ecotourism experience blending nature and cultural heritage in this unique corner of Lithuania!

#### Day 1: Priekulė – Dreverna – Svencelė – Kintai – Minija village

**Distance: by bike ~35 km, on foot ~2 km.** On the first day, you will start in Priekulė and travel toward the lagoon region, visiting **Dreverna**, cycling along the “**Curonian Road**” bike route by the lagoon, and arriving in the village of Minija (Mingė) by evening.

- **Start (Priekulė, around 9:00 AM):** Arrive in Priekulė by bus (there are direct routes from Klaipėda). Priekulė is a small-town characteristic of Lithuania Minor, located on a bend of the Minija River. This is where your cycling journey begins. If you don't have your own bike, you can rent one in advance (see the list of service providers – bike rental). Before heading



out, it's worth taking a quick look around Priekulė: the central square with the monument to Ieva Simonaitytė, the Evangelical Lutheran Church (built in 1903), and more.

- **Cycling to Dreverna (~10 km):** From Priekulė, ride westward toward Dreverna. The best route is the old **King Wilhelm Canal path**: a scenic, quiet trail passing through **Pjaulai** and **Klišiai** villages on either side of the historic canal, which was dug in the 19th century by French prisoners of war. Along the way, you'll see the Bismarck Oak near the canal and old Lithuanian Lutheran cemeteries. After about an hour, you will reach **Dreverna**.

- **Dreverna (exploring the lagoon coast, ~10:30 AM):** Dreverna is a historic fishing village on the Curonian Lagoon, known for shipbuilder Jonas Gižas, whose ethnographic homestead-museum operates here. Start by visiting the **Dreverna small boat harbor**, where a **15-meter-high observation tower** offers expansive views of the Curonian Lagoon and the **Dead (Grey) Dunes of Neringa** on the distant shore. From the tower, you'll be able to see the coastal meadows, the lagoon shoreline, and Dreverna's surroundings. At the harbour, you'll also find traditional **weather vanes**, symbolic of the lagoon region. Take a peaceful walk along the lagoon by the harbour – this part of the trip is meant to immerse you in the **atmosphere of lagoon life and nature**. If arranged in advance, you can also visit the **Jonas Gižas Museum** – you'll learn about traditional Kurėnai boats, shipbuilding, and fishing culture on the Curonian Lagoon.

***Note:** If you'd like to try some water activities, Dreverna Harbor offers boat, SUP board, and leisure cruise rentals. However, these are optional extras – the main route continues by bicycle.*

- **Cycling the "Curonian Road" route (Dreverna–Svencelė–Kintai, ~20 km):** Around 12:00 PM, you'll



leave Dreverna and head **south** along a scenic coastal cycling route. The path is narrow and winding, stretching through the coastal meadows of the lagoon region, constantly offering views of the lagoon nearby. After about 4 km, you'll reach another **fishing village – Svencelė**. On your right, you'll see the **vast Svencelė raised bog**, part of the Tyrų Wetland Botanical Reserve, while to the left, in the distance

across the lagoon, lies the dune ridge of the Curonian Spit. Today, Svencelė is famous for kiteboarding and wakeboarding – on windy days, you might see dozens of colourful kites dancing along the shore. From Svencelė, continue on a tree-lined gravel road (~3 km) until you reach the

**“Curonian Road” rest stop**, located near a small oil extraction site. The rest area has benches, a shelter, and informational signs – it’s a good place to take a short break.

*Route Feature:* Optional Short Hike (**~2 km round trip**). From this rest area, you can take a short walking trip to a nearby scenic spot. It’s recommended to walk along the gravel path toward the lagoon shore or **climb a nearby small dune** (a sandy hill) in the coastal forest. Although these inland dunes are not very tall, they offer beautiful views: on one side – the expansive Curonian Lagoon, on the other – the **flatlands of the Tyrų Wetlands**, with the sandy curves of the Curonian Spit visible in the distance. This brief hike will give you a chance to experience nature on foot and enjoy the **tranquil lagoon landscape** – you’ll see that not only Nida’s Parnidis Dune offers impressive views.

- After returning to your bikes, continue along a forest road toward **Kintai** (about 3 km to reach paved roads). You’ll arrive at the **town of Kintai**, the largest settlement in this region. Here you’ll find a store, the Vydūnas Cultural Centre, and by the roadside stands the Great Thuja – the second largest of its kind in Europe. If time permits, it’s worth a brief stop. Next, turn toward the village of Minija (also known as Mingė) – the final destination for today. The distance from Kintai to Mingė is about 7 km, along a quiet paved country road through fields and riverside landscapes

- **Arrival in Minija Village (~5:00 PM):** You will reach **Minija (Mingė)** – a unique linear fishing village often called the **“Lithuanian Venice”**, as the Minija River serves as the village’s main street, with traditional houses lined up along both banks, connected only by water routes. The village is home to just a few dozen residents, but in summer it



comes alive with visiting water tourists. Located in the **Nemunas Delta Regional Park**, Minija offers stunning views of the lower river basin and lagoon edge – making it an ideal place for evening relaxation in nature.

