



Discover Bauska!

The history of the town of Bauska



The small and quiet town of Bauska, which has always been associated with its nearness to trade routes, continues the tradition of trying to greet and welcome travellers.

Pilsmiests, also known as Vairogmieists, originated in the middle of the 15th century, on the peninsula between the Mūsa and Mēmele rivers, next to the newly built Fortress of the Livonian Order. It was a safe place of residence for the landlords of the area, to whom the Master of the Livonian Order allotted the conquered lands. In 1518, Master Walter von Plettenberg issued a decree to build a church on the peninsula, named after St. Gertrude. During this time, the formation of a merchant settlement was taking place near the ford of the Mēmele, at the place where merchants and travellers crossed the river.

After the founding of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, during the second half of the 16th century, Bauska experienced the greatest flourishing in its history, albeit for a short time, becoming both the administrative centre of the Duchy with the Duke's place of residence in the Bauska Castle, and an important trade point through which the road from Lithuania to Riga passed. In 1584, Duke Gothard Kettler, decided that his place of residence in Vairogmieists had become too confined and

he made up his mind to move to a new part of the town on the banks of the river Mēmele. Already before that, the territorial arrangement works were performed. In 1573, the Church of the Holy Trinity was built for the Latvian congregation.

In 1594, the Church of the Holy Spirit was completed for the German congregation and the mortal remains of the buried were transferred from the St. Gertrude Church, which was scheduled for demolition, to the newly built church. During this time, the main streets of the town were also established – two along the river Mēmele (now – Rīgas and Plūdoņa streets) and smaller side-streets between them. The boundaries of the central market square of the town were set between the two churches. The year of foundation of the town is considered to be 1609, when the Duke of Courland Frederick gave the rights of the town a seal bearing the image of a lion which still serves as a symbol of the town on the coat of arms. At the 17th century end, the Duke gave permission for the construction of a town hall building in Bauska, but in 1635, he granted a charter to the town, which stipulated that there should be a mayor, a fogt of the court, a secretary and five council members. In 1616, the town hall in the centre of the market square already showed the wealth and scope of the burghers – even the council in Jelgava did not have such a large and luxurious building.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the growth of the town was stopped by the Great Northern War, the Great Plague and fires. It took a century for Bauska to recover from these disasters. The residential area of the town, which was formed at this stage, between the end of the 18th century and the 19th century, has survived to this day. The ancient houses, where tradesmen and craftsmen lived, were built along the edge of the street. On the ground floor areas, with an entrance from the street, marketplaces were organised, while the first floor was inhabited by the owners who arranged farm buildings, warehouses, stables and gardens in the courtyards. In the wooden architectural heritage, an observant spectator will notice gables of timber frame construction, half hipped

roofs, as well as an original window frame or door with a skylight window, sashes carved from wood and chiselled handles.

In the second half of the 19th century, the number of newly built elegant brick houses increased, and industry enterprises were founded including the Loding Beer Brewery (37 Rīgas Street) and the Lejas and Augšas mills. In 1864, a small Catholic church was built in the old part of the town. While in the still undiscovered part of the town between the fields of the Ērkšķu manor, an Orthodox Church named after St. George found its place. The author of the project of the Orthodox Church, built in 1881, in the Russian-Byzantine style, was J.F. Baumanis, the first professional Latvian architect with an academic education.

During the period of the late 19th and early 20th century, significant building works of the side of Kalna Street were taking place. Transformations also took place in the most attractive part of the town – around the Town Hall square and along the Plūdoņa, Pasta and Rīgas streets. Small, yet tasteful for this time, brick buildings appeared on the edges of the streets, showing characteristics of Modern Historicism.

After World War I, during the period of the formation and recovery of the state of Latvia, the town of Bauska continued to grow, now reaching beyond the narrow old town. New detached houses were built on both



sides of Uzvaras Street and next to it. The largest public building – the school house (now - Bauska State Gymnasium) – stood out among the stylish private houses. It was being built from 1926 to 1930, according to the design developed by the architect J. Neijs. The modern reinforced concrete bridge over the river Mēmele gave not only a functional, but also an impressive architectural accent to the landscape of the town.

