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MOLĒTĀI

inspiring land

In the historical sources the name of Molėtai for the first time was mentioned in 1387, when the Grand Duke Jogaila gifted it to Vilnius Bishop on the occasion of Aukštaičiai (the highlanders) baptism and foundation of the Diocese of Vilnius. Much later, about 1517, the Molėtai Estate was established where the brewery and distillery functioned. The church was built only in 1522, and since 1539 Molėtai has been called "a little town".

In 1905, the resources of the parish and the priest K. Bandzevičius were used to finance the construction of the Molėtai brick church of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul's in the Molėtai town. This building is one of mostly visited the sites by tourists, casual visitors and local residents. The Chamber of Commerce, which was built in the very centre of the Molėtai town at the end of the 19th century/ the 1st half of the 20th century, does not fall behind. Private Jewish shops functioned here until 1940. Both of these buildings are the most beautiful treasures of architecture remaining in the Molėtai town after the Second World War.



There are as many as 403 monuments of archeology, art, architecture and history, as well as 7 museums in the region of Molėtai. Ethnocosmology Museum (Kulioniai Village) and Fishery Museum (Mindūnai Village) are the largely visited ones. All the must-see sites are scattered throughout the incredibly beautiful towns of Molesta, Alanta, Balninikiai, Dubingiai, Giedraičiai, Joniškis,

Suginčiai, Videniškiai and Inturké.

Today the town of Molėtai is one of the most visited little towns in Lithuania. This is influenced not only by the wonderful lakes and hills of the landscape and the highly developed tourism services, but also by the cultural heritage sites, some of which are older than thousand years.

MOLĖTAI

▲
The brick church of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul

Since the old times the Molėtai town attracts the tourists and guests with its lovely landscape, clean nature and fresh air. The area is famous for more than 230 lakes, which are situated among the green pine forests, higher hills and small knolls. The Molėtai region is scenic and interesting for its vicinities and rich culture. Different cultural values, objects of art, science, technology and urban heritage, archeological, mythological, historic vicinities, folklore, traditions and folk-crafts as well as other objects are assigned to the resources of tourism culture. There are plenty of historical mythological vicinities in the region of Molėtai and the estate heritage also remains alive. Abundance of objects of cultural heritage and the scenic landscape creates favorable conditions for development of cultural and nature tourism.

Molėtai is famous not only for its wonderful pieces of nature and the most tourist visited unique places but for the companies of Melinga and Molesta that hold the highest places among the most acknowledged construction companies in Lithuania.



STATYBA, REKONSTRUKCIJA, GEN. RANGA PROJEKTŲ VALDYMAS



▲ Lilac at the Alanta manor

In 1436, Žygimantas Kęstutaitis gave Alanta to Kristinas Atsikās as a gift for his merits in fighting Švitrigaila. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Catholic church was built. In 1581, Steponas Batoras gave it as a gift to Gasparas Bekešius, a leader of Hungarian army in Lithuania. From the year 1598, Alanta belonged to the Radvila family. Their estate manor, barn,

granary, cottars' houses, icehouse and smokehouse still remain. More than 300 exhibits are stored in the library and the country life museum, which are established in the estate manor built in 1853-1858. Each year about 2000 visitors visit the museum. Near the country life museum, there is an exposition of the public institution Alanta Technology and Business School. The expositions and the exhibition halls are constantly renewed in Alanta estate, where the works of Lithuanian and foreign art masters are displayed.

In the Alanta region, there are plenty of crosses and chapel crosses that are famous even for their miraculous powers. There are more than ten mounds in the vicinities, the major of which are Antakščiai, Maišiakulė and Svobiškėlis. Not only the handmade objects attract the tourists to the little towns of the Molėtai region. Alanta is home for the impressive Verpetas Hill near which the film "Tadas Blinda" was shot, and the natural and historical monument, the Stone of Valiulis, famous for its mystical symbols.



▲ St. Stanislovas church, built in 1910

Balninkai was mentioned on November 1, 1338, in the letter of the Duke Gediminas to the Livonian Magistrate. As soon as in 1546 it was called a town, and in the second half of the 16th century Žygimantas Augustas granted to Balninkai the town rights, the seal and the coat of arms. In 1777, the town burnt. On March 20, 1792, it was again granted the town rights and the coat of arms. During the Second World War (1944), a half of the town was burnt.

