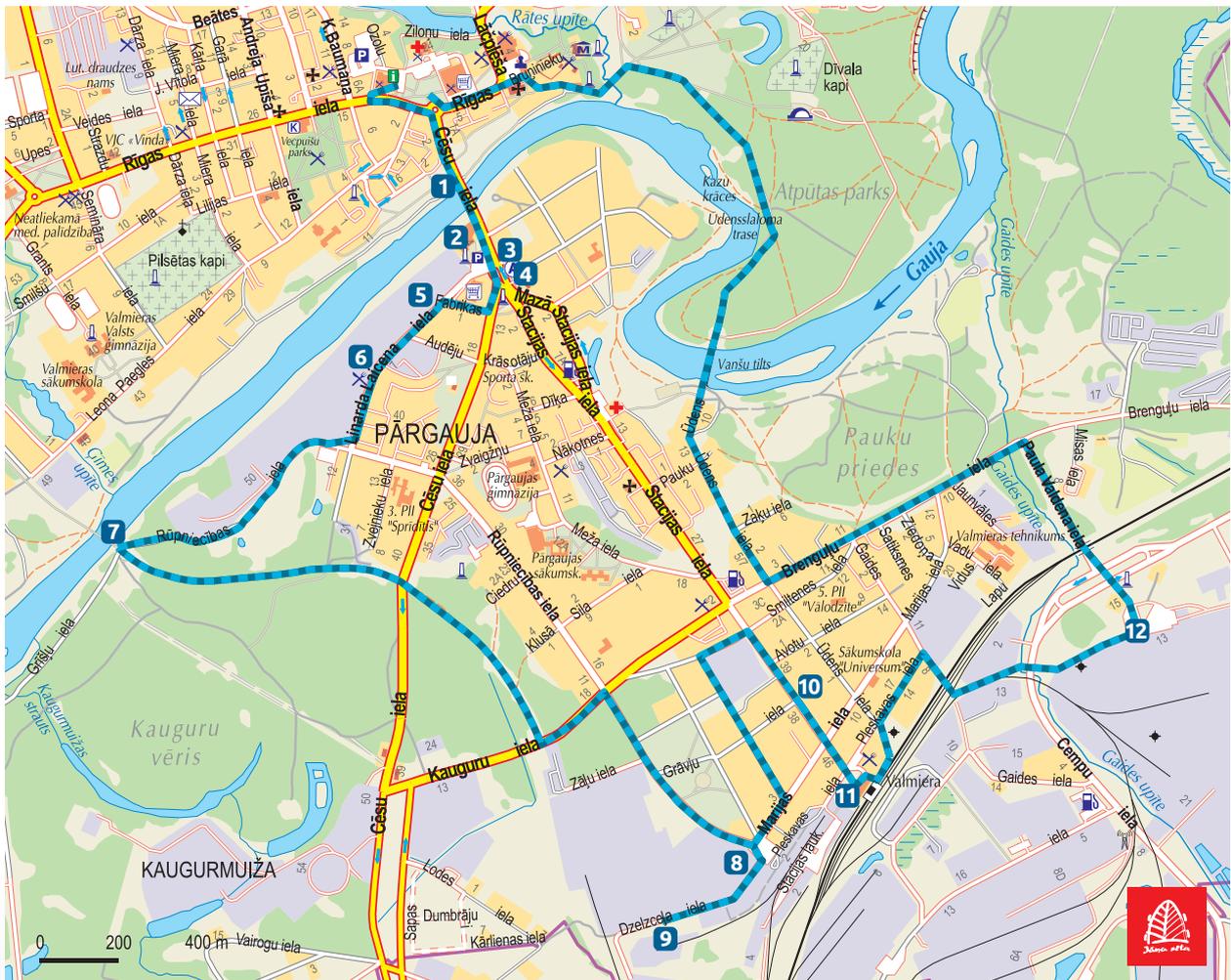


Cycling Route

Industrial Valmiera in the Centuries of Changes

In the place, where the reconstructed bridge over the Gauja River is currently found, earlier in the second half of the 19th century, there was organized a raft traffic over it, but the first bridge over the Gauja River was opened in 1865. The Riga-St. Petersburg railway, which passes through Valmiera, further improved the city's economic situation by promoting the development of industry, trade and construction. In Valmiera the first factories were established, and a new part of the city - "Kārliena" - arose at the railway station. The territory formed on the left bank of the Gauja River is called "Pārgauja", where the most important industrial objects are located.



