

Riga

Map and City Guide / 2012

99
TIPS FROM
LOCALS



Read more tips from locals at
www.likealocalguide.com



14 cool sights in & around the Old Town

- 1

Lorem Ipsum

This small alleyway, which locals use when Viru street is packed with tourists, brings a drop of magic to our lovely town. Take a gander at various works of art and witness their birth in the open studios.
- 2

Lorem Ipsum

The history of Estonia is written on its streets – literally. Head to the Börsi passage and read the overview and key dates on the city's story right off the pavement.
- 3

Lorem Ipsum

A big wooden door in one of the most unique streets in Tallinn (Laboratooriumi) is usually open to everyone who dares to knock. If you're lucky, you get a free church tour and an opportunity to make silk paper with your own hands.
- 4

Lorem Ipsum

Used to be the weekend market for illegal vinyl dealers in 70s and 80s, now a popular park with a nice view over the modern side of the city. Though it's forbidden many locals drink beer straight from the bottle there, because the police rarely pass by.
- 5

Lorem Ipsum

The entrance to Tallinn's most gorgeous courtyard is easy to miss if you walk too fast on Vene street. It hides an artisans' quarter with little textile, ceramics, jewelry, wool and ironwork stores and galleries. Whether you're shopping or not, you'll probably stay for longer than you intended.
- 6

Lorem Ipsum

In 17th and 18th century those tunnels had to shelter men, ammunition and supplies, or hide relocation from the enemy, but today those limestone passages are one of the most mysterious and cool places to visit. The passages are hundreds of meters
- 7

Lorem Ipsum

This is the the spot where the Danish flag fell down from the sky. A beautiful place for romantic midnight walks, but beware, most of the buildings there are full of ghosts. The Virgin tower by the garden has its own invisible piano player and in Lühike jalg Tower you can greet local skeletons.
- 8

Lorem Ipsum

Pushing your way through the hordes of tourists you can enjoy the famous Kohtu Platform with all the red rooftops and the blue... well mostly gray Baltic Sea. This view can be enjoyed more intimately at night. One of the best views in Tallinn.
- 9

Lorem Ipsum

This eccentric character could very well be the last Mohican of the 60s flower power. His psychedelic paintings make some wonder if he was on LSD while painting them, but the truth is he's only hooked on caffeine and nicotine. The gallery is open most of the time and all the art is for sale as well.
- 10

Lorem Ipsum

Equal to the Old Town in historical value the Rotermann Quarter has renovated old factory buildings into a creative and modern environment. Interesting finds include artists' Loovala and Oot-Oot Lounge, galleries, museum of architecture and even a Christmas market.
- 11

Lorem Ipsum

Why walk in the old Town when you can walk around it? Turn off the steps leading to the Government's house for a walk on the castle hill alongside the massive medieval stone wall.
- 12

Lorem Ipsum

Tallinn gets iced, a lot. Take advantage of the cold winter days by putting on a pair of skates and pulling a few fast laps on the ice rink right next to the St. Nicholas church. Open from November 1.
- 13

Lorem Ipsum

The legend has it that in the medieval times people would throw dead cats down the well to appease the demons living underground. Unsurprisingly, the demons turned out to be the echoes of their own voices. Back then people were... different.
- 14

Lorem Ipsum

Hardly anyone can walk past this small gallery on Harju street. Provocative exhibitions and bold statements grab your attention and most likely fill the next hour with internal debates and questions about the meaning of life.



Cafes

- 15

Lorem Ipsum



This relatively new cafe, already very popular among the locals, takes all the cool nostalgic details and design elements from the Soviet era and combines them with an urban vibe of Tallinn. Short but exciting menu, affordable prices and occasional DJ-s and performers.
- 16

Lorem Ipsum

Up for a hot drink? Matilda is a homely cafe with a wonderful choice of coffee, tea and pastries. Situated on the hidden Lühike Jalg street leading to the upper town. You're heading that way for the view from Toompea Hill anyway, aren't you?
- 17

Lorem Ipsum

No matter what kind of pastry you crave for, Pagaripoisid probably has it. Take a seat in the cafe and indulge in the cakes and the buns, all fresh from the oven. If you're on the move, you can take the cakes to go as well, making everybody on the streets jealous.
- 18

Lorem Ipsum

There is no shame whatsoever in going on a chocolate binge every now and then. The people at Josephine certainly won't judge you. Just take a look at their mouth-watering menu of, well, mainly truffles. But just look at those truffles! Exquisite.