World War II caused a lot of damage to the buildings of the town and many houses and bridges were completely destroyed. Recovery and debris removal after the war lasted for more than 10 years. The first large post-war new building was the cinema “Uzvara”, the construction of which was completed in 1954. Its architectural style symbolised the Soviet power and came from the USSR in Latvia. The construction of the newest part of the town began in the 1960s, when new multi-storey residential buildings were built in the southeast part of the town.

After the reestablishment of the independence of Latvia, Bauska strove to become accustomed to the new

economic situation and the growing role of the highway VIA BALTICA crossing the town, as well as to preserve and maintain its cultural heritage, which would make the town attractive to travellers, therefore both bridges, the Bauska Castle and the Bauska Town Hall were reconstructed. In 2016, a new pedestrian bridge was opened across the river Mūsa, and in 2018, the Bauska swimming pool was opened. A book about the history of Bauska has been issued as a tribute to the centenary of Latvia.

1. Bauska Castle

In order to protect themselves from the attacks of Lithuanians, around 1443, the Livonian Order built the last fortress of the Order, the Bauska Castle, on the peninsula between the rivers Mūsa and Mēmele. The secrets of the medieval palace are now kept by the romantic ruins of the castle. The castle was the residence of the landlord – the fogt. His living room was located on the first floor of the largest tower, where traces of the star vault are still visible. In the basement of this tower, until the 18th century, there was a prison which became famous thanks to one of its prisoners in the 16th century. For four years it was occupied by the Franciscan monk Burkard Waldis who was also a well-known politician, writer, composer and tinsmith in Europe.

In 1561, The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia was created. Its new ruler Duke Gothard Ketler needed new residences, therefore, around the year of 1580, the Duke issued a decree to build a new part of the Bauska Castle. It was only completed in 1596 – during the reign of his son



Friedrich. It was both modern and luxurious and, unlike the gloomy walls of the medieval fortress, was also dignified. Its facades were decorated with luxurious sgraffito plaster and stone ornaments. At the ends of the red tin roofs, there were golden wind vanes, and the sun shone through tiny windows. The indoor floors were covered with coloured ceramic tiles and the rooms were heated with luxurious glazed tile stoves and fireplaces.

The splendour of the Duke's residence was destroyed by the Northern War when Russian troops blew up fortifications and part of the castle in 1706. However, in the newest part of the castle, the ancient legends have risen from the ashes, as it has been restored and the interior of the castle is being rebuilt.

Pilskalns, Bauska, www.bauskaspils.lv, Phone: +371 63923793

Bauska Old Town

2. The Bauska Church of the Holy Spirit

The oldest remaining building in the Old Town of Bauska is the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, once built for the German congregation. It was built from 1591-1594. At the beginning, the building was without a tower, which was additionally built in the Western end only in 1614. In 1623, the tower received a beautiful finish with a dome and a spire. A clock was built in the tower, which, along with the bell, told the correct time to the inhabitants of the town, and in the ball on the spire of the church, documents were placed to tell the future generations about the history of the town and church. In 1813, the spire of the tower had to be dismantled because it had been damaged by lightning. The mighty walls of the church, the sharp-bow window openings, the heavy buttresses supporting the tower and part of the choir, and the small windows of the tower, reminiscent of loopholes, show both the medieval construction traditions and the unsafe life of the town.