Route characteristics: The route leads to the industrial sites of the city of Valmiera, which provide an insight into the industrial development of Valmiera in the 20th century and the location of the objects that have survived to the present day. The route runs through *Kārliena* and *Pārgauja*, enabling the traveler to enjoy less known and contrasting places in the city, combining industrial heritage and proximity to nature.

Preferable time: April-October, however, for enthusiastic travellers available throughout the year

Difficulty level: easy

Length of the route: 10 km

Approximate duration: 2.5h (excluding recreation pauses or additional objects, guided tours, etc.)

Road cover: variable (asphalt, sidewalks, forest paths, road with gravel cover)

Start and end points of the route: Valmiera Tourism Information Centre, Rīgas iela 10



1. The rebuilding of the Central Bridge over the Gauja River was completed on December 20, 2012, but earlier in the second half of the 19th century, there was organized a raft traffic over the river, and in summer of the year 1865 was discovered the first wooden bridge over the Gauja River. GPS: 57.5362466, 25.4239322



2. The Krasta iela (now Linarda Laicena iela) was busy at that time, there workers from various jobs, small craftsmen and manual labourers, found employment in the small industrial enterprises of Pārgauja – **in wool weaving mill of J. Līcis and flax mill of A. Pētersons**. During World War II, these companies were devastated. Since 2000, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences here has found its home. The Valmiera Integrated Library is also located here. GPS: 57.5350344, 25.4240440

3. The Valmiera Bus Station for passengers' convenience was built in 1957. A network of bus lines connected Valmiera with many republic cities and villages, and already in 1962, the number of bus trips had reached 80. In 2013, the rebuilt Valmiera Bus Station was opened to provide passengers with more modern and more convenient bus terminal services. GPS: 57.5344550, 25.4262489

4. Inside the Old Fire Tower there, at the present, inhabit the fragrant delicacies of the bakery "**Liepkalni**", but earlier this tower has played a significant role in the life of the city. The tower was built similar to the one in the city centre opposite the St. Simon's Church in Valmiera - the market square and it has been used as a fire station. The tower is an example of an industrial heritage that features elements borrowed from medieval guard towers. GPS: 57.5339795, 25.4265460

5. Further, there is a view on the former Valmiera district industrial enterprise, but today - LLC "Valpro" vast territory. The origins of the company dates back to World War 2, when in October 1944, was launched Valmiera district industrial enterprise on the base of the former ironworks and mechanical workshops of Atis Tauriņš. Currently "Valpro" Ltd. is one of the largest metal processing companies in the Baltic States specializing in producing metal cans, fire extinguishers and their hulls. The area is possible to view from the outside. GPS: 57.5332116, 25.4219846

6. Walking along Linard Laicena Street, we arrive at the former **Valmiera Furniture Complex**, later - the area of "Valmieras mēbeles" Ltd. The Valmiera Furniture Factory was founded on the base of the former industrial complex in 1960, but in 1975 it was called the Furniture Integrated Plant. It was the largest woodworking company in the district with workshops in Rūjiņa, Valka and Jaunpiebalga. From 2014, Ltd. "Valmieras mēbeles" is combined and has become a subsidiary of Ltd. "**Daiļrade koks**". The area is possible to view from the outside. GPS: 57.5324017, 25.4205019

7. The Iron Bridge (Dzelzītis) of Ainaži-Valmiera-Smiltene narrow-gauge railway line proudly extends across the River Gauja. This is the oldest of the existing Valmiera bridges and an important object in the city's industrial heritage. The structures of this ancient bridge were placed on boulder walls in 1911. The railway line was closed in the seventies of the 20s century and became a pedestrian and cyclist bridge. It is told that the narrow gauge train's speed had been such that hot-tempered passengers could jump out to run the embankment, pick up the flowers and jump back. GPS: 57.5283871, 25.4084125