Restaurants

- 19

Lorem Ipsum

This cozy meeting place famous among locals for its good coffee also hides a nice restaurant in the back of their Müürivahe street cafe. Stop by for a delicious lunch (weekly specials €3.60) during the day or sneak to the back for dinner and wine. Pastas €5-6, mains €8-10.
- 20

Lorem Ipsum

"The Garden" is the embassy of pure food with its menu changing according to seasons. It's the perfect place to try healthy and modern Estonian cuisine and the romantic rustic-looking interior makes it a great place for long conversations. Pastas from €4, mains €7-13.
- 21

Lorem Ipsum

You can hardly find a better price and quality ratio than in this ever-popular international chain of fast-casual restaurants. Your salads, pastas and pizzas are made fresh before your eyes and the desserts are gorgeous... A trendy and cosmopolitan meeting place.
- 22

Lorem Ipsum

Fancy a taste of the Dark Continent? This restaurant features an excellent choice of dishes from all over Africa. Exotic wall paintings and warm grooves make for an easeful spot where to relax with your friends. Great for vegetarians as well!.
- 23

Lorem Ipsum

Tallinn doesn't lack exoticism and Kathmandu Hill is yet another option for those seeking a more spicy dining experience. Specializing on Chinese and Indian cuisine, they offer a broad range of Asian dishes. Whether you prefer spicy hot or relatively mild, they have an option.

Budget Meals

- 24

Lorem Ipsum

A real medieval tavern where you can have rich elk soup with gorgeous pies and The Right Beer for so cheap that you can pay for your friend as well! Pickle fishing from the huge tank is free and all food is €1. The service stays true to the Medieval times.
- 25

Lorem Ipsum

In this small cozy courtyard you'll find the cheapest pizza place in the Old Town. The selection is excellent and even the smallest pizzas will put up a fight! With prices starting from €3, it's hard to find a better place. Pasta and salads are available too.
- 26

Lorem Ipsum

Ideal for backpackers, EAT is pretty much as cheap as it gets when it comes to good and simple meals. Their dumplings (€3) come in three varieties (including a vegetarian option) but waffles, fries, soups and the like are also available. Free internet makes it a perfect pit stop.
- 27

Lorem Ipsum

Besides the tasty sushi (from €4) this place is worth visiting to see the finest examples of Estonian girls dressed like Japanese anime characters wearing kitten ears. If you say please they might do a special dance. Free miso soup/green tea with your sushi.
- 28

Lorem Ipsum

Ah, kebab – the national dish of pretty much all of the world. Preparing it is an art and the professionals at Square Kebab use only the freshest of ingredients. Located in the pedestrian tunnel on the Vabaduse square, this place will satisfy the hungriest of customers.

Pubs

- 29

Lorem Ipsum

Drink is the BEER MECCA of Tallinn, featuring the widest selection of import beers and ciders in town. Regular comedy and quiz nights make even workdays fun and right next door you'll find their famous and well-stocked beer shop. Best fish and chips in town!
- 30

Lorem Ipsum

The oldest new Estonian pub, open since 1993. Friendly service, good house beer (try the "tume" – dark), weird animal head dolls on the wall, doors on the ceiling, free wireless internet access, and the best damn bar sign ever all means that it's the best local bar in town!
- 31

