

LEGEND

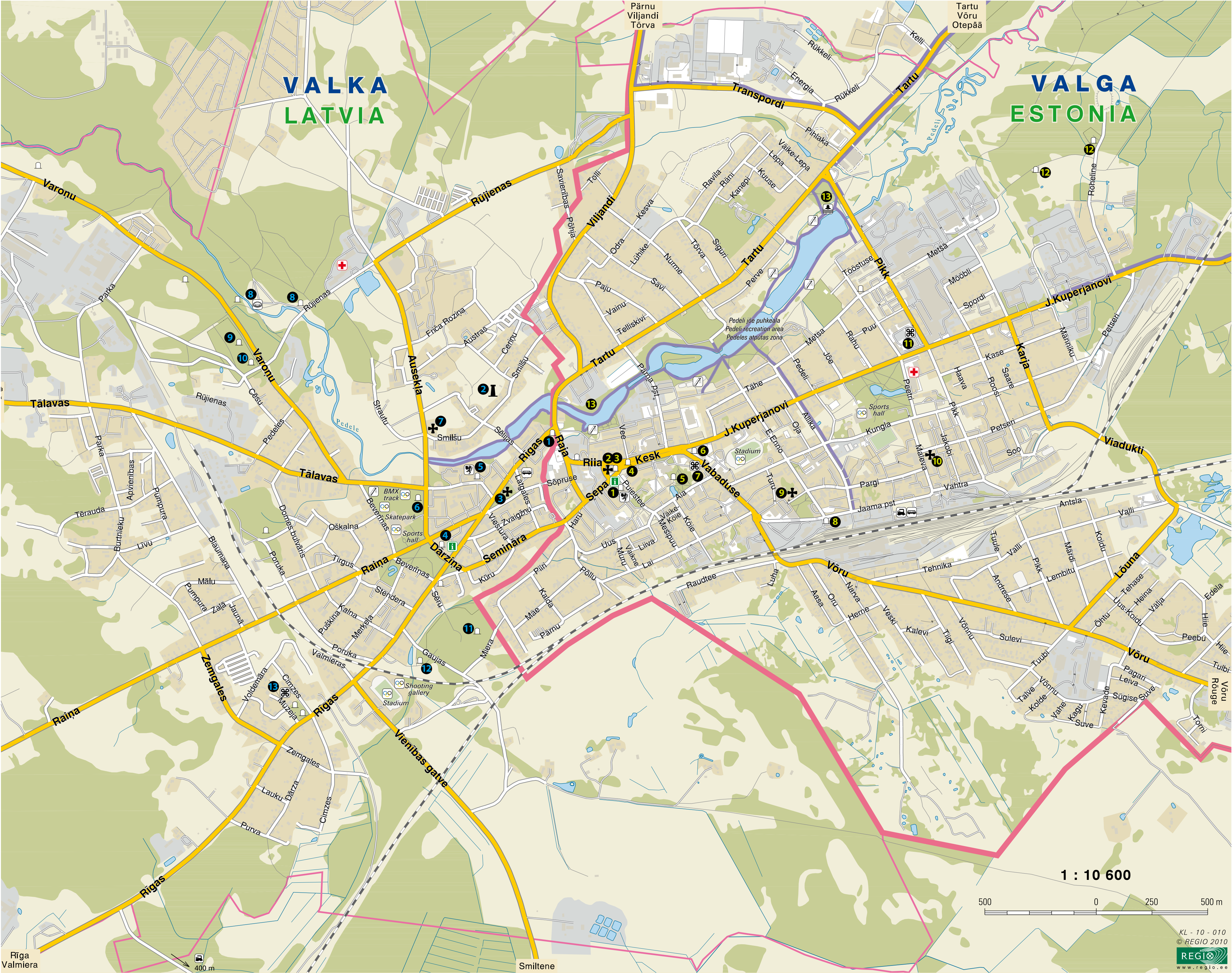
- Tourist Information Centre
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- Playground
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- CEMETERY FOR SOVIET SOLDIERS WHO FELL IN WORLD WAR II
- VALKA LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM





1 TOWN HALL *Kesk 11*

Built in 1865, the late Neoclassical Valga Town Hall (Raekoda) stands on the city's central plaza, which was formerly a market square. The first ethnic Estonian mayor in the country's history, the pharmacist Johannes Märtson, governed the city from 1902-1917. A memorial plaque commemorating his dedication to the Estonian national cause can be seen on the wall of the Town Hall's foyer. A wax figure of Märtson can also be found in the Valga Museum. From 1917-1918, the city had a Latvian mayor, Kārlis Aleksandrs Ozoliņš. In 1917, the Latvian Provisional Government adopted a declaration in Valga Town Hall, proclaiming Latvia autonomous.



