

# Different Lithuania

Private travel & concierge

Phone: +37065070055 | Email: [info@differentlithuania.eu](mailto:info@differentlithuania.eu) | Rodunios kelias 8, Vilnius | [www.differentlithuania.eu](http://www.differentlithuania.eu)



## Grand Jewish tour

Lithuania

Belarus

Poland

### Tour facts

Duration: 12 days

Distance 1800km/1242mi

3 different countries

1 Border crossing

Discovering the rich Jewish cultural heritage in all three countries. We hope that the mysterious little shtetl towns and lovely countrysides will outbalance the sights connected with the Shoah.



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*Romain Gary, famous Jewish – French diplomat, novelist, film director, WWII aviator*

## Day 1

Arrival to Vilnius. Private shuttle from the airport to hotel “Ramada” 5\*. A short Jewish heritage tour afternoon in Vilnius.

## Day 2 Paneriai memorial - Trakai

After breakfast, a visit to Paneriai memorial. Paneriai is one of the most dreadful sites of the mass execution of Jews during the Second World War. Jews were brought here mostly from Vilnius Ghetto, but Jews from other towns of Lithuania and other countries were also killed here. The forest entrance is marked by a memorial. Proceeding to Trakai. Name of Trakai Castle reminds us the great times of Lithuanian Grand Dukes. A visit to medieval island



Castle was built on the peninsula in the 14th c. At that time Vytautas the Great, Lithuanian Grand Duke ruled the country. 600 years ago Vytautas brought 1000 families of Karaites from the south of Crimean peninsula. One of the streets in Trakai is named after the small ethnic group Karaites. There are only a hundred of them left in Trakai nowadays. The philosophy of their religion is very close to Judaism. Their language belongs to Turkic language group. It is worth visiting the museum of Karaites.

Return to Vilnius. Overnight stay in hotel “Ramada” 5\*

## Day 3 Vilnius - Kaunas

Visit Kovno old Jewish quarter, Bet Midrash, synagogue and the Japanese consulate in Kovno, where Chiune Sugihara saved 8,000 Jewish lives.

Visit site of Slobodka yeshiva, graves of R. Yitzchak Echanan Spector (d.1896) and. R. Avraham Dov Ber Kahana Shapira (d. 1943) in Aleksot. Continue to the Ninth Fort, where R. Elchanan Wasserman was martyred in 1941, together with other 70,000 Jews. Return to Vilnius. Overnight stay Vilnius, “Ramada” 5\* hotel.

## Day 4 Vilnius

After breakfast, visit to Shnipishok, site of the old Jewish Cemetery of Vilna. Continue to the Zaretscha Jewish Cemetery (1830-1940) where R. Shmuel Strashun, Matityahu Strashun (d.1885), and R. Baruch Ber Leibowitz (d.1939) were buried. Continue to the present cemetery where we will visit the graves of the Vilna Gaon, R. Itzel Ponowiezer and. R. Cahim Ozer Grodzenski. Proceed to the Karaite Kenesa of Vilna, then to the Romm Publishing Company – where the Vilna Shas was published. Overnight Vilnius “Ramada” 5\* hotel.

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## Day 5 Vilnius - Minsk

On the way to Minsk, a stop in Volozhyn to see the renowned yeshiva established by Rav Hayim Volozhiner, a disciple of the Vilna Gaon in 1803 (it existed until 1942, when the Nazis killed the last sixty-four students). See the Jewish cemetery with the tomb of the great Hayim Volozhiner. Arrival to Minsk. General sightseeing of Minsk. "Yama" – a memorial for the Jews that perished in Minsk during the Nazi occupation. The obelisk was built on the exact spot where five thousand Jews were slaughtered. Visit Minsk Synagogue. A walk in the small part of the Old Town the only remains of the pre-war Minsk. The site of the Minsk ghetto. Examples of Jewish architecture, including a building with an ornate wooden door that still has the imprint of a large mezuzah. Overnight stay at Crown Plaza 5\* hotel.

## Day 6 Minsk-Mir-Novogrudok-Naliboki-Grodno

After breakfast enjoy a lovely drive to Mir. Here, visit a world-renowned yeshiva, established in 1815, that housed over five hundred students from around the world during its golden age. Explore three marvelous synagogues in yeshiva quarter. Continue through an old Jewish cemetery, where an impressive memorial is erected in memory of the Jewish inhabitants murdered during WWII. Follow with the visit to the medieval castle of Duke Radziwili, built in 1495. Journey with us to the town of Nowogrodek, where Great Duke Vytautas built a spectacular castle in the days of his rule, ruins of which can be seen to this day. Along with the visit to the Museum of Adam Mitskevich, this tour will take you to the Jewish ghetto area where mass murders took place.



Be the first to experience the forest of Naliboki, where Jewish partisan brother heroes Bielski hid and led one of the biggest Jew prisoner rescue in history.

Be the first to experience the forest of Naliboki, where Jewish partisan brother heroes Bielski hid and led one of the biggest Jew war prisoner rescue in history. Later in the evening, we will arrive to Grodno, where you can rest and relax at 4\* Kronon Park Hotel.