Lorem Ipsum

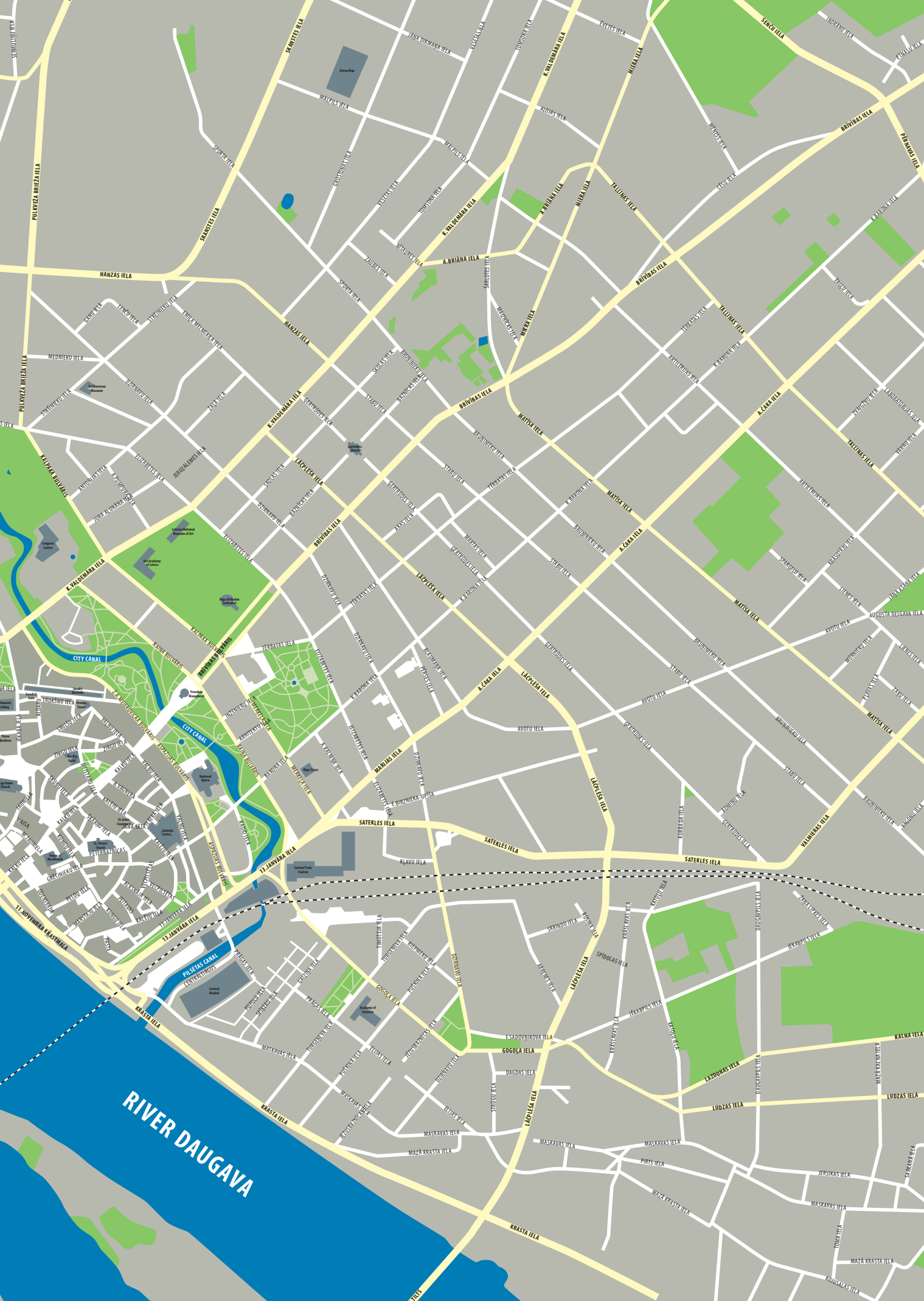
Who says you have to go to a fancy restaurant if you can indeed have a delicious (and really reasonably priced) meal in "Hell" prepared by a chef that takes his food dead seriously? The underworld-themed Põrgu is also the place to try the traditional farm ale Pihlta.
- 32

Lorem Ipsum

The obligatory Irish pub in Tallinn is a great place for enjoying a pint and watching sports on the big screen. Sundays bring traditional Irish music sessions and weekends see live music. Happy hour (for beer, cider, wine and cocktails) from 5 to 7pm with 1=2.
- 33

Lorem Ipsum

Their extremely popular pubs always attract a crowd and people party here till the early hours. But perhaps more importantly, St. Patrick's is renowned for its value meals. For the price you pay, their foods are an absolute blessing. And they're open during the day too!



vated and resuscitated as an art factory – a venue in which the unorthodox find their stage.

Lorem Ipsum 78

Fitting right into the somewhat run-down seaside area the Contemporary Art Museum features photography or video installations, sculpture and sound experiments and provocative attitude. Open from Wed to Sun from 1pm to 7pm.

Lorem Ipsum 79

This tremendous concrete concert hall is a constant reminder of Soviet delusions of grandeur. Built as a concert hall, but also as a military object in case the Finns would attack the USSR by sea. Occasionally Tallinn youth gathers on the roof to have a beer & watch the sunset over the sea before a heavy club night.

Lorem Ipsum 80

Telliskivi is a creative hub for enterprises and educational and cultural institutions. The old factory building is also a popular venue for many art and music events. Go exploring around the complex and discover its secrets.