During all its long life, the Bauska Church of the Holy Spirit has carefully been keeping evidence about the history of the town and its inhabitants and has gathered a collection of excellent art monuments, including donations and commemorative medals. The altar of the church was made in 1699, but it got its present appearance in 1861 after the reconstruction, performed by the well-known Jelgava artist J. Dearings. The pulpit (in 1762) and the organ prospect (in 1766) were donated to the church by the Russian senator N.fon Korf. The benches of the parish were made in the middle of the 17th century and at the beginning of the 18th century. In one end of the benches there is a colourful wood-carving which is the oldest depiction of the Coat of Arms of Bauska (1640) with a gold lion in a red shield. In the altar there are three luxurious private benches in the Baroque and Rococo style. By the walls of the Church, nine tomb plaques of the end of the 16th century and the 17th century are arranged in lines.



Among them, there are also unique monuments of memorial sculpture, as well as commemorative plaques for town officials (the tomb plaque for the Bauska Town Council member Gotthard Ficke, 1672). The epitaph at the Southern wall of the Church was put up in memory of the fogt of Bauska Court J. Henning in 1677. It was painted by the Bauska artist D.fon Ceics who had also held respectable positions – he was an Elterman, the Court Fogt and even the Burgomaster. At the opposite wall, the epitaph for K.J. Reimerss (1757), another Burgomaster of Bauska, has just recently returned.

The Church is decorated with six ball-type chandeliers of the 17th-18th centuries which are also gifts of the owners of the surrounding estates and townspeople.

13 A Plūdoņa Street, Bauska, Phone: +371 26609920, 29227564

3. Bauska Town Hall

In 1615 the Duke of Courland Frederick granted to Bauska the privilege to construct the Town Hall. The place for it was chosen in the centre of the market square. Although it was not richly decorated, it was the largest and the most luxurious town hall in the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia in the 17th century. On the ground floor of the Town Hall there was a room for scales and the flat of the servant of the Town Hall, while on the first floor there was a room for holding the meetings of the Town Hall and a meeting room for citizens. The bell from the tower announced the important events to the inhabitants of the town.



In the second half of the 19th century, the Bauska Town Hall lacked the funds for the repair of the Town Hall, therefore, in 1852, the damaged tower was destroyed, and in 1871, the first floor of the building was also demolished. The remaining part was reconstructed and used for various needs for the next 140 years.

The reconstruction of the Bauska Town Hall was started in 2010. It took place in several stages and currently the Bauska Town Hall is the only reconstructed town hall of the 17th century in Latvia. At present, the Tourism Information Centre and the Civil Registry Office are located there. Tourists can visit an exhibition of the interior of the Town Hall and the exhibition “Weights and Measures”

1 Rātslaukums, Bauska, www.ratsnams.bauska.lv ,

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4. Bauska Museum

For over 70 years, in the building that was once the most luxurious hotel in town, the Bauska Museum welcomes its visitors.

The museum's collection holds more than 60 thousand items: antiquities, photos, documents, books, furniture, tools, household items and other historical evidence.

It includes the exhibition of the history of Bauska “Bauska in Time and People in Bauska in the 20th century”, the exhibition “Lost Inhabitants of Bauska” which tells about the Bauska Jews, Germans, and Krievini, as well as the exhibition of the puppets and toys of the 20th century. The exhibition halls of the museum offer contemporary fine art exhibitions. You can also visit the Folk Applied Arts Studio “Bauska”.

6 Kalna Street, Bauska, www.bauskasmuzejs.lv, Phone: +371 63960508, 63960511



5. Drengers inn

One of the oldest and largest wooden houses on the corner of Kalna and Plūdoņa streets now grieves in solitude behind locked windows. Since the 1880's, it has housed a well-known pub and inn. The oldest part of the building on the side of Plūdoņa Street was built in 1788 on a plot of land belonging to the Duke of Courland and Semigallia. At the beginning of the 19th century, a courtyard building was built with a colonnade, a decorative window frame and facade corners carved in wood. In the 19th century, a building was built on the Kalna Street side, where a beverage store, a pub and an inn were located. E. Drenger, whose name the inn has kept, only took possession of the house in 1884. The enterprise was also expanded on the other side of Plūdoņa Street by arranging stables, warehouses and an inn. The shop “Fotomiks” and “Velosēta” Ltd are successfully operating in the cosy yard, which is currently being restored.

