

Latvia Essentials



Time

Latvia is in the - GMT+2 time zone. If you arrive from London, put the clock back for two hours, from Moscow – forward one hour. For precise time call 154 (in Latvian) or 174 (in Russian).

The supermarkets usually open at 8 AM and close at 11-12 PM. On Saturdays and Sundays grocery stores are usually open. Banks and museums close at 4-5 PM. Most large cafes are open until 2 AM. Most service enterprises work without a lunch break.



Money and payment cards in Latvia.

The currency in Latvia is Lat (Ls), one Lat is equal to 100 santims. The Lat exchange rate is stable. One Lat is equal to app. 1,5 Euro or 1,8 Dollars. There are no legal limitations in currency transfer across the borders of Latvia. You do not have to show your passport to change currency.

There is no problem with getting cash from your payment cards as there is a broad network of cash dispensers that lets you getting cash in almost any town of Latvia. Most stores, hotels, restaurants accept debt and credit cards. You can also cash in Travel cheques American Express & Thomas Cook (in USD and EUR).



Telephone

Latvian telephone connection is almost totally digital and for that reason of very high quality. You can call any place in the world from phone booths located all around Latvia. You can use a 2, 3 and 5 Ls call card, sold in all press boots, or with a credit card. There are instructions in every phone booth. You should remember that a call to Europe or USA costs less than a call to Russia or CIS countries.



Mobile communication

Mobile connection in Latvia is very well developed. Almost all territory of Latvia has cell coverage. Tourists are recommended to buy pre-payment cards – “O karte” or “Zelta Zivtina” that provide you with a temporary number and call opportunity for local prices.



Mail

Mail in Latvia works well. Letters are usually delivered on the next day (across Riga) and in one-two days across Latvia. International letters are usually delivered in under a week. To send a letter you have to buy post stamps in post offices or Narvessen shops and stick them on envelopes. Across Latvia – 15 santims, European counties and Russia – 30 santims, to other countries – 40 santims.



Transport

Riga has no subway but there are trams, trolleybuses, buses and route taxis. Public transport fee is 20 santims, taxi-buses – 25 santims. You pay the conductor as you enter.



Taxi

There is no problem with finding a taxi in Riga. The fee is regulated by Riga Council and is the same for all taxis. Day fee (06:00 – 24:00) is 0,40 Ls for entry and 0,30 Ls p/km . Night fee is app. Double – 0,60 Ls for entry and 0,40 Ls p/km. Taxis are available at taxi stops and via phone. A ride across the city will cost you 3-5 Ls.



Information services

Main information telephone numbers are 118 and 117 – both paid. A call costs app. 10 santims. Service quality is very high, operators are able to answer even the most unexpected questions. Operators speak Latvian, Russian and English.