

BĀNĪTIS (NARROW-GAUGE TRAIN) TOUR LET'S GO BY RAIL!



All Latvians know the tongue twister “šaursliežu dzelzceļš” that means “the narrow-gauge railway”. We try to pronounce it quickly and precisely but how much do we know about it? Experience an adventure on the Bānītis, the antique charm of its stops and you will find out everything!

The narrow-gauge railway line Gulbene-Alūksne is the preserved section of the historical railway line Pļaviņas-Gulbene-Alūksne-Ape-Valka which was constructed in 1903.

For more than 100 years, in spite of different rules and times, the Bānītis is still on the way. Only 33 kilometres have been left from the former 210-kilometre line. The Bānītis is the only one in the Baltic States that still provides regular passenger traffic in the route Gulbene-Alūksne. The train trips are supplemented by newly-created interactive and multimedia exhibitions both in Gulbene and Alūksne train stations.

1 GULBENE-ALŪKSNE BĀNĪTIS

The train travels the route Gulbene-Alūksne twice a day in each direction according to its timetable. The 33-kilometre distance from Gulbene to Alūksne the train covers in 1 hour and 25 minutes, but the trip in the opposite direction takes 5 minutes less. Stāmeriene, Kalniena and Umernieki are the stations where the train always stops, but Birze, Pūriņi, Pāparde and Vējiņi are just the flag stations. Different festivities are organised both on the Bānītis and in its bigger stations, adventure trips are also available. The trips when the regular diesel locomotive is replaced by the renovated Gr-series steam locomotive “Ferdinands” are exclusive.

Adress: 16G Viestura Street, Gulbene
Ph.: +371 20228884
e-mail: info@banitis.lv
www.banitis.lv

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BĀNĪTIS DEPOT IN GULBENE

From the 1930s till the 1980s, the Gulbene railway junction with its impressive depot building was one of the biggest and most significant in Latvia. Nowadays the Gulbene Depot is a pretty quiet home for the Gulbene-Alūksne Bānītis. It is possible to visit the

repair shop, watch the operation of the turntable and have a ride on both hand-lever drains.

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PAPARDE STATION

The station at Paparde was constructed several years after the railway was put into operation. It was around 1907. A water tower next to the wooden construction passenger building provides

additional water supply to the steam engine. Near the station there is also a comfortable area for different activities.
Address: Anna Rural District, Alūksne Region

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EDUCATIONAL AND INTERACTIVE CENTRE "RAILWAY AND STEAM"

More than 20 interactive devices enable anybody to get acquainted with the railroad operation, history, professions and safety. The educational and interactive centre provides the opportunity to try one's skills in loading a wagon or to become an engine-driver, snapshot the fact and send the photo to

one's e-mail. The centre is the place to organise thematic activities or celebrate festivities. There is also a play area for children and a small souvenir shop.

Address: 8 Dzelzceļa Street, Gulbene
Ph.: +371 25448661
e-mail: turists@gulbene.lv
www.visitgulbene.lv

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MULTIMEDIA EXHIBITION "ALŪKSNE BĀNĪTIS STATION"

The visual path of the exhibition is the baggage shed. Though more than a hundred years old, its authentic wooden constructions interlace with the contemporary comfort. The design of the exhibition exposes ancient baggage boxes and information depositories thus symbolically opening the door to former times. As if having a real ride on a train, one can sit at the stylized windows and watch the scenery of 10 different stations slide by, explore different track gauges

in the floor display case or see the world in front of the train with the engine-driver's eyes. If applied in advance, there is a possibility to take part in an adventure game, to organise thematic activities for groups of friends, colleagues or students but the souvenirs characteristic for Alūksne can be purchased in the onsite shop.
Address: 52 Jāņkalna Street, Alūksne
Ph.: +371 25669604
e-mail: stacija@aluksne.lv
www.visitaluksne.lv

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STĀMERIENE STATION

The Stāmeriene station, which initially was called Stāmere, is located in the centre of the Stāmeriena village (in former times – Vārgaļi). The passenger building was constructed simultaneously with the railway line in the characteristic style of the beginning of the 20th century – a red brick construction with decorative brick band and traditional window aperture ornaments. In the

station you can get the information on the hiking route and the tourism offer in the Gulbene region, or spend your free time playing interactive games.

Address: 19 Brīvības Street, Stāmeriena, Stāmeriena Rural District, Gulbene Region
Ph.: +371 25755784
e-mail: stameriena.tic@gmail.com
www.stameriena.lv

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OBSERVATION PLATFORM IN STĀMERIENA

Quite close to the Stāmeriene station, there is a 4-metre-high observation platform providing a lovely view over the nearest landscape. If you are on the platform at 13:26, 16:22, 18:26 or 20:52, you have the possibility to watch the arrival and departure of the Bānītis. On the platform there is a small table and some benches for your comfort.

Address: Stāmeriena Rural District, Gulbene Region