26 Plūdoņa Street, Bauska



6. “Saules Garden” and the monument to the poet Vilis Plūdōnis

The small square between Rīgas, Plūdoņa, Saules and Kalēju streets keeps the memories of the Church of the Holy Trinity for the Latvian congregation, built in 1573. In the 17th century, travellers could easily recognise the Bauska silhouette with its three characteristic spires that looked down over the city and that could be seen from far away – the towers of the Holy Trinity Church, the Town Hall and the Church of the Holy Spirit.

The life of the ancient building was not long. In the winter of 1733, the town experienced frequent fires. Seven houses were burnt at the beginning of the year, and on 24 February, the Holy Trinity Church was burnt down. It turned out that the guilty person was the tailor M.K. Heinz, who confessed that fire had always given him great pleasure. The court sentenced him to death by burning and the pyre was prepared by stacking the burnt sticks of wood from the church in the Mazdirdes ditch.

The monument to the poet V. Plūdōnis was installed in 2016 and was created by the sculptor Ģirts Burvis. It is designed as a page from a book, from which the figure of the poet appears and from which swans are flying out “to the sunny distance” and where one can read fragments of the poetry written by the poet.

The square between Plūdoņa, Saules and Kalēju streets, Bauska



7. Loding beer brewery

In the second half of the 19th century, in the very centre of the town, the main housing and high chimney of Loding's Brewery were built. The facade of the brewery along Rīgas Street, built in the brick style which was popular at that time, tastefully fitted to the line of other houses. The beer produced by this brewery was well-known, not only in Bauska, but also in Jelgava, Liepāja, Riga and even Lithuania.

The German Loding Family was one of the most prominent German families in Bauska. At that time, the Germans were the ones who formed and governed the town and led its spiritual life. German priests represented both the German and Latvian parishes.

39 Rīgas Street, Bauska



8. The Memorial “Synagogue Garden”

This memorial site was designed and created by the sculptor Ģirts Burvis, who is also the author of the monument to V. Plūdōnis. The total area of the Synagogue garden occupies exactly the same area as the Bauska Great Synagogue. The stone images symbolise the Jews coming out of the church after the service. A symbolic bimah is standing in the centre of the memorial, containing the surnames of the Jewish families who perished in the Holocaust.

The Bauska Jewish community was destroyed in 1941 during the German occupation. In the second half of the 19th century, 2/3 of all the inhabitants of the town were people of this nationality. The Vecsaule Memorial is located 7 km from Bauska, where at the beginning of August 1941, German occupation authorities committed a crime and murdered approximately 500 Jews living in Bauska and even 200 Jews that lived in the surrounding area of Bauska. In 1971, a memorial was created in this place, in the central part of which is a wall of human silhouettes made by the sculptor Imants Murovskis.

35B Rīgas Street, Bauska



9. Mosaic with fish and water motifs

In June 2018, thanks to the project of the association “Master Gothards”, a panel with fish and water motifs in a mosaic technique has been created. The creator of the mosaic idea is Laura Matilde Ikerte and more than 50 inhabitants of the Bauska Municipality have become involved in the creation of this mosaic. The mosaic is located at the end of the Strautnieku street near the river Mēmele, on a 30-meter-long wall of the barn.

Strautnieku Street, Bauska

In 2017, glamorous decorations – roses made of fabric (“Rose Alley”), were installed on the houses of Rīgas Street (from Kalna Street to Baznīcas) which will be visible for some time...



