

Cycling Route

Tales and legends

The route will reveal less heard tales and legends about Valmiera and Beverīna County. You will find answers to your questions during the trip; What is the name of Valmiera? Does the ghost live in the Valmiera City's Cemetery? Why is the water red in the Gauja River?



Route characteristics: The route begins in Valmiera, then leads to the Beverīna County and ends in Valmiera. During the journey, you can look from outside to the Gaide's Meeting House, the "Mičkēni" home, Jaunāmuīža (New Manor), and other viewing objects.

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

Difficulty level: moderate

Length of the route: ~ 20 km

Approximate duration: 4-5h

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

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



1. How has the name of Valmiera arisen?

The way Valmiera's name has arisen, there are stories in the nation, that do not match the evidence found by historians, about the borrowing from the Russian word "Vladimir". On an ancient parish and land border along the Liekupīte is a corner called Valmierī. Earlier in the fall, there had been plenty of nuts in the ravines of Valmierī, that had grown in hazelnuts. At the People's University, in Mūrmiuža, there once been a common discussion about Valmierā's name. Teacher Zāķis told a story that Valmierā has first been a village near Liekupīte. There was a castle, but it had sunk. "Valmierīņu" houses are old, and an ancient burial ground was found near them. So, there has been more life in this area than now. Cemeteries and churches have never been in remote places. Many of the names of the present towns were derived from the older names of the nearest neighbourhood, including the name of Valmierā from the House of "Valmierīņi". Truth – it is just one of the legends about the name of the city. GPS: 57.5386474, 25.4214466

2. A Ghost of the Valmiera City Cemetery

People say that in the Cemetery of the City the devil ghosts on light moon nights, at midnight. A couple of men decided to check it because they did not believe in ghosts and devils. At midnight, they went to the cemetery. When the first one entered the cemetery gate, a black dog, who had been in the size of the calf with glowing eyes, jumped in front of him. The dog with an open throat attacked a stranger. The man had a small sailor's dagger, which he drew against a powerful animal. As it appeared later, the animal was trained to scare humans, whose Landlord released it at midnight to run in the cemetery. GPS: 57.535501, 25.412457

3. Beberveģis

In the 19th century, someone Kocēni village Landlord the road section from the bread factory (now L.Paegles Street) to Jumaras street, or old Beverīna's road, has called Beberveģi. The name was taken from the German language. It is known that in the past it has been Bebrene's way. Others knew to tell that there had been Bebrene that supposedly was built before the Church of Valmierā. GPS: 57.5297267, 25.4054515

4. Why is the water red in the Gauja River?

When a man was riding a horse through Kauguri pine forest, an old woman stood in the way and asked to take her for a bit of road. The horse had been very tired and the man had refused the old woman. She died and buried her fortune - money in the ground, but it has not given her peace. After years, once again, the same man had been on the coast of the Gauja River, and he had been visited by the spirit of the old woman. It said, if he had picked up her, she would have given him all her money. The spirit shouted: "Money, go down in the Gauja for a thousand thousands years!" The money has dropped in Gauja, and the water remained red. GPS: 57.5283871, 25.4084125

5. Kaugurmuiža (Kauguri Manor)

The manor was built instead of "Kauguri" house and, also once, called "Ūdrenis". There had also been a large deer garden around the house. The story tells us that the Baron has dug an underground passage, so that the water would leak to the pond of the deer garden. GPS: 57.5174594, 25.4118257

6. The persistent Peter of "Lejas Eņiņš" house

"Lejas Eņiņš" house owner Peter has argued in his time with a local Landlord, who wanted to move the holding to another place. Peter has not been in peace for such eviction and has gone to Stockholm (Sweden), to seek the king's defence. For a while, the Landlord had postponed his plans for the transfer, but later the holding had been moved to another place. Peter the second time went to the King to Stockholm. The Landlord had returned the holding of "Lejas Eņiņš" to Peter, but he had done a tricky thing before, he built other houses in the fertile part of the land. During the outbreak of plague, all residents of "Lejas Eņiņš" houses died. GPS: 57.4969774, 25.3953655

7. Witches' Mound

In the middle of the Kauguri pine forest, rises one hillock called Witches Mound. There was a wood-block in the middle of the mound, where the witches made their rituals. If someone walked past the Witches Mound between twelve and one at night, or the same time during the day, then the witches caught a pedestrian and carried to the block. GPS: 57.4965811, 25.4191492