2 ST. JOHN'S CHURCH *Kesk 23*

Featuring a combination of Baroque and Neoclassical styles, St. John's Church (Jaani kirik) was built by Riga architect Christoph Haberlandt in 1816. St. John's Church, the only oval-shaped church in the country, is one of the most outstanding examples of late 18th century architecture in Estonia. The church has two altar paintings – one depicts the Resurrection and the other preparations for the Last Supper. It was donated to the church by a citizen of Riga, a potter named Hase. The church's organ – restored and in working order – is also unique. The organ was built by Friedrich Ladegast in Weissenfels, near Leipzig, Germany, in July 1867 and is ranked among the 200 finest organs in Europe. The organ was commissioned by schoolmaster and teacher Janis Cimze. Bells can be heard ringing at noon and midnight.



3 MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO THE POHJAN POJAT FINNISH REGIMENT *Kesk 23*

A memorial plaque to the regiment of Finnish volunteers, Pohjan Pojat (Sons of the North), who fell on the southern front of the Estonian War of Independence in 1919. The plaque was installed on the wall of St. John's Church on 1 February 1934 – marking the 15th anniversary of the liberation of Valga. The plaque was destroyed in September 1940 by railway workers acting on orders from the Red Army, which had occupied Estonia. The plaque was reinstated with financial support from the Republic of Finland on 31 January 1999 in connection with the 80th anniversary of one of the bloodiest chapters of the War of Independence, the Battle of Paju. The plaque bears the names of 200 men killed in the Battle of Paju, and above them, the polar bear's head emblem of the regiment.



4 MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO STEPHEN BÁTHORY *Kesk street*

The current city of Valga received city rights by decision of the King of Poland Stephen Báthory on 11 June 1584. It is now celebrated as Valga's birthday. City rights were granted to revive local life and commerce after the destruction of war. Stephen Báthory, a Hungarian by birth, went from being ruler of the small state of Transylvania to the throne of Poland when the Jagellonian dynasty found itself heirless. The memorial plaque to Stephen Báthory was opened on the Kesk tn. tree-lined avenue in 2002 in cooperation between the city of Valga and the embassies of Hungary and Poland.



5 STATUE OF NIPERNAADI – MEMORIAL TO WRITER AUGUST GAILIT *Säde park*

Toomas Nipernaadi was the most famous literary creation of August Gailit, who was from a mixed Estonian-Latvian family in Kuiksilla in Valga County. Located in Säde Park, this memorial celebrates the vagabond hero of the novel of the same name, a man with the ability to dream and live for miracles. The novel is like a hymn to adventure, joie de vivre and pastoral life. With an Estonian lyre (kannel) slung around his neck, the carefree Nipernaadi journeys through seven short stories in the space of one summer. In one episode he is a raft-man, in another a pearl-diver; in others, a sexton or irrigation man. He latches on to each situation to spin his fantastic tales. (Bernard Kangro. Noor Gailit. Tulimuld, 1961.)



6 MEMORIAL TO ALFRED NEULAND *at the intersection of Vabaduse and Kesk streets*

This monument on the corner of Vabaduse, Kupejanovi and Kesk streets commemorates independent Estonia's first Olympic gold medalist. Sculptor Mati Karmin. Weightlifter Alfred Neuland (1895-1996) was the son of a Valga coach-man who reached the pantheon of Olympic greats due to a combination of raw talent and diligent training. He won a gold medal at the Antwerp Olympic Games in 1920 in the lightweight class and a silver in Paris in 1924. It is believed that he lost his gold due to an innovative lifting technique – the snatch part of his stroke employed a broad grip and locked thumb. Without exaggeration, it can be claimed that Neuland put independent Estonia on the world map, being the first Estonian Olympic champion and the first to win Olympic gold for the Republic of Estonia.



7 VALGA MUSEUM *Vabaduse 8*

The museum is located in the former Säde Society building, a contemporary of the venerable cultural institutions such as the Endla in Pärnu, the Vanemuine in Tartu, the Estonia in Tallinn and the Kannel in Võru. Designed by the first Estonian architect Georg Hellat, the Säde building was built in 1911 and in the early 20th century was the largest community building in Estonia's smaller cities. Being a large Art Nouveau style building, it is architecturally noteworthy on a national level. The Säde theatre operating under the aegis of the Society was well-known and loved. The building was renovated for the museum and opened on 6 October 1999. The main exhibition covers the history of Valga and the entire County with scenes from daily life and wax figures. Art exhibitions can be viewed in the museum gallery and handicraft workshops are open to the public.