Today Balninkai is known for its picturesque nature, historical past and an active community. The vicinity is located in a hilly landscape between the Alaušai Lake and the Pėršinas Lake. St. Stanislovas Church built in 1910 and the interwar monument for those who fell in battle for the Independence are the architectural

accents of Balninkai. Glass Museum and Painting Gallery of Vladas Miškinis operate in the town. About 370 glass works are preserved in the first specialized Glass Museum of Lithuania. On September 10, 2001, this unique family collection of glass works was given as a gift by the former Balninkai resident, Gediminas' 5th Degree Cavalier, a glass technologist Kazys Strazdas. 160 painting works of Vladas Miškinis and 40 graphic engravings of Onutė Pusvaškytė, a laureate of the Galaunė Award, were donated to Balninkai Painting Gallery.

There are plenty of places of interest in the vicinity of Balninkai, the most famous are the beautiful Perkaliai Mound, the Twelve-House Giluziai Street Village and the old Parudinė Estate.



BALNINKAI

ALANTA

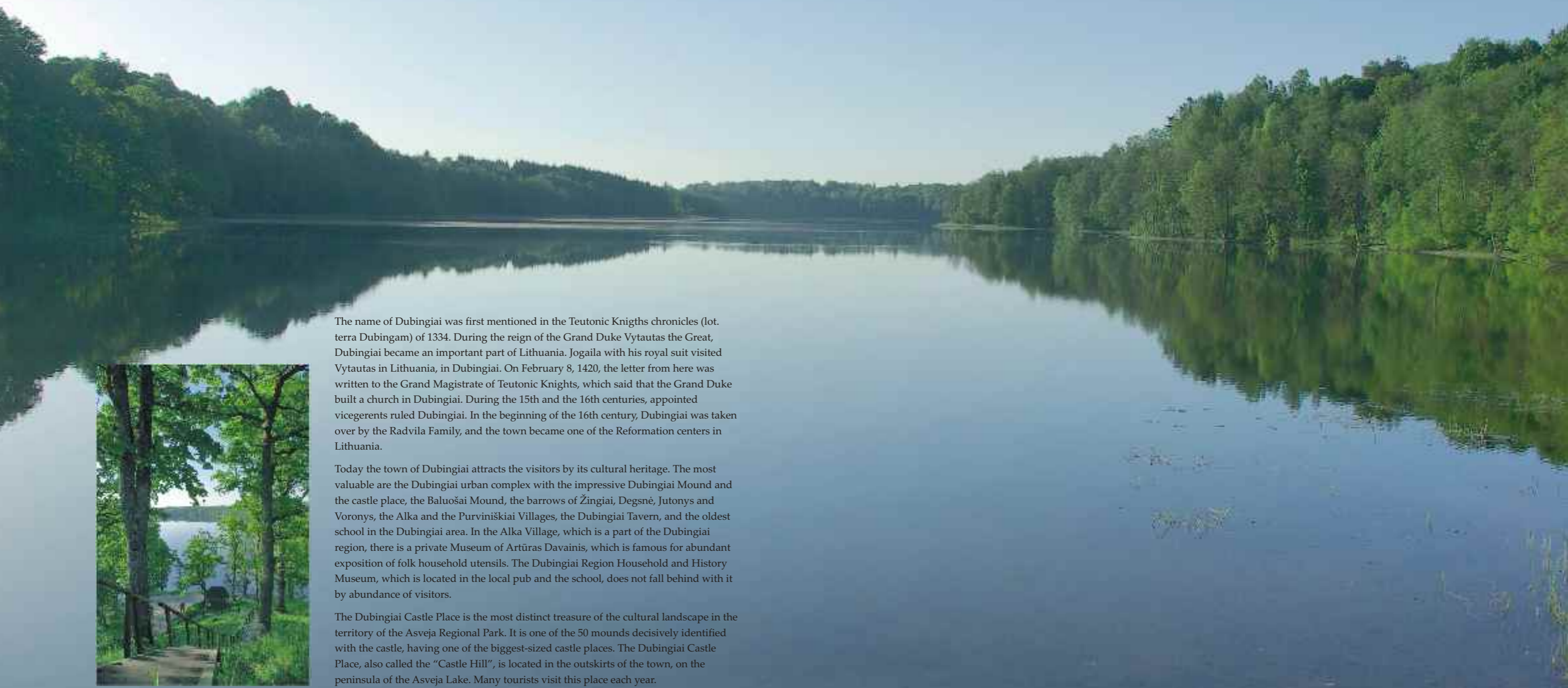




DUBINGIAI

The Dubingiai Tavern

Seminar and recreation centre Dubingiai that offers alluring services and attractions is situated in the wonderful piece of nature near the lake Asvejos (Dubingiai), which is 22 km long and attracts tourists by its forested banks and small islands.