8. Arriving at the end of Rūpniecības Street, there is a view on the vast territory of the former **Valmiera Meat Factory**. In the past, the company "**Bekona eksports**" Ltd. operated in this place. Valmiera Export slaughterhouse newly built complex was opened on 23rd October in 1928, and in the ceremony of laying the foundation stone on 15th September in 1927, participated an agronomist and a Saeima Deputy, later the President Kārlis Ulmanis. In 1930,



was built a slaughterhouse, where bacon was mainly prepared for export, but in 1944 it was almost completely burnt down. During the Soviet Era was built a large, modern, equipped company. Later Trials Ltd. was operating in this area, but the production halls are waiting for a new rebirth and a working boom. The area is a private property and is possible to view only from the outside. GPS: 57.5209032, 25.4360740

9. Behind the former meat factory site is located the old narrow-gauge railway depot, which construction, together with the same railway line Ainaži-Valmiera-Smiltene, completed in 1912. Currently, the building houses Ltd. "ZAAO" Eco Square and is possible to view from the outside. GPS: 57.5377569, 25.4131916

P *On the way to Valmiera's Railway Station at Marijas Street 6A, one can see the former warehouse building, which still delights with its ancient looks, thus emphasizing the importance of the area of the nearby railway station and the historic aura. The second impressive warehouse building is located at Stacijas Street 55, opposite the Valmiera Railway Station. These warehouses were built from torn boulders, and earlier these and other nearby warehouses were called Spīķeri.*

10. Going back across the railway line, further along Gaides street and turning to Avotu street, then continuing to the intersection with Stacijas street (Stacijas street 34), there is a view of the restored building with a tower, which in the Soviet times was a centralized **Machine and Tractor Station (MTS)**. There was parked expropriated agricultural machinery, which served small collective farms in the neighbourhood of Valmiera. The building is possible to view from the outside. GPS: 57.5246565, 25.4369054

P *On the corner, at the crossroads of Stacijas and Smiltēnes streets (Stacijas street 30), there is a red brick building - a shop with history. More than 100 years ago, there has been the Baltic (Kauguru) Farmers' Association shop here. At the same time, large-scale annual agricultural exhibitions, that were popular among people of Vidzeme, have been held in the courtyard of the building. The promoter and main supporter of the exhibition was Kārlis Ulmanis, the President of the Republic of Latvia from 1936 to 1940. GPS: 57.5256005, 25.4359091*

11. From Valmiera railway station there is a view on the broad-gauge railway Pskov-Riga built in 1889 through the Kauguru manor and "Gaides" home fields. This broad-gauge railway accelerated economic growth, because through it was possible to deliver the goods for local entrepreneurs and traders to send the required cargo to Estonian or Russian lands. Both the people of Valmiera themselves and the residents of the nearby parishes appreciated the amenities provided by the new train service. GPS: 57.5216244, 25.4389085

P *Continuing the path along the rails, there is a view on the **Railway station's water towers** Feiņšmekers and Ūdensgalva, which it once called the people of Valmiera. In the article of the Newspaper "Valmierietis" is reported: "Although the difference between the two water towers of Valmiera railway station after passports is a half-century, that senior lowest still pleases with its romance, while the tallest, silicate palest, is absolutely nothing".*

12. Walking along Pleskavas street and turning right onto Gaides street, you can cross the train's rail passage. Moving further, we arrive at the **Valmiera Glass Fiber Factory**. The company started operating in 1963. The only glass fiber producer in the Baltic States. At the beginning, it employed 30% of the total number of employees in the former district of Valmiera. Currently, **JSC "Valmiera Glass Fiber"** is one of leading manufacturers of glass fibre products in Europe and more than 50 years of experience in textile processing and with subsidiary companies in the United Kingdom and the United States. The territory is possible to view from the outside. GPS: 57.5256009, 25.4526377