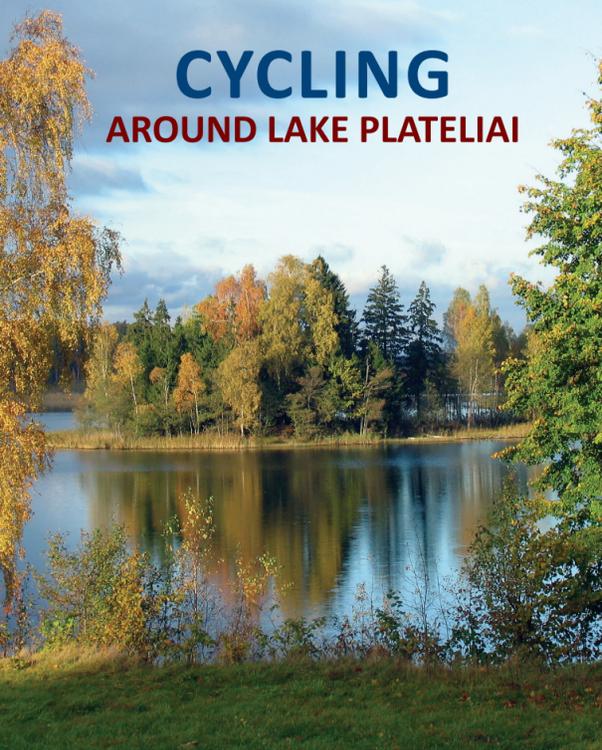




CYCLING AROUND LAKE PLATELIAI



ŽEMAITIJA NATIONAL PARK

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Lake Plateliai

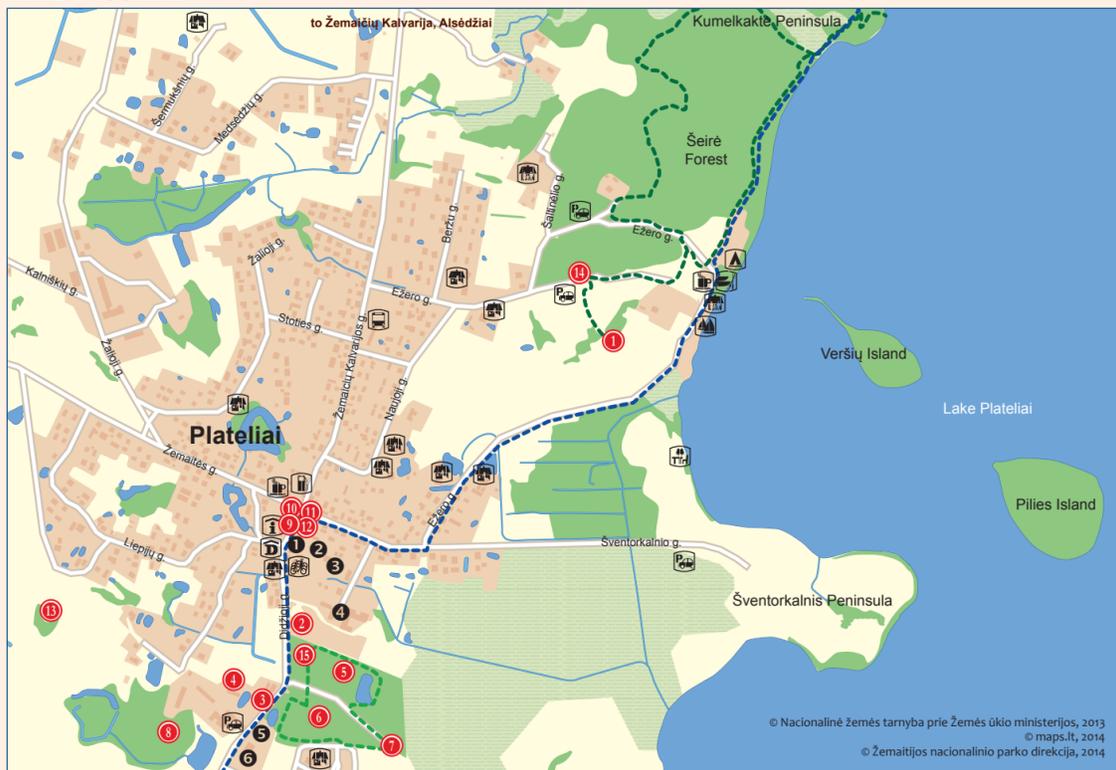
LAKE PLATELIAI

This is the largest and deepest Žemaitija's lake. Its area is 1205 ha, average depth –10.5 m, the deepest point –48.5 m. The Lake has 7 islands that together with the Kreiviškės and Auksalės peninsulas are state-protected monuments of nature or natural heritage objects. The castle that used to belong to Dukes of Lithuania stood on Pilies Island (Island of Castle) even in 15th century. It was connected with the Šventorkalnis peninsula by means of a wooden bridge. The 16th century poles that have survived, Pilies Island and Šventorkalnis peninsula (Plateliai Manor location) have been granted the status of cultural valuables. In the Lake, together with ordinary fishes, salmon family fishes are breeding – vendace and lake whitefish that have been living here since post-glacial period. On the uptown area of Plateliai town, a **Lake Viewing Platform** is built, which is one of the most popular places of interest in the National Park.



Lake Plateliai

PLATELIAI SCHEME



Legend

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Bus Stop | Visitor Centre | Emergency Station, Library | Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform | Plateliai Linden | Monument to the Lithuanian Freedom Army |
| Parking Place | Rest House | Multifunctional Centre | St Peter and Paul Church | Plateliai Elm | Monument to B. Korza |
| Petrol Station | Campsite | School | Exposition of the Žemaitija National Park | Shrine with a sculpture of St Florian | Jasmine Mountain |
| Bike rental | Boat Hire | Craft Centre | Shrovetide Exposition | Monument to the Lithuanian Independence | Seirė Walking Trail |
| Yacht Club | Žemaitija National Park Administration Resting Place | Culture Centre | Plateliai Manor Park | Walking Path of Giliukas and Kaštoniukas | |
| Rural Tourism Farmstead | Eldership, Post Office | Cycling and Walking Path | Witch's Ash | | |
| Cafe | | | | | |