Lorem Ipsum 81

If you manage to get all the way there, don't miss the F-Hoone cafe. If it wasn't situated in a such funky neighbourhood, you'd call it out of place. An inspiring menu and a unique dining experience in an industrial setting guaranteed.

Lorem Ipsum 82

Just get naked and hop in! Kalma is Tallinn's oldest public sauna and the as retro as it gets. There are men's and women's general baths (complete with swimming pool) as well as private saunas for rent. Men €8-9, women €6.50-8. Private sauna booking at +372 627 1811. Open 11am-10pm, weekends until 11pm.

Riga Center



Romantic wooden decorated villas from the 19th and 20th century make this part of town one of the most valued places to live. The history of Kadriorg, especially that of the art museum building is closely connected to the Russian czar Peter the 1st. Take tram number 1 or 3 towards Kadriorg and get off at the final stop.

Lorem Ipsum 83

A forested park filled with criss-cross paths and dotted with statues and ponds. The jewel in Kadriorg's crown however is the Kadriorg palace – the residence of the President of Estonia, surrounded by manicured gardens and fountains. Get a blanket and lie in the sun (if there is any) or bird-watch by the pond.

Lorem Ipsum 84

Neighborhood, Organic, Practical = NOP. This homely cafe and eco-shop is a popular meeting point for Kadriorg's ecofriendly folks. Start your day with their banana bread topped with cinnamon butter or pouched egg with smoked salmon, and head on the the Kadriorg Park.

Lorem Ipsum 85

The new KÜnstiMuseum (Art Museum of Estonia) was built in 2006 and is a sight to see purely because of its design. It holds classic

and contemporary Estonian artwork, hosts music events and shows independent films. Admission €5.50, students €3.20. Open Wed 11am to 8pm, Thu-Sun 11am to 6pm.

Lorem Ipsum 86

The Foreign Art Museum holds a quite valuable collection of Western European and Russian art from 16th to 20th century. In addition, temporary exhibitions, concerts and theater performances take place there. Admission €4.20/€2.20. Open Wed 10am to 8pm, Thu-Sun 10am to 5pm.

Lorem Ipsum 87

Funny enough, the chances to actually see the Estonian President there are pretty good. It is one of the smallest countries in Europe, so everyone knows everyone. Shopping together with the First Lady doesn't surprise anyone here.

Lorem Ipsum 88

Amidst the quaint wooden villas there's a house that might fool you with its run-down look, but hides an absolutely delightful Georgian restaurant. Kitsch though it may be, the owners know their trade. Best shish kebab in town!

Lorem Ipsum 89

One word – coffee. Absolutely amazing coffee, from freshly ground beans from all around the world. A resounding 'no' to compromises, it's the perfect place for a rest after an exhausting day around the Kadriorg park.

Lorem Ipsum 90

Lauluväljak (singing festival ground) was the heart of the Singing Revolution in the end of 80s when 300 000 people gathered there and sang national songs against Soviet regime. 10 years later Michael Jackson brought only 70 000 people to his concert there. Traditional song festival is held every 4 years.

Silent Riga



A day in Pirita is like becoming Estonian. The sea of masts at the Pirita yacht club makes for an interesting walk and the imposing Pirita monastery ruins offer a chance to travel far back in time. Pirita also opens up a vista on the Tallinn bay and the city's famous skyline. Take bus no 1A, 8, 34A or 38 from Viru Center to the "Pirita" stop.

Lorem Ipsum 91

Just a couple of bus stops from Old Town in an amazing valley you will find yourself among trees, hills, native birds and local nature spirits. This is a good place to have a peaceful picnic listening to the murmur of the river.

Lorem Ipsum 92

It's hard to miss the pointed obelisk alongside the road to Pirita Beach. This rocket shaped spire was put up in 1960 in memory of Russians who died in 1918, while the surrounding concrete and iron figures were added later to honour Soviet soldiers killed by Nazis. Ironically, this used to be the site of a German war cemetery.

Lorem Ipsum 93

Founded in 1407 this convent was unique because it housed both monks and nuns. The convent crumbled in a siege by Ivan the



Talk Like A Local

Strange Language

Can't understand a darn word? Don't be surprised. Estonian is totally different from Russian, German or English. Learn your õ, ä, ö and ü. You also might stumble across some of the long-est words in the world here – like "juustuküüslaugutäidis" or "seitsmepenikoormasaapad".