The name of Dubingiai was first mentioned in the Teutonic Knights chronicles (lot. terra Dubingam) of 1334. During the reign of the Grand Duke Vytautas the Great, Dubingiai became an important part of Lithuania. Jogaila with his royal suit visited Vytautas in Lithuania, in Dubingiai. On February 8, 1420, the letter from here was written to the Grand Magistrate of Teutonic Knights, which said that the Grand Duke built a church in Dubingiai. During the 15th and the 16th centuries, appointed vicegerents ruled Dubingiai. In the beginning of the 16th century, Dubingiai was taken over by the Radvila Family, and the town became one of the Reformation centers in Lithuania.

Today the town of Dubingiai attracts the visitors by its cultural heritage. The most valuable are the Dubingiai urban complex with the impressive Dubingiai Mound and the castle place, the Baluošai Mound, the barrows of Žingiai, Degsnė, Jutonys and Voronys, the Alka and the Purviniškiai Villages, the Dubingiai Tavern, and the oldest school in the Dubingiai area. In the Alka Village, which is a part of the Dubingiai region, there is a private Museum of Artūras Davainis, which is famous for abundant exposition of folk household utensils. The Dubingiai Region Household and History Museum, which is located in the local pub and the school, does not fall behind with it by abundance of visitors.

The Dubingiai Castle Place is the most distinct treasure of the cultural landscape in the territory of the Asveja Regional Park. It is one of the 50 mounds decisively identified with the castle, having one of the biggest-sized castle places. The Dubingiai Castle Place, also called the "Castle Hill", is located in the outskirts of the town, on the peninsula of the Asveja Lake. Many tourists visit this place each year.



Asveja from the Dubingiai Mound

INTURKĖ

In the historical sources (the Chronicle of Livonia), a name "Inturkė" was mentioned for the first time in 1373. The name of the vicinity derived from the name of the Urkiai Lake. A church, which was ordered to be built by the Queen Bona in the exactly same, stands in the center of the incredibly beautiful town. Later on, in 1671, a bell was made and brought to the belfry of the church.

The Inturkė Church with its belfry, the Orthodox Church and the Independence Monument form an

ensemble of architectural monuments of local interest and is willingly visited by tourists and guests. The visitors are also attracted by the beautiful landscape. The forests and the lakes occupy almost half of a territory of the region. The town Inturkė itself was established on the North Shore of the Gėluotas Lake. In the west of the town there is the Galuonai Lake, and in the east there is the Išnarai Lake. In summer time, there are so many visitors here that they triple the number of the local residents.



GIEDRAIČIAI

The name of Giedraičiai was first mentioned in the written sources in 1338. Teutonic Knights refer to it as „Gedereiten“. The town was the center of the Giedraičiai Duchy. In the wall of the presbytery of the Town Church, which was built in 1809, there is heart of its founder, bishop Juozapas Arnulfas Giedraitis, which is bricked in. It is believed that it protects the town. The Regional Study Museum introducing the life and activity of A. Jaroševičius, the artist who worked here (1870-1956) as well as other famous people of the Giedraičiai region, is established in an old school building. A monument

“For epic heroes who died for the freedom of Lithuania in 1920” stands in the center of the town reminding about the battles of the Lithuanian soldiers against the Polish Army, which happened in the same place.

There are many places of interest in the vicinities of the Giedraičiai town, which attract many tourists each year: the Piliakiemiai Mound, the Old Cemetery of Piliakiemiai, the Old Papiškiai Cemetery, the Ambraziškiai Estate, the Žalvariai Water Mill, the grave of the artist and cultural activist Antanas Jaroševičius, and the graves of the Volunteers of Giedraičiai.



Mindūnai is the area of the Molėtai region mostly dotted by lakes. The forests and the lakes delight, comfort and feed the residents of this region. There is a Lake Fishery Museum to the east from the town of Molėtai. The exposition of this museum is spread between two buildings, which are joined by an outdoor exposition and an antique spruce branch fence. It is possible to see different fishery tools, which were used by the people from the Eastern Lithuania at the end of the 19th century, as well as to observe the

development of their activity. Nowadays, the fishery tools which were taken over by the local residents from the poachers complement the exposition also.