8 LOCOMOTIVE MEMORIAL *Jaama pst*

The Locomotive Memorial is located near the Valga railway station. It was installed here in 1998 to mark the 110th anniversary of the Pskov-Valga-Riga railway. The railway was opened on 22 July 1889 in Pskov. The locomotive memorial also recognizes Valga's importance as a traditional railway connection. The first passenger train on the narrow-gauge railway from Valga to Pärnu left Valga station on 5 October 1896 and was used until 1944. The railway workshops built in 1980 employed 500 workers before World War I.



9 ISSIDOR ORTHODOX CHURCH *Pargi 1A*

Designed by architect V. Lunski, the church was built in 1897-1898. The historicist building in the old Russian style is rich in detail and complex in form. Valga's Issidor congregation was established in 1896, primarily by Russians and Latvians. Due to the disputes over whether the church should belong to the Moscow or Constantinople patriarchate, the congregation split in the early 1990s. This building, the main church, remained in the use of the congregation, which opted to join the Eastern Apostolic Orthodox Church in Constantinople.



10 VALGA ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST *Maleva 8*

The church was built in 1907 of fieldstone and brick. It was the fourth Catholic city church in tsarist-era Estonia after Tallinn, Tartu and Narva. There were 300-400 Catholics in Valga before World War I. A gar- rison of Polish soldiers was located nearby, and so was the railway, which employed a number of mainly Catholic nationalities. The congregation was restored in 1990 and was named the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit in Valga. The church has been renovated and is currently active.



11 VALGA PATRIOTIC EDUCATION EXHIBITION *Pikk 16*

The Valga military museum attracts the curious from far off due to the Soviet-era war machines parked in front: armoured vehicles, a T-34 tank, a helicopter Mi8 and various trucks. The Forest Brothers' bunker (once used by Estonia's anti-Soviet freedom fighters), Airsoft games and military obstacle course offer a variety of things to do. The museum building looks back on the pain-wracked history of Valga County and Estonia from the perspective of military history. Exhibits on various uniformed services introduce their activities – the Defence Forces, the Defence League, Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, Latvian Police, Security Police and the Rescue Board.



12 POW CEMETERY IN PRIIMETSA

The district of Priimetsa in Valga was consecutively the site of three different POW camps in the years from autumn 1941 to 1953. From 1941 to mid-1944, the Stalag 351 camp was here, populated by Russian POWs mainly captured on the Volkhov Front near Leningrad in 1941-42. The 30,000 men who died of cold, hunger, disease and wounds, were buried under the firs here in Priimetsa. They are remembered by memorial called "Mourning" designed by Anton Starkopf. When the war turned in autumn 1944, the camp came under Soviet control and was renamed NKVD POW camp no. 287. The prisoners were Germans, Austrians, Hungarians and even some Spaniards serving in the Nazi military. Three hundred men who died in this camp are buried a stone's throw away in a graveyard built for that purpose. The GERMAN POW CEMETERY was renovated with the financial support of the German government and the Hungarian embassy. From 14 May 1948 to 1953 it was the site of the Estonian SSR Ministry of Internal Affairs camp no. 5 where top Estonian clergymen, people who had evaded the tax imposed on kulaks (wealthy farmers), and enemies of the state were interned.



13 PEDELI RECREATIONAL AREA

Several artificial lakes with bathing beaches have been established on the River Pedeli, which passes through Valga-Valka. They are ideal for recreational sports, and children's playgrounds can also be found here. In summer 2005, Valga sculptor Sergei Babits's sculpture "Birth of Time" was installed here. In the 15th century, Valga was for some time called Podel, Põdoli or Peddele after its river. The Pedeli was navigable. The cargo from ships arriving in Pärnu was reloaded onto large barges and ferried up the waterway to Valga via Lake Võrtsjärv. The view from the Pikk tn bridge gives an idea of the river's former banks, which rise to each side a good distance away from the current river course.

