

While visiting Latvia

We provide the

**—HOW TO—
guide**

**for all those little
things you might
like to know**



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Where to find answers to questions?

- 1. Ask Patricia Tourist Office:
www.patricialtd.com/contact/**
- 2. Check our family of websites:
www.seelatvia.com & www.infolatvia.com**
- 3. Search the internet: www.117.lv
and www.118.lv - Latvian,
English and Russian languages**
- 4. Searchable street map at:
www.118.lv**
- 5. To find a business in Latvia,
search business directory at:
www.117.lv - Latvian, English
and Russian languages**



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Calling locally or abroad

Buy at NARVESEN shops

- “ Public phone calling cards with chip
- “ Long distance calling cards
- “ Internet - dialup connection cards
- “ SIMM chips for GSM phones
TELE2: www.en.tele2.lv/
LMT: www.lmt.lv/en/

The Latvia country code is: 371

Time zone: GMT +02.00

AT&T (USA Direct) access: 800-2288

World Phone (MCI) access: 800-8888

Net2Phone access: 800-3018



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Check balance SIMM Phone card

1. O-Karte " dial: 920-2010 and listen to the balance spoken by the operator
2. Tele 2 " dial: *245# and the balance will be written on the phone digital display

There are two types of SIMM mobile phone cards, O-Karte by LMT & Golden Fish by Tele 2. You may purchase refill cards at NARVESEN shops and other locations around Latvia



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Refill " add credit SIMM Phone cards

There are two types of cards, O-Karte by LMT & Golden Fish by Tele 2. You may purchase refill cards at NARVESEN shops and other locations around Latvia

TELE2 card dial: 688 - listen for instructions

- " Scratch off the black line at the back of the calling card.
- " Enter 13 number code and then press # sign
- " Check credit balance dial: *245#

O-Karte dial: 920-2010 - listen for instructions

- " Scratch off 2 black lines back of the card
- " Enter the two codes (one on left side the other on right side) - follow instructions
- " Check credit balance dial: 920-2010



Public laundry services

Public laundry services are not common in Riga or Latvia

" You may be asked to leave the clothes for them to wash. Normally, you may pick them up in 3 to 6 hours. Some are open 24 hours

" Payment is usually made in advance at the time you drop off the clothes
The amount is calculated 0.50 to 0.70 Ls per kg

" Clothes laundry services in Riga:
Address: Akas street. One block south of Brivibas between Lacplesa & Gertrudes Streets



Public transport

Public transport such as: buses, trams and trolleybuses have a conductor. The price is not negotiable and is not refundable.

Each trip requires a separate ticket bought from the conductor - no transfers.

A fare of Ls 0.20 applies to Riga only. Other cities have their own pricing. For example, in Liepaja city, the ride on the tram costs only Ls 0.12 and should be bought from the tram driver.

Trams are electric with rails. Trolley busses are electric with rubber tires. Auto buses are motorized.

Transport stops are normally every two blocks along the street and marked with a sign



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How to pay - transport

Bus tram & Trolleybus:

- “ Each car has a conductor - you hand them a fare of Ls 0.20 in their hand. In return you receive a ticket. The ticket is not refundable.
- “ On mini-busses, you pay the driver and receive a ticket

Traveling by train:

- “ You buy a ticket at the central train station where the sign of trains & timetables are placed.
- “ Name the destination you are going to and mention to them if that is a one way or round trip
- “ You can buy a ticket on the train from the conductor, but must pay Ls 0.30 in addition to the price.



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Traveling by minibus

“Minibuses (usually 16 passenger) are either yellow or white color. Within Riga faire is normally Ls 0.25 and should be paid to the driver. You may stop the minibuses anywhere by waving your hand. The destination and the number of the minibus is placed in the window.

“ You may stop the bus for departure most anywhere by telling the driver in advance

“The starting departure point for minibuses is opposite the main Post Office~~s~~ close to Mc Donalds and Origo Center.

“ Check the number and the destination of the minibus. to Riga suburbs and Jurmala you may also use the minibus.