## Day 7 Grodno - Bialystok

After breakfast sightseeing of Grodno, once a residence of Great Duke of Lithuania Vytautas. Here in 1389 he issued a "Permit of Residence" that regarded the arrival of Jews into Lithuania with favor. Walking tour in the old part of Grodno, including the medieval castle, the brilliant example of Baroque architecture - the Roman-Catholic Cathedral, the streets of the Jewish quarter before the war, buildings of the various Jewish public institutions, the Great Synagogue of Grodno, the territory of the Jewish Ghetto, the old Jewish cemetery. Departure for Bialystok. Border crossing. Arrival to Bialystok. Accommodation in Branicki palace 4\* hotel.

## Day 8 Bialystok-Tykocin-Treblinka-Warsaw

We will see a Branicki Palace – a former residence of Branicki family who owned most of Bialystok in 18th century. We will also visit Main Market with town hall, Orthodox Church of St Nicholas from 19th century, Jewish Cemetery, Church of St Roch and Gothic Cathedral of Virgin Mary with monuments of Pope John Paul II and Father Jerzy Popieluszko in front of it.

A trip to a small but very interesting town, only 40 km from Bialystok. We will see the Market Square with Baroque monument for Stefan Czarniecki – Hetman of Poland during war with Sweden, parish church from 18th century and finally the Baroque Synagogue which dates from 1642. Synagogue reminds about times when Jewish population living in this region was very big. Walls of Synagogue are inscribed with religious quotations in Hebrew and Aramaic. Evening arrival to Warsaw accommodation at 5\* Bristol hotel.

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## Day 9 Warsaw

After breakfast, enjoy a tour of Warsaw. It will include the very best of the city: the charming Old Town painstakingly rebuilt from scratch after WW II, the area of the former Jewish Ghetto, the busy downtown, and the elegant Royal Route including Łazienki Royal Gardens and the Palace on the Water. Free time in the evening to visit a Chopin concert or to walk in a medieval part of the old town. Accommodations at Bristol 5\* hotel.



## Day 10 Warsaw-Krakow

After breakfast departure to Krakow. A Krakow tour will follow after a hotel check-in and little rest. We will explore the streets of Kazimierz, stopping at synagogues, market squares and beautiful old graveyards, (the magical Remuh cemetery is the best-surviving Renaissance Jewish graveyard in Europe). It is likely that there will be interesting one of the kind exhibitions on in the district, and we can watch the best of the shows that are being held. We will cross the river and explore Podgorze (a short walk from Kazimierz). This area, once a prosperous mercantile district, became Krakow's Jewish ghetto during the war. Fragments of the old wall still survive as a chilling reminder of a past that is really not that long ago at all. Whilst a few Jews managed to escape from the ghetto (Roman Polanski is a well known example) most were transported from here to the death camps. And finally we'll see the exhibition established in the former Oscar Schindler's Factory. Overnight at the Grand 5\* hotel.



## Day 11 Auschwitz & Wieliczka salt mine

After breakfast departure from Krakow to Auschwitz. Within eight hours you will be able to visit the largest Nazi death camp: Auschwitz (both Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II – Birkenau) and one of the greatest highlights in Poland – the Wieliczka Salt Mines. One place extremely beautiful and the other grim and awe-inspiring. It will be a day of strong emotions. Be ready for a great experience. After visiting Auschwitz, you will travel to the Wieliczka Salt Mines, a fascinating monument of engineering which dates back to the 13th century. The subterranean universe comprises over 300 km of galleries hewn into the rock and salt deposits. Return to Krakow, overnight Grand hotel 5\*.



## Day 12 Krakow-Warsaw-Departure

After breakfast private shuttle to Krakow airport. Departure.

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## Hotels Selection

**4nights** in Vilnius Ramada 5\* hotel. Standard room or similar.

**1night** in Minsk Crown Plaza 5\* hotel. Standard room or similar.

**1night** in Grodno Kronon Park 4\* hotel. Standard room.

**1night** in Bialystok Branicki Palace 4\* hotel. Standard room or similar.

**2nights** in Warsaw Polonia 4\* hotel. Standard room or similar.

**2nights** in Krakow Grand 5\* hotel. Standard room or similar.

## Food selection

Daily breakfast is included.

If you follow the Kosher Dietary laws, we can arrange 3 daily meals to fit the requirements.

Any desired restaurant can be booked in advance.

## Entertainment

Tickets to classical music events, art exhibitions & galleries can be arranged throughout the trip.

## Visa to Belarus

Belarus is a country where you need to have a tourist visa. There are 2 options how to get a visa. You can contact visa support agency in the states and do all the process with them. We can recommend Different Lithuania can provide a visa support service. To get a visa we will need to prepay your hotel stay in Belarus in advance, after the full payment, we will get an invitation for tourist purpose. When you arrive to Vilnius, with our assistance, you will go to Belarussian embassy with your application form and pay a visa fee. You will receive a visa in a 3-5 days.

## Car selection

A standard and new medium class car/minivan is included. For your preferences it could be changed in to a luxury Van Mercedes Viano / V Class or luxury limo Mercedes E or S Class.

## Final Tour price

Before estimating your private tour price, we will discuss all your needs and requirements.

## Shabbat services

According to Shabbat we will choose a synagogue for the services.

## Special requirements

If you are interested in something that you don't see mentioned in the tour description, we are ready to discuss your specific

## Tour includes

- Round trip airport transfers.
- Transportation throughout the tour.
- English speaking guided tours according to itinerary.
- Guided city tours: Vilnius, Kaunas, Trakai, Minsk, Hrodno, Bialystok, Tykocin, Warsaw, Krakow.
- Private guided tours in Auschwitz & Wieliczka salt mines.
- Entrance fees & tickets to all museums & sights during a tour