VALKA



14 ESTONIAN-LATVIAN NATIONAL BOUNDARY *Riga 1*

When the border was established between the Republic of Estonia and Republic of Latvia, the town, then called Valk was divided into two between the countries on 1 July 1920. As the international commission (British, Latvian, Estonian) was not able to resolve the issue in a manner satisfactory to all sides, the committee's chairman British colonel Stephen George Tallents made the decision himself. The main part of Valk would go to Estonia; Latvia would get the outskirts of Valk and Pudurmägi. Konnaoja stream, which separates the two sides, was the boundary in the heart of the town from 1920-1940 and today as well. The boundary was formally opened on 21 December 2007 by President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and his Latvian counterpart Valdis Zatlers – on the day the countries joined the Schengen visa space.



15 PEDELI RECREATIONAL AREA AND PUDRUMÄGI OBSERVATION PLATFORM *Sõljās street*

Located on the other side of Ramsi bridge when coming from Estonian Valga, on the left side. Pudurmägi got its name from Putra farm, established in 1875 by the tenant of Paju manor, Pensis. Pudurmägi was the childhood playground of the Estonian-Finnish playwright Hella Wuolijoe (1886-1954) and the grand old lady of Estonian theatre Liina Reiman (1891-1961) (both lived nearby).



16 LUGAZI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH *Riga 17*

The first written record of the church dates from 1477. The church is in a basilica style, with a simple appearance - thus, it was the peasants' church in earlier times. Different historical styles can be seen in the exterior of the church, which is due to the fact that the church had to be rebuilt and repaired after frequent wars. The end of the church with the bell tower has characteristics of Neoclassical and Baroque styles. The church is currently active. The church tower affords a splendid view of Valka and Valga – one city, two countries. The park area in front of the church is the site of a sundial, made in 2002.



17 VALKA CULTURAL CENTRE BUILDING *Däržņa 8*

Designed by architect August Raister, the Valka cultural centre building was built in 1927. The building is one of the best examples of the quasi-Neoclassical style in Latvian architecture. The building was erected because the Latvian Valka also needed a community centre after the Estonian-Latvian border was established dividing the city of Valk into two.



18 VALKA'S ONLY ART NOUVEAU BUILDING *Tālavas 4*

The building was constructed in 1902, as it is also signified by the inscription above the entrance. Initially, Martiņš Udris (Uhdēr), a pupil of J. Cimze, a reverend and organist of the Lugaz congregation built the house for himself, but later he gave it to public use. Originally, the red brick building with white mortar ornamentation was the site of the Valka county government, and later, in Soviet times, of the militia. Following the tradition, it is now a Latvian national police office.



19 MILITARY BUNKERS *Tālavas 23*

The military bunkers are odd-looking hummocks in Valka's urban environment. If you stand with your back to the cultural centre, the mounds will be to your right. They were built in the 1970s as strategic missile control centres for the Soviet Army, to relay messages in case of military threat. Only duty officers were on guard in the facilities and telephone switching station extending two storeys underground. The entire area was surrounded by barbed wire and high-voltage electrified fence. There were two entrances, both equipped with metal doors.



20 EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN OF IVERSK *Ausekļa 14*

The church was built in 2005, the creation of architect Liia Kukele. Before construction began, the Metropolitan of Riga consecrated the land allotted to the church. The funds were raised thanks to the congregation's persistence. The church was completed faster than planned and the congregation credits the protection of the Virgin of Iversk for this. The church is open every day from 12 noon to 4 pm.



21 MEMORIAL STONE TO THOSE KILLED IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE IN 1919 *Varoņu street*

The memorial stone was established in 1922. Sculptor Emils Melders-Millers' monumental work is titled "Warrior of Ancient Latvia". It is the first memorial honouring the memory of those who fell in the Latvian War of Independence and the only Cubist monument in Latvia.



22 OPEN AIR STAGE AND THE "ZITHER PLAYER" *corner of Rūjiena and Varoņu streets*



Located in a cultural and recreational park outside the centre of Valka. The open air stage for song and dance festivals was built in 1969 and its architecture is emphasized by the River Pedeli, which flows between the stage and the audience. The attractive, well-maintained surroundings are a great setting for cultural and sports events. At the top of Allikamäe hill (also called Heidelberg hill) by Rujiena street near the stage is a stone sculpture, entitled the Zither Player, which marks the centenary of the first Latvian national song and dance festival.



23 CEMETERY FOR GERMAN SOLDIERS KILLED IN THE BATTLE OF VALGA-VALKA DURING WORLD WAR II *Varoņu street*

These men were killed in the Battle of Valga-Valka, when the Soviet army attacked Valga from three sides at once. Before retreating via Valka in the direction of Ergeme, Valmiera-Seda, they considered their duty to bury their dead. The stylistic elements used in this cemetery include metal swords, benches, fire grates, metal and concrete crosses bearing inscriptions. The chapel in the cemetery was built for the Latvian congregation of the Lutheran St. John's church, as the congregation needed a church on the Latvian side of town after the border was established.