10. The former school building at 8 Rīgas Street

In 1806, a wooden building was built for the county school, but in 1835 a new two-storey brick building was built at 8 Rīgas Street, where the Bauska Children and Youth Centre are located now. In 1886, the county school was transformed into the town school. In the 80s of the 19th century, the Latvian poets Plūdōnis and Edvards Virza, as well as the well-known publisher Andrejs Jesens, took their first steps in literature here, accompanied by the teacher and the writer Frīcis Adamovičs. Krišjānis Berķis, general and Minister of War, and Vilis Olavs-Plutte, the Head of the Central Commission for the Refugees Supply, as well as other significant provincial residents have also studied here.

8 Rīgas Street, Bauska



11. Bauska Culture Centre

The house, which is located at the corner of Kalna and Rūpniecības streets and which has now become the centre of cultural life in the town, was built in 19th century end as a nobleman house. In 1930 the building was managed by the Bauska Guards who arranged it in a patriotic way. The paintings of the representation rooms of the vast Defender House were painted by the Riga artist E. Treilons.

Unfortunately, during the Second World War, the building was partially destroyed. Its exterior has been restored, but the interior decoration has completely disappeared. However, also today the Bauska Cultural Centre kindly welcomes visitors to concerts, shows and other events.

18 Kalna Street, Bauska, www.kultura.bauska.lv, Phone: +371 63923291



12. Bauska Elementary School

In 1903, in the newly built school building at 32 Rīgas Street, the Ina Kļaviņa Private gymnasium for boys started work. The large and modern school building stood out in the line of older buildings for the combination of Art Nouveau and National Romanticism which is a rare phenomenon in a small town. In 1931, the Kļaviņas gymnasium was merged with the Bauska State gymnasium, but in 1934, when the gymnasium moved to the newly built building at Uzvaras Street, the Bauska Parish school moved here. After the Second World War, the Bauska Elementary school was located in the building.

32 Rīgas Street, Bauska



13. Freedom Monument (The monument to the fallen in the fight for the freedom of Latvia)

In 1929, a monument was erected in the garden of the castle, in the place where four Latvian army soldiers (J. Hāzenfuss, A. Užiņš, J. Rimlins and one unknown soldier) who died in the battles at Bauska in 1919 were buried. The base of the granite, which features the lines of the poet Plūdōnis: “Only those who die for the benefit of others can be great. He who has ears, let him hear!”, was prepared in Bauska in the workshop of the stone cutter J. Sieriņš. For several decades, the completion of the monument was delayed by the Soviet occupation. It was only in 1992 that the sculptor A. Jansons made and erected a bronze statue of Semigallian soldier according to the design of his father K. Jansons.

There are two more monuments near the Freedom Monument in the former garden: a memorial place, opened in 2008, to the victims of the communist regime and the fallen soldiers and a monument, opened in 2014, to the volunteer defenders of Bauska who defended their town in the summer and autumn of 1944 against the Soviet occupation, as well as monument of Lācplešis War chevaliers names, that was born in Bauska County.

Brīvības bulvāris, Bauska



14. The Bauska Catholic Church

In the second half of the 17th century, V.F. Carmel de Berg, the owner of the Skaistkalne manor and the son of the initiator of the construction of the Skaistkalne Catholic Church donated a plot of land to the town of Bauska for the Bauska Catholics. The small Catholic parish in the Protestant Bauska, until the second half of the 19th century, could only afford to maintain a prayer house. A small Catholic church was only built in 1864. In 1891, a bell tower was built next to it. In the second half of the 19th century the interior of the church was designed.

The church was built mainly for the needs of Lithuanians, as in the middle of the 19th century, Lithuanian immigrants who were Catholics arrived in Bauska. Later, in the 20th century, Lithuanians became another national minority in Bauska. The fact that, after the proclamation of independence of Latvia in the early 1920s, even the Lithuanian Consulate, headed by Bauska Catholic priest Jazeps Maskvits, was nominated in Bauska, demonstrates the significance of the presence of this national minority in Bauska.