St John's Day



Shrovetide celebration

ŽEMAITIJA NATIONAL PARK ADMINISTRATION PLATELIAI VISITOR CENTRE

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- Excursions around the Žemaitija National Park and surrounding locations.
- Detailed information on sightseeing locations, folk artists, craftsmen, walking and cycling trails and routes, other possibilities to take active rest, in the Žemaitija National Park.
- Leaflets and other publications about the Žemaitija National Park, and souvenirs.

The exhibition "The Mysteries of Žemaitija" is opened to the public in the Visitor Centre.



Visitor centre in Plateliai

Welcome to the Žemaitija National Park, where beautiful nature of Samogitia land, abundant historic and cultural values and magnificent Lake Plateliai are inviting you.



Lakes in Šilinė Hydrographical Reserve



Basilica in Žemaičių Kalvarija



Sustainable tourism

The Žemaitija National Park (ŽNP) was established in 1991 by Decision of the Supreme Council – Restoration Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania to preserve, manage and use the areas of the Žemaitija region most valuable from the natural and cultural point of view.

The objectives of the Park:

- preserve the laky and woody natural complex, the largest in Žemaitija;
- preserve the existing cultural valuables and restore the ones that have been destroyed;
- organize investigation of natural and cultural heritage and collect information;
- foster Žemaitija's cultural traditions, encourage environmental ideas and knowledge, traditional agricultural activity, develop recreational activity and educational tourism.

The ŽNP territory, except for recreational and other functional zones (residential purpose priority), has been granted the status of an important site for protection of Bird and Habitats (NATURA 2000).

In 2008, the Žemaitija National Park and Plateliai, famous for Shrovetide celebration, became the most attractive Europe's tourism destination (EDEN).

In 2013, the Žemaitija National Park became a member of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.