24 JANIS CIMZE MEMORIAL STONE IN LUGAZI CEMETERY *Gaujas street*

The memorial stone in Lugazi cemetery was placed in 1887 at Cimze's grave by his students and admirers. The Latvian, Estonian and German text says that it is dedicated to the teacher of its teachers by a thankful Livonia. For Cimze's birth centenary a bas-relief portrait of Cimze was added to the memorial stone.



25 CEMETERY FOR SOVIET SOLDIERS WHO FELL IN THE VALGA-VALKA BATTLE WORLD WAR II *Gaujas street*

Brāļu kapi atrodas starp Rīgas un Gaujas ielām. Šeit apglabāti 414 Valkas-Valgas cīņās kritušie padomju karavīri. Memoriāla granīta plāksnēs ierakstīti kritušo vārdi.



26 VALKA LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM *Riga 64*

The building was constructed in 1850-1853 for the teachers' college operated by Livonian congregation schools. Janis Cimze was the head of the college from 1853-1881. Around 500 Latvian and Estonian teachers received their education in this educational facility, among them Karlis Baumanis, Auseklis, Indriķis Zīle, as well Estonians such as Carl Robert Jakobson, Aleksander Kunileid and Aleksander Lätte. Since 1971, it has housed the Valka Local History Museum. Due to the museum's historical location, one of its missions lies in popularisation of the cultural heritage of Janis Cimze, a pedagogue and a founder of the Latvian choir singing culture and the legacy of his pupils; and in promoting public interest and knowledge concerning the historical events of the Valka county. The museum holds an exhibition on the history of the Valka county and city, it organises history and art expositions and visitors can participate in workshops.

Valga-Valka

History / Tourist Information / Map



Chronology

Oldest forms of Valga's name until 1920:

WALCO, WALCK, WALK, VALK

1286 First appearance of the name Walco in the city of Riga's debt book.	1901 On 7 December, Estonians and Latvians manage to wrest power in the city away from the Germans for the first time.
1298 -1558 The settlement is burned to the ground six times in various wars.	1902 Estonian pharmacist Johannes Märtson becomes mayor and remains in office until 1917.
1477 The first written record of Lugazi Lutheran Church.	1909 The building of Säde Society building begins (architect G. Hellat).
1500 The unfortified settlement in the heart of Old Livonia is chosen as the site of a general assembly of towns. It would serve as the site of the assembly on 36 occasions up to the year 1500.	1917 The Latvian Provisional Government adopts a declaration in Valga Town Hall, proclaiming Latvia autonomous. The mayor is a Latvian, Kārlis Aleksandrs Ozoliņš.
1584 On 11 June King of Poland Stephen Báthory grants an article of incorporation and city rights.	1918 Estonia and Latvia become independent.
1590 On 17 April, King Sigismund III confirms the city's article of incorporation a second time. The city gets its coat of arms.	Estonia VALGA and Latvia VALKA
1626 After the Polish-Swedish War, Walk is under Swedish control.	1920 A commission led by British representative Colonel Stephen George Tallents determines the national boundary between Estonia and Latvia, which splits the city into two: Estonian Valga and Latvia Valka.
1710 At the end of the Great Northern War the city along with other parts of Estonia is under Russian rule.	1940 The Soviet occupation begins and border checkpoints are abolished in Valga-Valka.
1783 The County (kreis) of Walk is established after Catherine II of Russia decrees her Statute for Administration of the Provinces.	1941 The German occupation begins.
1816 St. John's Church is completed.	1944 Soviet re-occupy the country.

1849-1890 The city is home to a teacher's college for parish schools and pastors led firstly by Janis Cimze (1814-1881). Many prominent Latvian and Estonian teachers and cultural figures are educated here.	1990 After Estonia and Latvia restore independence, border checkpoints are reinstated on the national boundary, including in the city of Valga-Valka.
1889 The Tartu-Walk-Riga line is opened to train traffic. The railway station house is built.	2007 Estonia and Latvia join the Schengen visa space and border checkpoints are abolished in Valga-Valka.
1896 The narrow-gauge Pärnu-Walk railway is opened.	2008 Passenger train traffic is restored between Estonia and Latvia on the Riga-Valga-Riga line.