“ Different destinations may have different fare - Faire is 0.50 to Jurmala



Monthly Transport Passes

Weekly and monthly transport passes are available. Price varies upon following aspects:

- “ Days to be used (all days, weekdays only)
- “ Mix of transport vehicles (all trams “ all busses - Trams & busses)
- “ Student / Adult “ Senior for locals with ID only
- “ Mix of transport vehicles & destinations
- “ Passes may be purchased in cash at some NARVESEN shops; transport kiosk close to Opera House or on board the busses or trams the last 2 days of month
- “ Unless you ride the transport a lot each day, the passes may not provide a cost savings.
- “ The Riga Card may NOT be a good value



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Money exchange at bank

Before queueing the line, please **take a number** for the required service.

Note: Machine display will be in Latvian language only and choices will be somewhat as follows:

“**Kontu apkalposana** lidz XYZLs ” Cashier small amounts
“**Privatpersonu apkalposana** ” Private person issues
“**Skaidras naudas darījumi** ” Cash exchange issues
“**Vlutas maina** ” foreign currency exchange

“Kases operācijas >XYZLs - (Cashier over 2000Ls)

“Juridisko personu apkalposana - Company issues

“Karsu noformšana un sanemsana - Debit/credit card

“Depoziti - (Deposits)

“Kredīta paterins ” Loan matters

“Vertspapīri - Securities



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Cash travellers cheques

“Major Travellers Cheques such as American Express, Thomas Cook, etc. are accepted only at banks and exchanged for cash in Latvian Lats.

“There will be a service charge - normally 4%

“Your passport is required to be presented



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Open a bank account

Present your passport (Passe) at the bank along with your address and if you have a resident visa, your Latvian Personal Code.

“The necessary paper work will be filled in by the bank's personnel. (If you are asked to do any of the paper work and are in doubt of how to do it, do not hesitate, ask for help).

“Your debit or credit card will be available in 3 to 4 days and should be picked up at the same bank. You will need your passport

“Checks are not in use in Latvia. There will be a large service charge for the deposit of any check into your bank account

“Passports are NOT required to be carried; but, most likely will be required for any type of banking activity.



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Electricity/plug converter

Electricity in Latvia is 240V (volts) 50 Hertz using two pin European outlets and plugs

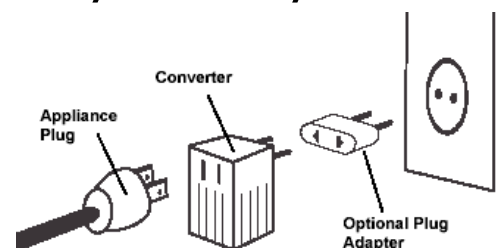
Goods brought in from the other countries will need plug/pin converters and possibly voltage converters.

Converters may be brought from the country of origin or bought here locally, in Latvia in electronic stores such as Electrons on Terbatas Street.

If you are using electronic appliances like camera chargers you must have a transformer type converter (heavier) not an electronic one or you may damage your appliance.



Most modern electronic devices will take voltages from 100 to 240 V so all you may need is a plug/pin converter



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Payments " services or goods

- " Payments in stores, shops, cafes, etc are made in Latvian Lats only
- " Some hotels may accept Euros
- " Some street vendors may accept other currencies
- " Larger stores, shops and restaurants may accept credit/debit cards.
- " Be aware that **card fraud does exist**
- " Travelers checks are not accepted
- " Tipping is purely an individual decision
- " Do not tip when buying food at a counter
- " Tipping applies more to table service normally 10 to 15% - your choice
- " Some bills may include 10/15% service charge - check your receipt
- " Local tradition " money is NOT placed in the hands of a clerk in a store " place in small tray or plate. Exceptions, McDonalds, public transport



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Languages Spoken

“The national language is Latvian. Russian is widely spoken in Riga and is a second unofficial language in Latvia

“Most young people do speak/understand some English and some German, however, there is a problem with English among the older generation

“You might experience the language barrier in post offices, super markets and locations outside of Riga city

“Be prepared to speak slowly and to use simple language and phrases.



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