In addition to the Fishery Museum, the guests and the tourists are attracted by the beautiful vicinities, the mostly appreciated Stirniai Lake, the wonderful architectural monument the Stone Church of Stirniai, the Kraujeliai Mystic Sacred Stone, and the old Čiuliai Estate.

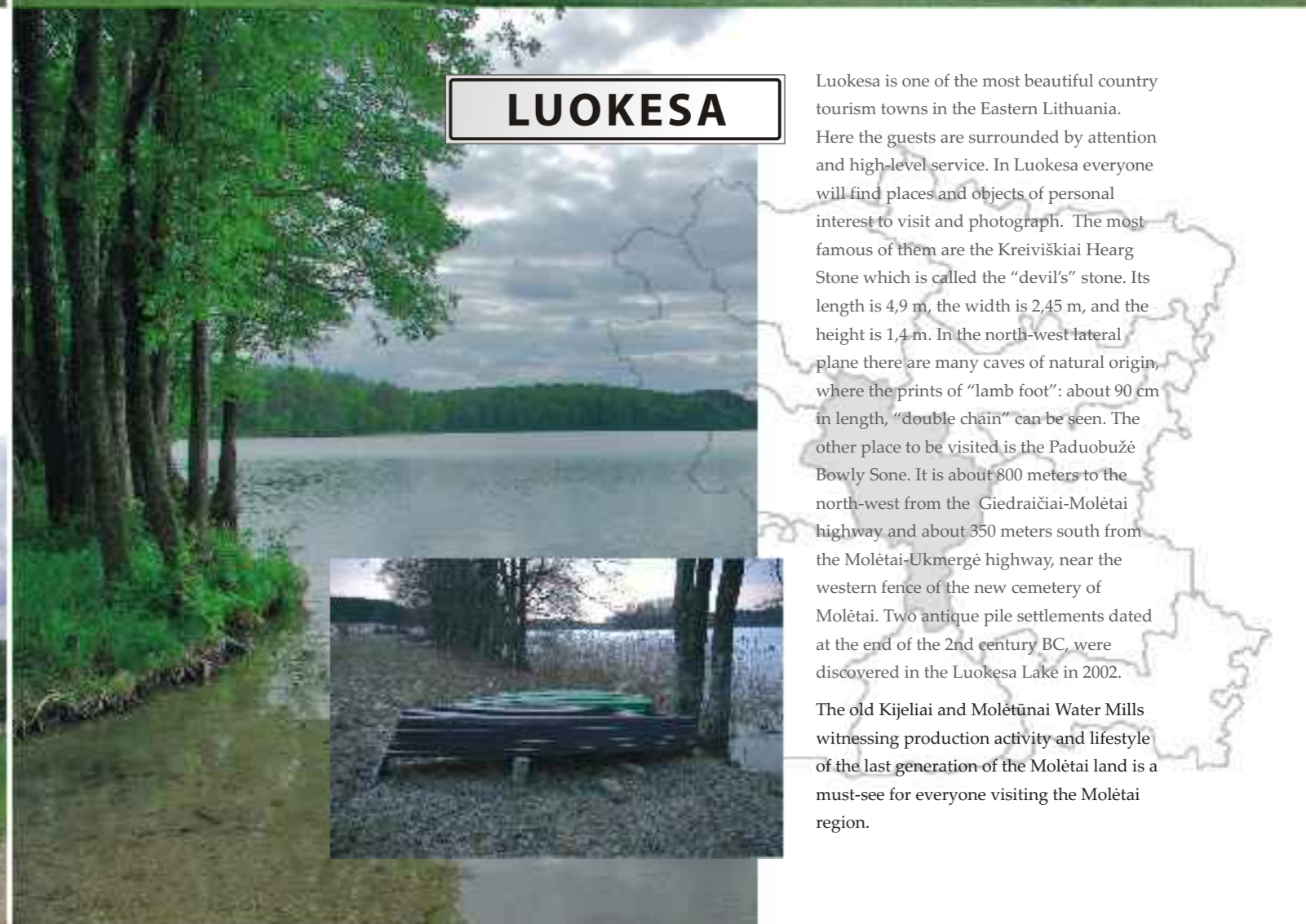
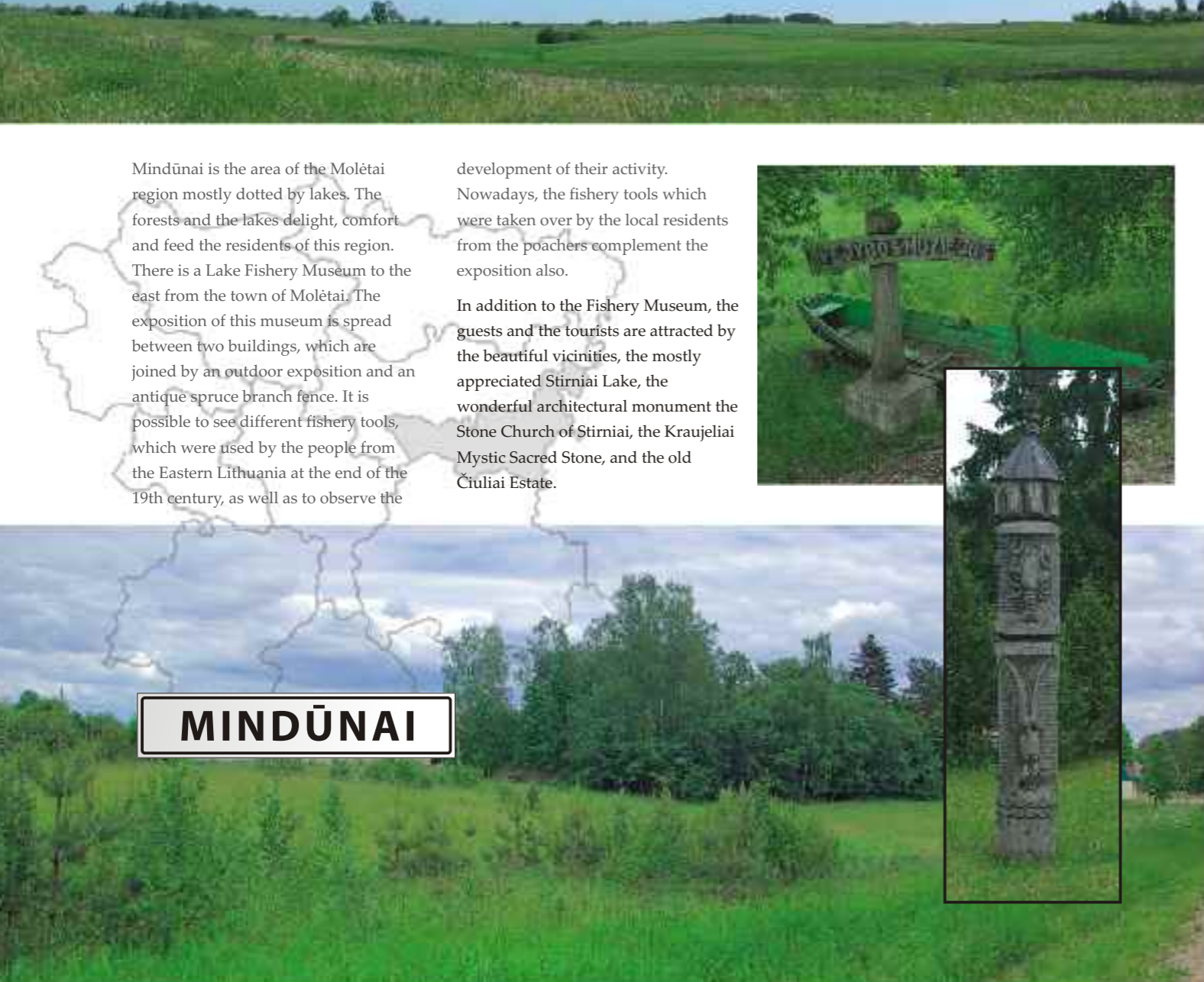