- **Overnight Stay in Minija:** Settle into your pre-booked countryside homestead. There are several **authentic guesthouses** in the village to choose from (see service providers below). Most homesteads offer modern amenities, and dinner with fish dishes can usually be ordered. **Important:** Minija does not have a bridge – if your accommodation is on the opposite bank of the river, the crossing can be easily arranged: local residents will ferry guests by boat, or you can arrange transport in advance with your hosts. This crossing adds to the authentic and memorable experience of the trip.

*Evening Leisure:* After dinner (perhaps trying the famous fish soup), you can take a walk along the Minija riverbank. If interested, your hosts may offer a **small evening cruise** by electric boat or



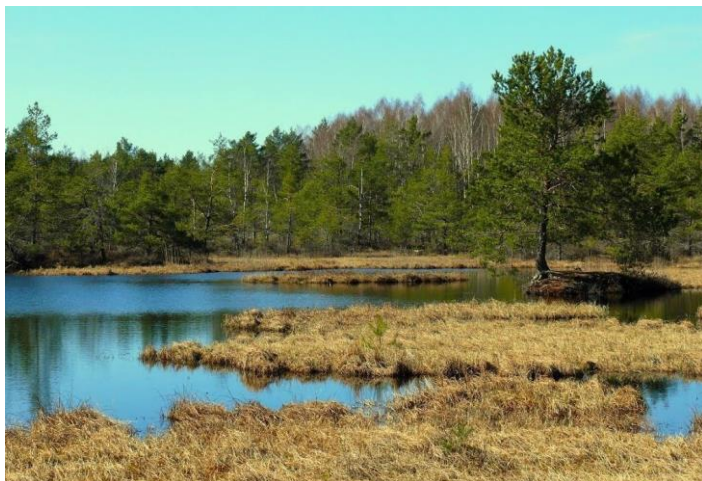
motorboat along the Minija River – a chance to see the sunset over the Curonian Lagoon, admire birds (numerous cormorants, terns, and sometimes beavers in the evening). Such a cruise typically lasts around 1 hour (arrange with your host or local boat operators). Overnight stay in Mingė.

## Day 2: Minija village – Tyrai bog (Bird trails) – Priekulė

**Distance:** ~30 km by bike, ~14 km on foot. On your second day, you'll experience two nature hikes: a longer one into the Tyrai Bog, and a shorter one on your way back to Priekulė. You'll also enjoy lunch at a traditional tavern. The day starts early to ensure there's enough time to explore and comfortably return to Klaipėda.

- **Morning in Minija (~7:30 AM):** Enjoy breakfast at your guesthouse. After saying goodbye to your hospitable hosts, you'll begin your **bike ride around 8:30 AM, heading north**. From Mingė, you'll cycle back toward Dreverna/Priekulė, passing through Kintai. You have two route options: Shorter route via **Sakučiai and Lankupiai**, following a more direct asphalt road along the Minija River (~25 km to Priekulė). Or recommended route with the more scenic western route via **Kintai–Svencelė–Dreverna**, repeating part of the previous day's "Curonian Route" (~30 km to Dreverna). We recommend the second route if time and energy allow – cycling back via Svencelė and Dreverna lets you enjoy the lagoon views once more, perhaps noticing things you missed the first day. Morning landscapes of the bogs and lagoon are different from those in the afternoon. This route is also ideal because your main hike of the day begins near Dreverna.

- **Hike into the Tyrai Bog ("Bird Trails"):** Once you reach **Dreverna harbor (~10:00 AM)**, take a short rest. From here, a **new nature trail** called the "**Bird Trails**" begins, leading into the **Tyrai Bog** (part of the Kliošiai Landscape Reserve). This educational trail is perfect for nature lovers – it lets you observe a **unique wetland ecosystem** and listen to birdsong all around. Trail length: **~14 km**



**round trip.** Hiking time: 3–4 hours. Preparation: **bring drinking water, snacks,** and comfortable waterproof footwear (it may be wet in the bog). The trail starts directly at the Dreverna harbor. You can leave your bikes safely at the harbor's bicycle stand or another secure spot. Follow the marked wooden and gravel paths labelled "Bird Trails." In the beginning, you'll walk alongside the **King**

**Wilhelm Canal**, then the path leads into the **old Kliošiai forest**. Along the way, you'll pass viewing

points and information boards about the bird species – these are great for education, and some even include QR codes to listen to bird calls on your phone. The trail continues deeper into the bog, where you'll see bog lakes and flooded meadows. There's a high chance you'll spot cranes and hear many other bird species – this area is renowned for its rich bird diversity, making it a must for birdwatchers.

- **Picnic in the Tyrai Bog (~12:00 PM):** At the end of the trail, you'll reach the **newly built Tyrai Bog observation tower**, which marks both the destination and rest point of your hike. Climb to the top of the tower to take in the **breathtaking panoramic view**: the vast expanse of the Tyrai Bog spreads out before you, and in the distance, you can see the Curonian Lagoon and even the **ridge of dunes on the Curonian Spit**. The tower is equipped with permanent binoculars for easy bird and landscape observation, a modern visitor counting system (used to track trail usage). This is an ideal **picnic spot** – you can sit down to eat either at the base of the tower or even inside the tower itself and take a break while sharing your impressions. **Important:** You're in a protected area, so please do not leave any litter and avoid disturbing wildlife. After refreshing yourself, **return to Dreverna via the same trail** (~1.5 hours walk back, arriving around 1:30–2:00 PM).