Here's a few simpler, yet useful phrases you might need:

Hello – Tere	Excuse me – Vabandust
Good-bye – Head aega	I love you – Ma armastan sind
Yes – Jah	Cheers! – Terviseks!
No – Ei	Why not – Miks ka mitte
How much is... – Kui palju maksab...	I don't know – Ma ei tea
Where is the closest... – Kus on lähim...	One more beer – Veel üks õlu
Thank you – Aitäh	Come with me – Tule minuga kaasa
Please – Palun	I'm not a stupid tourist – Ma ei ole loll turist

Riga 2012 Top Events

Oct 5-16 / NEW GERMAN CINEMA (Cinema Sõprus)

12 days full of the freshest and best german movies! Doesn't matter whether it is your first meeting with the german cinema or you have been a friend for a long time, nor whether you like your movies short or full– there's something for everyone.

Oct 20-28 / NYJD 2011 (Different venues)

The 12th international new music festival introduces the most intriguing new composers and their work from both home and abroad to the wider audience. Even more – the composers and conductors conduct their works themselves. The theme for 2011 is "Future Symphonies".

Nov 4-6 / SERVATAGUSE MUSIC FESTIVAL (Kultuurikatel)

This unique music festival will bring you the eccentric, bold and experimental music mostly from the Baltics and Scandinavian countries. Over three days you will be able to experience over 20 artists and some performance art on top of it in a venue that used to be a power plant!

Nov 10-12 / ST. MARTIN'S DAY FAIR (Saku Suurhall)

The St. Martin's Day fair will be your best option to get a crash course in everything Estonian – handicrafts, food, music, dance etc. And it's not just about looking – you're welcome (and encouraged) to join in on all the activities!

Nov 16-30 / BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL (Different venues)

Watch out, Cannes and Sundance, this Estonian film festival, started in 1997, has quickly made its way into the top 50 of the thousands of film festivals in the world. In addition to the wide choice range in films, it also has four sub-festivals (hint: there's also lots for youngsters and anima lovers).

Nov 22 / 60 SECONDS OF SOLITUDE IN YEAR ZERO (Tallinn Bay)

A one of a kind happening – a compilation of 60 one-minute silent films will be screened outdoors on the Tallinn Bay. At the end of the hour, the screen will be lit on fire and burned along with the single 35mm print of the compilation. You know, for art.

Nov 26-Jan 8 / OLD TOWN CHRISTMAS MARKET (Townhall Square)

This bustling market held in the heart of the Old Town gives you an opportunity to try traditional holiday foods, buy homemade candles, woolen clothes to keep you warm in the cold whether, ceramics, decorations and all you can think of from the 50-something merchant stalls. Children will be able to meet Santa, while parents can sip on hot mulled wine. That's what we call Christmas spirit here!

Nov 30-Dec 2 / BATTLE OF EST (Tallinn Dance Academy & Cinema Sõprus)

BOE is the biggest international street dance festival in Northern Europe. More than 300 dancers from 20 countries show off their skills each year, this time will be no different. You don't have to be a hip-hop fan to enjoy their art!

Lorem Ipsum 96

Estonian 18th to 20th century vernacular architecture and rural milieu in a beautiful park of 80 hectares on the coast of the Bay of Kopli. Also, by the sea you can swing on the kind of huge village swing that all Estonians know how to handle from birth. Admission: €3/€1.5. Open every day 10am–5pm. Buses no 21 & 21B from "Balti jaam" to "Rocca al Mare".

Lorem Ipsum 97

On your way to Tallinn Zoo you can check out the district of Õismäe (ugly grey block buildings you can't miss). Otherwise, a zoo is a zoo, with animals and everything. Admission Oct to Apr €3.20/€2. Open every day 9am–7pm (Nov–Feb until 5pm), internal expositions until 6pm (Nov–Feb until 4pm). Take trolley bus no 6 from Kaubamaja or Vabaduse Square and get off at "Zoo".

Lorem Ipsum 98

If you're looking for some serious shopping in Tallinn, then Rocca al Mare is THE place for you. This newly renovated Estonias' biggest shopping center is a home to more than 170 shops and services. You can find goods from fashion to electronics and get some more shopping energy from the juice bar or sushi. They even run regular free shuttles from Hotel Viru to Rocca al Mare Centre.

Lorem Ipsum 99

Estonia's Soviet times are over, but not forgotten. The once super modern circle-shaped bedroom district is now one of the many identical districts of cold hearted block buildings you can see in every Eastern European country. At least from the ground, anyway. If you could fly over it, you would see the UFO-like shape.