Campsite



VISITING THE NATIONAL PARK

The Žemaitija National Park is a protected area of national and European importance, which requires responsible behaviour so that the natural and cultural valuables existing on this land would survive for future generations. Respect and take care of the Žemaitija National Park:

- dispose of waste properly – pack out all garbage and throw it away at home after sorting it out for special containers;
- make your fire only on the sites intended for bonfires. Keep attending the fire you have made, and before leaving the camp, drench your fire with water or soil until the campfire ceases to smolder;
- take a rest or camp on the sites intended for this purpose only;
- remember that your loud music or any other noise may bother other visitors or local people, do not destroy or trample flora and fauna, do not do damage to cultural valuables, recreation equipment, signs etc.;
- tie up your dogs, do not bathe them on the beaches or other public places;
- do not park your cars or motorcycles nearer than 25 metres from the shore of a water area.

More information on behaviour in the National Park and visiting rules is available at the Žemaitija National Park Administration (Didžioji g. 10, Plateliai), on the Internet <http://www.zemaitijosnp.lt>, and on the National Park Information Boards.

In cooperation with the State Protected Territory Service under the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, administrations of state-owned parks, state-owned biosphere strict natural reserves, and non-governmental environmental organization Baltic Environmental Forum, the brand of Lithuanian protected area product has been introduced as one of measures for sustainable tourism promotion. The trademark is intended for local product manufacturers, craftsmen, tourism service providers and other local residents that by their activity contribute to sustainable tourism development on the protected areas of Lithuania.



ŽEMAITIJOS
NACIONALINIO PARKO
PRODUKTAS

This brand will assist the travellers in finding the projects and services of local communities that conform with key valuables of sustainable development, and help local people to popularize them:

Development of Protected Areas. The managers of protected areas and local businessmen are related to each other by symbiotic relationship – they can prosper together only. The protected areas attract travellers by their cultural and natural valuables, still in order to have them leaving with good travel impressions, a qualitative and authentic offer of products and services is important as well: accommodation, guide services, items of traditional crafts etc. The brand is awarded to those manufacturers and service providers who consider their activity inseparable from objectives of protected areas development.

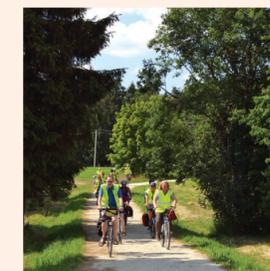
Fostering the Cultural and Natural Heritage. It will be sought by this brand to draw attention of travellers to the products and services that encourage educational purposes regarding cultural and natural heritage, and continuation of traditional crafts or cultural valuables.

Eco-Friendly Activity. Those manufacturers or service providers are awarded the brand, the activity of which do not do damage to the living nature and who make efforts to reduce impact of their activity on the environment.

Welfare of Local Communities. The common brand will assist local people in making available to the public the products created and services provided by the local people so that the occupation of local communities and economic development would be enhanced.



Lake Plateliai



Sustainable tourism



Walking trail of Gegrėnų mounds

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In 2013, the Žemaitija National Park became a member of European Sustainable Tourism Charter Network. The initiator of this movement is the international EUROPARC Federation that unites about 400 environmental organizations in 35 European countries. The members of the Charter Network commit themselves to comply with the principles of European Sustainable Tourism on Protected Areas, to draft and implement sustainable tourism strategy and Action Plan.

The Charter is a practical tool that helps protected areas, local businessmen to develop sustainable tourism. What is the sustainable tourism? It is a tourism which fosters natural diversity, cultural heritage and traditions, allows preserving them for those who will come. Sustainable tourism contributes to economic development and welfare we all need.

SCHEME OF THE TOURISM ROUTE



- Legend**
- Bus Stop
 - Petrol Station
 - Bike rental
 - Yacht Club
 - Rural Tourism Farmstead
 - Cafe
 - Hotel
 - Information (Board)
 - Diving
 - Rest House
 - Campsite
 - Boat Hire
 - Resting Place
 - Post Office
 - Emergency Station



- 1 Visitor Centre
 - 2 Plateliai
 - 3 Siberia Telmological Reserve
 - 4 Viewing Tower
 - 5 Beržoras
 - 6 Beech of Birškus
 - 7 Lake Beržoras
 - 8 Art Gallery-Study of L. Černiauskas
 - 9 Source of the Babrungas River
 - 10 Plokštinė Natural Reserve
 - 11 Cold War Exposition
 - 12 Plokštinė Educational Walking Trail
 - 13 Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform
 - 14 Paplatelė Educational Walking Trail
 - 15 Birdwatching location
 - 16 Užpelkiai Mound
 - 17 Granary of Kazys Striaupa
 - 18 Šeirė Walking Trail
 - 19 Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform
- Cycling Path



This is one of the most popular tourism routes in the Žemaitija National Park, on which interesting objects of tourism, natural and cultural valuables, scenic panoramas are plentiful and tourism infrastructure is built. Circular route length is 24 km (cycling path).