- **Cycling to Priekulė (~10 km):** Once you've picked up your bikes in Dreverna, set off back to Priekulė around **2:00–2:30 PM**, following the same quiet rural road via Pjauliai as on Day 1. This return route is now familiar and slightly shorter – about 10 km from Dreverna to Priekulė. Upon arrival in Priekulė, it's time for a late lunch.

- **Lunch in Priekulė, at the “Mingė” Tavern (~3:30 PM):** Stop by the **famous restaurant-tavern “Mingė”** (Klaipėdos g. 9, Priekulė) for lunch. This tavern has been operating for several decades and is well-known for its traditional dishes from



the Lithuanian coastal region, especially fresh fish meals. We recommend trying smoked bream, fisherman's soup or the legendary “šiupins” (hearty stew) and stuffed pig intestines (vėdarai) – praised by many travellers. Since it's late afternoon, it's a perfect time to recover after your hike.

- **End of the Route (~5:00 PM):** After your meal and a short rest in Priekulė, you'll complete the route. From Priekulė, buses to Klaipėda run regularly (the trip takes about 30 minutes). If needed, you can return your rented bicycles to a designated rental point, or arrange bicycle transportation if they were rented in Klaipėda with delivery service. You'll head home full of impressions from nature and the unique cultural landscape of the Curonian Lagoon region.

## Service Providers Along the Route:

Here are some recommended **service providers** that may be useful when planning your route — for **bike rentals, water transport, guides, and accommodation**. It's **recommended to book in advance**, especially during the high season.



- **Bike rental:** Bicycles can be rented either in Klaipėda or locally. For example, **VE Bike Rental** in Klaipėda (Taikos Ave. 58) offers bikes for rent and **can deliver them to an agreed location** (for several days). Also, **Dreverta Camping** (Pamario St. 12, Dreverta) offers local bike rentals – to reserve bikes, you can contact them by phone at **+370 604 80108**

or by email at [camping@dreverta.lt](mailto:camping@dreverta.lt). Rental price is about €10–15/day (depending on bike type and rental duration). There is no specialized bike rental in Priekulė, so it's most convenient to arrive already with bikes.

- **Electric boat / rowboat rental:**

Sightseeing cruises are popular in the Pamaris region. The **Dreverta harbor** offers boat trips on the Curonian Lagoon, rowboats, and pedal boats. Contacts: harbor kiosk in Dreverta, **phone: +370 686 31674**. In **Minija village**, most guesthouses have their own boats. For example, the mentioned guesthouse **“Vila Minė”**



**organizes boat tours (7- or 30-seater) through the Nemunas Delta and the lagoon** – you can book a private trip or join a scheduled one. There are also small recreational boats for rent in Minija, such as the **tour boat “Mingė”** (10 seats, a cozy boat with a toilet). For boat/rowboat rentals in Minija, contact the guesthouse hosts or the **Nemunas Delta Regional Park Information Center** (tel. +370 441 77 788) – they will advise you on the best options. Rowboat rental in Minija usually costs around €10/hour.

- **Guided nature hike services:** If you would like to have a **guide (expert)** during the hike, it is recommended to contact the **Klaipėda District Tourism Information Centre** (Gargždai, tel. +370 694 65335) or its branch in Dreverta (located at **J. Gižas Ethnographic Homestead**). They maintain a list



of certified guides and can recommend a nature expert for the Tyrų bog hike or for general regional exploration. Additionally, the **Nemunas Delta Regional Park Administration** (tel. +370 441 42 018) offers excursions around Minija surroundings, Ventė Cape, and birdwatching tours. Having a guide makes hikes more engaging – you'll learn about local birds, plants, and cultural heritage. Approximate cost: ~€50 for a half-day (per group). If you decide to hike without a guide – no problem. The Bird Trails are well marked, and you can hike independently (info boards with QR codes for bird calls are available).

- **Overnight stay in Minija village:** Minija offers several cozy guesthouses providing accommodation. It is recommended to book in advance, especially on summer weekends. Here are some options:

#### Homestead „Èvė“

- **Phone:** +370 615 20066, +370 616 50640
- **E-mail:** [eve.minge@gmail.com](mailto:eve.minge@gmail.com)
- **Website:**  
<https://atostogoskaime.lt/apgyvendinimas/eve/>



#### Villa „Minė“

- **Phone:** +370 686 45599
- **E-mail:** [info@vilamine.lt](mailto:info@vilamine.lt)
- **Website:**  
<https://atostogoskaime.lt/apgyvendinimas/sodyba-mine/>

*Note:* Guesthouses in Minija village often offer **breakfast** (to be arranged during booking), and it is also possible to pre-order **fish smoking or tastings**. If river crossing is needed, it should be arranged in advance – most guesthouse owners can help with that.

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