

Let's visit Haanja Nature Park and Võru!



We will choose a romantic, winding road to drive from Tartu to Võru. This is a trading road and warpath with a dignified and exciting history which, over many centuries, has connected Tartu, Vastseliina and Pskov, and along which the horses of Swedish, Russian and Polish rulers have galloped. From the mid-19th century the road was ridden by stage coaches and a network of post stations was established along it, which is why it is called the historic '**Postitee**' (postal road).

This excursion takes us to **Võru County**, where we find domed hills, deep valleys, large rolling plains, fast-running rivers, beautiful little lakes, great views, unique hiking-tracks and cross-country skiing trails in the wild nature, untouched bogs and natural wetlands.



We will make our first stop and walking excursion in **Võru** - a town of parks and lakes, a town of sports and culture, a town that is...on the frontier and a bit different. The uniqueness of the Võru town is simple – rectangularly crossing system of streets, nice wood architecture and people who have managed to hang on to their own language.



Our second stop will be at **Vällamägi** – the second highest hill in Estonia – where a walk on a 2,2 km long hiking trail is passing highly diverse landscapes, starting near a bog with the deepest peat layer in Estonia, then going up to the steep (35-40degrees) slope of Vällamägi (84 meters) and down again.

Our next stop is at **Suur Munamägi** – the highest peak (318 m above sea level) in the Baltics. The observation tower on Suur Munamägi provides a splendid view of Estonian nature within the range of 50 km. The existing towers height is 29.1 metres. The tower was built in 1939 and last renovated in 2005 when an elevator was added to its back side.



On our way through **Rõuge** we will see the most beautiful features of the primeval valley of Rõuge. There are 7 lakes, including Rõuge Suurjärv – the deepest lake of Estonia and a Nightingale Valley where especially in May when the European bird cherries bloom, the valley is filled with singing nightingales, that's also where the name comes from.

Our final walk will take us to **Hinni canyon**. This is a valley perpendicular to the primeval valley of Rõuge and a unique monument of Devon era. Stairs and wooden walkways facilitate entrance to this narrow 200 m long canyon with its 5-6 m high vertical walls revealing different tones of the Gauya layer of Devonian sandstones.





Dinner will be served in Hämsa Tavern - major attraction of the historic farm with the interior from 19th century. In this tavern we will be offered delicious ethnic food.

More information on Võrumaa can be found at <http://www.visitestonia.com/en> ,
<http://www.visitvoru.ee/?lang=en>, <http://www.voru.ee/index.php?Lang=eng>