The route starts and ends in the same location - Plateliai. You should start your trip at the **Žemaitija National Park Administration Plateliai Visitor Centre** 1, where "Mysteries of Žemaitija" exhibition is opened to the public, detailed information about objects to be visited is available and cognitive excursions are conducted from here.



Plateliai 2. This is one of the most beautiful Žemaitija's towns with the most famous past. In historical sources, this town used to be mentioned from the 15th century. The objects to visit: exposition of the Žemaitija National Park, the Shrovetide celebration exposition, the 18th century church, the 19th century bell tower, the 19th century Manor Homestead, monuments of nature growing in the Manor Park: the stoutest Lithuanian ash, the Plateliai Linden, the Plateliai Elm, monuments in memory of First Decade of Lithuania's Independence, Lithuanian Freedom Army, Rainiai martyr B. Korza, the walking trail of Giliukas and Kaštoniukas in the Manor Park, and Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform. In the town, there is the National Park Administration Office, the Visitor Centre, the elderate, a post office, an ambulatory, a drugstore, a library, a petrol station, several stores and cafes, several rural tourism farmsteads, a yacht club, a guest house etc.



Plateliai – Beržoras
The asphalt-paved cycling and walking trail, 1.4 km long. On this segment you will see:

Siberia Telmological Reserve 3. This is one of the most valuable marshes in the National Park, a Natura 2000 site, in which plants, fungi and animals to be protected in Europe and Lithuania have been discovered. This Marsh has been granted a status of a telmological reserve, to which, in order to preserve biodiversity, visitors are not permitted from April 1st to August 1st.



Viewing Tower 4 (there is a sign with the inscription "An Object of Interest"). The 15 metres high tower overlooks Beržoras surroundings, the Siberia Marsh, Lake Plateliai, the southern part of Plateliai town and the Liepiai forest.



Beržoras – Plokščiai
(a turning to the Cold War exposition (museum)). Asphalt-paved cycling path, 3.4 km. One of the most picturesque segments of the route: you travel along Beržoras lake, the southern part of Lake Plateliai, in which one can see one of 7 islands of the lake – Gaidsalė, on the right roadside – lake Žiedelis (A Tiny Blossom). On this segment, there are several campsites and several rural tourism farmsteads.



Beržoras 5. The old street village, mentioned starting with the 15th century, which preserved its traditional landscape, has been granted a status of a state-protected cultural valuable. The 18th century Beržoras church is one of the oldest wooden sacred architecture buildings in Lithuania. There are wooden Stations of the Cross, abundance of chapels, crosses and wayside shrines with sculptures of saints inside, which have survived or have been restored. Near the Paošiniai – Plateliai road, the **Beech of Birškus** 6 grows, an object of natural heritage.



Beržoras Lake 7. The area of the lake is 52 ha, maximum depth – 6.3 m. The perch makes the major part of fishes in the lake, although great quantities of roach, bream, pike and rudd are breeding here as well. Near the lake, 2 resting places are built, and there are several rural tourism farmsteads.



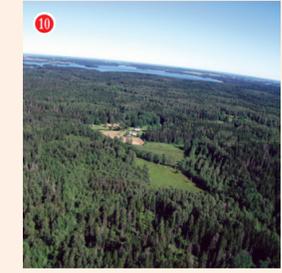
1.6 km away from the route, when driving towards Plungė, in the former 19th century Babrungėnai water mill, a **private art gallery-study of L. Černiauskas** is open to the visitors 8.



Plokščiai – The Cold War Exposition (Museum)
Asphalt-paved cycling path, 4.9 km. On this segment you can explore:



Source of the Babrungas River 9. At the starting point of the segment, on the left roadside, a hydrological structure can be seen regulating the water level of Lake Plateliai. This place is the one where the Babrungas river rises.