2 Katoļu Street, Bauska



New Bauska

15. The Bauska Orthodox Church

The Bauska St George Orthodox Church was built in 1881 according to the design of the architect J.F. Baumanis. J.F. Baumanis was the first professional Latvian architect with an academic education who designed such buildings as the former House of Knighthood (Now the Building of the Saeima - the Latvian Parliament) and the Riga Latvian Society House. He has also designed 20 Orthodox churches that were built in Estonia. The church was built for the small Orthodox Parish and was located in the rural part of the city in an area that was not built up and its style represented the Russian national spirit. The church has partially preserved its original part but its iconostasis was rebuilt in 1991.

5 Uzvaras Street, Bauska



16. Korff's manor house and park

The newest part of the town has reached the former rural areas. Korff's manor house were built around 1863. The owner of the manor was a participant of the Polish uprising who sought refuge in a small and quiet manor in the outskirts of Bauska.

In the Korff's park can found the monument of merchant and mayor of Bauska K.V. Kraukling (1805), that during the years lost top part of empire style urn. K.V. Kraukling was the director of the Dresden Royal Museum of History and was a friend of prominent German writers, for example, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

The manor house next to the park, which is called the Korff's park, is now a favourite place for walks and parties, and the only building left to this day – the former mansion's dwelling house was rebuilt as an apartment building with a stationery store.

In 1989, on the 380th Anniversary of the town of Bauska, in the Korff's garden, the works by Latvian sculptors which were donated to the town were exhibited.

10 Salātu Street, Bauska



17. Bauska Old Cemetery

At the end of the 18th century, after the inclusion of Courland in the Russian Empire, burials in the churches were banned. Burials were also stopped next to the two churches in the town centre, and a new cemetery was built outside the town, which is now called the Old Cemetery.

The interesting memorial sculpture monuments and the graves of the most reputable citizens of Bauska have been preserved in the cemetery, including the monument, built according to the design of the artist Jūlijs Madernieks, in the burial place of the Bērtuļi family. Next to the Old Cemetery, the new part of the cemetery and the Warrior's cemetery for the fallen Soviet soldiers during the Second World War were also established.

7 Biržu Street, Bauska

18. Bauska Motor Museum

The largest car museum of southern Latvia. It consists of four thematic collections of ancient vehicles with 89 car units, 30th century carpenter's workshop, interior of a landowner's house and military equipment. Thematic exhibitions are held here as well.

6 Sarkanmuiža, Bauskas nov., Phone: +371 67025887



19. Brewery «Bauskas alus»

Founded in 1981. The company's brewers are loyal to the classic brewing technology. One of the oldest and most experienced brewers of Latvia, Karlis Zalitis still works there. The brewery produces non-alcoholic malt drinks as well. The brewery offers beer tasting with a story about the technology of beer producing.

Bērzkalni, Bauska, +37163960013, 25770575

Festivals

Due to the unique opportunity to be in the valley of two rivers and in the middle of Latvia, Bauska has always been a convenient and interesting place for travellers, artists, event organisers, traders and athletes. Year after year new events take place that become a tradition and welcome everyone to Bauska.

Music Festival «Bauska Country» takes place on the second weekend of July on the Bauska Castle mound with the best Latvian, European and American musicians. www.countrybauskafestival.lv/

Festival «Bauska TasTe» takes place on the first weekend of August. A wide programme with Latvian music for different generations, a Fencing tournament in Bauska Castle and sporting activities in Bauska Town are offered during the festival. www.kultura.bauska.lv

Early Music Festival «Vivat, Curlandia!». The Dukes of Courland Ketlers Time Music. The festival is held on the second weekend of July in Bauska Castle, in the Church of the Holy Spirit of Bauska and in Bauska Town Hall. www.kultura.bauska.lv

Bauska Old Town Yard Celebration, Porridge Festival, South Latvia Bazaar take place on the second Saturday of September with various activities in the Old Town's yards, porridge tasting, and craftsmen market. www.kultura.bauska.lv

BAUSKA

0 200 400 600 m



Jauncode

Elektriķi

Bauskas dabas parks

Bērzkalni





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