LUOKESA

Luokesa is one of the most beautiful country tourism towns in the Eastern Lithuania. Here the guests are surrounded by attention and high-level service. In Luokesa everyone will find places and objects of personal interest to visit and photograph. The most famous of them are the Kreiviškiai Hearg Stone which is called the “devil’s” stone. Its length is 4,9 m, the width is 2,45 m, and the height is 1,4 m. In the north-west lateral plane there are many caves of natural origin, where the prints of “lamb foot”: about 90 cm in length, “double chain” can be seen. The other place to be visited is the Paduobužė Bowly Sone. It is about 800 meters to the north-west from the Giedraičiai-Molėtai highway and about 350 meters south from the Molėtai-Ukmergė highway, near the western fence of the new cemetery of Molėtai. Two antique pile settlements dated at the end of the 2nd century BC, were discovered in the Luokesa Lake in 2002.

The old Kijeliai and Molėtūnai Water Mills witnessing production activity and lifestyle of the last generation of the Molėtai land is a must-see for everyone visiting the Molėtai region.

MINDŪNAI



ČIULĖNAI

Even Napoleon was captivated by the beauty of the Čiulėnai town, which is surrounded by lakes from the three sides. During the crusade of 1812, one of the Napoleon's comrades in arms painted a view of the Čiulėnai Village. He was fascinated by the Čiulėnai Mound standing nearby, which was called the "black hill", as well as by one of the most distinct mounds in the region which lie north-west from the Kulioniai Village on the peninsula of the Želva Lake, which was inhabited by people from the 1st century. The legend tells that once upon a time there was a church, which on a day during the mass disappeared under the ground together with the priest and all the believers, therefore even today the church bells ringing from somewhere underneath can be heard.

Some incredibly interesting objects could be visited in Čiulėnai: the remaining old Water Mill with the

residential house of the miller, the Observatory, the Ethnocosmology Museum and the Observatory of the Celestial Bodies. The activity of the Ethnocosmology Museum focuses on the relation of a man and the humanity with the cosmic world. The complex of the museum buildings is the first and the only construction in Lithuania which was designed and constructed according to the mythological image of the World Tree.



JONIŠKIS

The name of Joniškis was first mentioned in the middle of the 18th century. The Jesuits built a church here in the beginning of the 18th century. At the end of the 18th century, a school was established and one of the most important buildings of Joniškis, the Arnioniai Estate Homestead, was built.

The Arnioniai Estate Homestead was established during the 18th – 19th centuries. In the year 1888, there were 20 buildings on the Estate, 8 of which were made of brickwork; there was a Catholic wooden chapel and a Church of Evangelic Lutherans. The palace was surrounded by

the scenic park and the garden. After the Second World War, the palace was rebuilt. There are 5 buildings, the remains of the greenhouse and gates, and the park that survived until today.

Nevertheless, it is not the Arnioniai Estate, but the old Kertadalė Oak, which is mostly visited by the tourists. The oak is believed to be more than 800 years old. The guests also like to visit the Pavandenė Mound and the Bendžiukai Mound with its cemetery, as well as the Joniškis Independence Monument built in 1928.



The historical sources (the inventory of the Balninkai region) mention in the year 1554. In the middle of the 16th century it belonged to the bishop of Vilnius Povilas Alšėniškis (it was his private territory). As the years passed, the ownership of the Suginčiai town kept changing hands and was continuously resold and repurchased, leased and donated as heritage. Two chapels stood in the old Suginčiai town and a wind mill functioned on the bank of the Suraiža river.

Today the Suginčiai town is kindly

visited by tourists. There are many interesting places and objects to see. There are plenty of mounds in the vicinity, the more important of which are the Vorėnai, Želviai and Peleniai Mounds. Impressive stones stand near the Skudutė River. Local residents believe that religious symbols are imprinted on these stones: God's foot, Holy Mary's foot, the Vytis Cross and Heart of Jesus. It is believed that the spring possesses healing powers.



VIDENIŠKIAI

For the first time Videniškiai was mentioned in the historical sources on November 7, 1367. This is a patrimony of the famous Dukes Giedraičiai and the descendants of Videniškiai history originator Daumantas Vidaitis. This region is important for its historical heritage: in the year 1618 Videniškiai Renaissance Church was built (it contains 10 art treasures), the monastery that belonged to the monks of Augustine was constructed in 1617, the remains of Baltadvaris Bastion Castle which was built by masters invited from Sweden in the 16th century (Martynas Giedraitis was the founder of this construction of

heritage values), Liesėnai – Bendrai Mound where the Videniškiai Castle stood in the 14th – 15th centuries, and the Baltadvaris Barrow. Rich historical past of Videniškiai attracts lots of artists. Each year painting symposiums are arranged here.

The remains of the Baltadvaris Bastion Castle and the Videniškiai Church are important historical architectural sites. The tourists arriving to this town always visit the beautiful Liesėjai Mound, the Siesartis Water Mill and the Petrauskas family which is famous for the foot imprints surrounded by legends.



SUGINČIAI