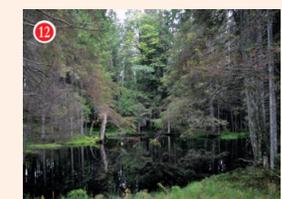


Plokštinė Strict Natural Reserve 10. When moving towards the exposition, on the right roadside, you can explore the Plokštinė Strict Natural Reserve, occupying the eastern part of the Plokštinė forest with the imposing marshes of Juodupis – Uošna, lively springs and mysterious rivulets. Human activity is limited here, therefore, visiting is not permitted.

Cold War Exposition (Museum) 11. The exposition is located on the former Soviet Army underground site for thermo-nuclear missile launching. Here, unique visual and graphic material is available telling about the former Soviet Empire principles of secret activity regarding nuclear weapon organization and functioning.



Plokštinė Educational Walking Trail 12. The walking trail, 3 km long, begins near the Cold War Exposition and meanders on the hills of the Plokštinė forest, across the territory of the former military base and passes the monument of nature – the Pilelis spring.



On this segment, you will find a rural tourism farmstead and several resting places.



Cold War Exposition – Paplatelė – Rūdaičiai of Paežerė
In total 4.7 km cycling paths: asphalt-paved cycling path 2.2 km and hard packed soil-cycling path 2.5 km (rubble, gravel). On this segment:

Paplatelė Recreation Zone. This is an excellent place to take a rest. There are several campsites, rest houses, a hotel, a cafe, a restaurant, several rural tourist farmsteads and sports playgrounds.



Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform 13. The viewing platform built on the eastern shore of the Lake overlooks the panoramic view of the Lake and the western shore.

Paplatelė Educational Walking Trail 14. The walking trail (2.3 km) is meandering on the woody hills and along the shores of the Sultekis pond. Wooden sculptures provide the trail with playfulness, while the viewing tower overlooks the pond and spruce forests encircling it.



Rūdaičiai of Paežerė – Medsėdžiai
Asphalt-paved cycling path, 4.3 km. On this segment:

Birdwatching location 15. This place is located near the Pakastuva pond, in the Telmological Reserve, 400 m away from the route (there is a sign with the inscription "A Birdwatching Location"). Here you can explore cranes, Red-necked Grebes, Great Bitterns, Spotted Cranes, swans, Marsh Harriers and others. In order to preserve the biodiversity, visitors are not permitted to other locations of the Telmological Reserve from April 1st to August 1st.



Recreation Zone of Rūdaičiai of Paežerė. On the northern shore of Lake Plateliai, there are several campsites and rural tourism farmsteads.

Užpelkiai Mound 16. A monument of culture, dating back to the 1st millennium.

3 km away from the route, when driving towards Dovainiai a **private Granary of Kazys Striaupa** 17 is open to the visitors. Here, you can enjoy woodcarvings of the folk artist.



Medšėdžiai – Plateliai
5.1 km long path (cycling path, 3.2 km long, of hard packed soil (rubble, gravel)), an asphalt-paved cycling path, 1.9 km long). On this segment:

Šeirė Educational Walking Trail 18. When travelling towards Plateliai, 0.6 km from the roundabout, on the left roadside, a segment of the Cycling Path around Lake Plateliai begins, building of which has been currently completed. The trail is located in the picturesque places of the Šeirė forest, on the shore of Lake Plateliai. Part of this trail (1.8 km) coincides with the **Šeirė Walking Trail**. When walking the trail (4.1 km), you can explore a relief characteristic of this region, the Šeirė forest, the Gaudupis Bog, lake Piktežeris, Lake Plateliai, ordinary and rare species of plants, fungi and animals, while the infrastructure built up will assist you in acquainting with the environment through sight, smell, hearing, touch, moving and thinking.

Lake Plateliai Viewing Platform 19. The Platform is built on the western shore of the Lake. It overlooks one of the most beautiful panoramas of Lake Plateliai and its surroundings: you can enjoy Pilies, Veršių, Plikšalė islands, the Šventorkalnis peninsula and the eastern shore of the Lake.