8. The Ghosts of the Cemetery "Kauguri"

People talked that the Kauguri Cemetery is haunted and, therefore, had been afraid to drive along it at midnight. Once two neighbours have gone to the mill - the brave one and the fearful. They had to stay there until the midnight, but the way home led along the cemetery. At midnight, both neighbouring horses stopped at it. The brave one discovered that there had

been sheep that had disappeared from the herd, got into the cemetery and made rustling. The farmer rushed the sheep away and then they both got home. The fearful farmer became ill and died a few days later. GPS: 57.4974427, 25.4467094

9. Jaunāmuiža (New Manor)

Jaunāmuiža (New Manor) is built instead of three houses – "Mežuļu", "Koriša" and "Kaņepju". The name of the manor was taken from the name of the Swedish Statesman Axel Oxenstrierna. GPS: 57.5082300, 25.4609572

10. "Mičkēni" House

Jānis Endzelīns and Hermanis Enzeliņš were born in the "Mičkēni" house. Along the house is a road that peasants have set up. Hermann was a local historian and a friend of Kārlis Ulmanis. GPS: 57.5187384, 25.4717405

11. Gaide's Meating House

In the nation, called the Village Chamber, and known as the old prayer chamber. After a fire in the village, the chamber has become a temporary accommodation for the women of the village. One woman knew to say that the chamber is haunted. Someone, whose bed is in the chamber at a fixed location, sees the ghost - hand. On one harvest day, a young woman entered the room to pray to God. Two crossed sickles were hung on the wall. She stood straight below the two sickles, and somehow both of them fell down and straight on the arm, cutting it off. The young woman has died from the pain. GPS: 57.5227740, 25.4492406

12. Kazu krāces (Goat Rapids)

Legend tells us that the Gauja Rapids were created by the devil – that wanted to destroy the tower of the Church of Valmierā and carried a stone at night, but when he was in the middle of the river, the rooster had begun to sing and the stone had fallen into the river. It has been several nights in a row, while the devil had to give up his intention. Another story says that Gauja has been wide and shallow in this place. People had brought stones and put in the Gauja River to allow cattle to graze in the forest. The goats particularly liked the place, so they named rapids on their name. GPS: 57.5369168, 25.4334857

13. Luca Hill

After the Swedish-war in the excavations of the hill were found bastions (rampart-like formations) from which shot with cannons to the city. Two of the cannon bullets were immured in the church, and can be seen there nowadays. During the attack of the Czar Ivan the Terrible (Ivan the Fearsome) on Valmierā City from the Luca Hill were shot stone bullets. The Czar had not been able to conquer the city, and therefore, in anger, had tortured the prisoners who later appeared on the hill as ghosts. Once the masters of the city had figured out, that it had to be done the end the legend and promised a half of a manor to the man who was willing to manage the hill. A hired officer named Luke or Loce volunteered to manage Luca Hill. Old people tell that the officer had been good in friends with the devil King Lucifer and could therefore maintain the hill smoothly. GPS: 57.5400749, 25.4324661

14. Strength of the Valmierā Castle

While the Valmierā Castle was being built, women had to go to work as well. Mothers were allowed to breastfeed boys twice a day and girls only once, but the workers were allowed to have only lunch. At the same time, barrels had been driven around and every morning peasants had to give milk, whether they had one or two cows. The lime mortar has been battered with milk, therefore the old wall of the castle holds so firm. GPS: 57.5387854, 25.4268967

15. How did the devil wanted to drown the church?

Once upon a time, the Devil has picked up a place for himself at the Gauja River. The devil had twisted the river so, that there had been a major difficulty in going along the curves. Even the riders gave the devil a penny, they would sooner or later just been dragged into the whirlpool. This continued until the construction of the Church of Valmierā had started next to the Devil's house. The devil got angry and twisted the Gauja River even more up to the Kauguri spruce forest. Down the river behind the Sietiņi house, the devil started to build a solid dam to flood the church. Devil's intentions have been delayed by the singing of the rooster, and in the meantime the church has been completed and the rooster placed on the top of the tower. The devil has gone away and left the works unfinished. The built-up dam named Sietieņis. GPS: 57.5384577, 25.4263711

Prepared by Santa Paegle, using materials from the Valmierā Integrated Library.