



Department of
Physical Training,
Sports and
Tourism of the
Polotsk City
Executive
Committee

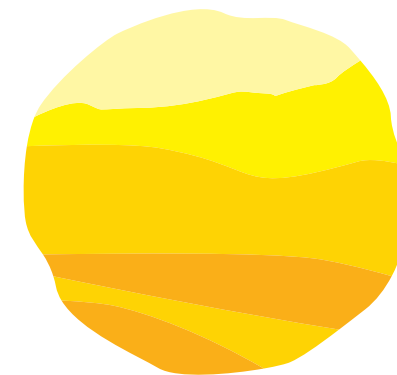
F. Skaryny Ave., 10
Polotsk 211400
+375 214 42 69 49
polotsk-turizm@mail.ru

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Text: Liudmila Drik, "Riftour"
Foto: Siarhei Plytkevich, "Riftour"
Idea: Konstantin Oleinik, "Prospectpress"
Design: Svetlana Vertunova, "Prospectpress"



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Bella Dvina: Land with Poetry in Name – Ultimate Discovery

Dear travellers!

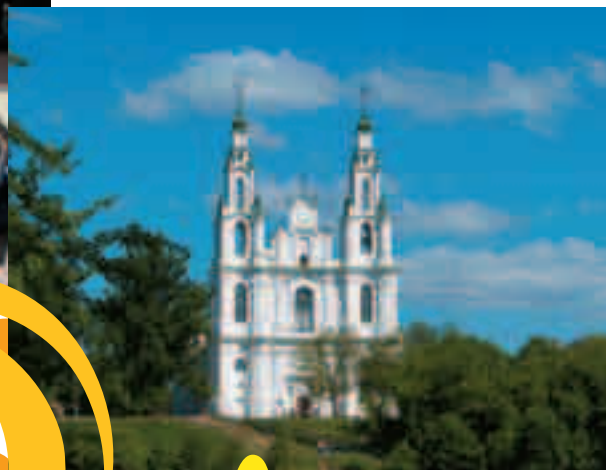
Maybe it is the first time you see the name Bella Dvina – you turn the globe around and ask yourself, where this land with poetry in name, the land you've never heard about, can be.

This land is where the marvellous Dvina-Daugava river flows. This river has been known since ancient times owing to the legendary trade route from the Varangians to the Greeks. When you look at the map, you find out at once that Zapadnaya Dvina is the river over which the people of three countries, Russia, Belarus and Latvia, may claim their right. It begins in Russia, flows through the territory of Belarus, and, changing its address and name in Latvia, runs into the Baltic Sea. While state borders split countries and peoples apart, rivers bring them together. For they, like wind and birds, know no borders. It has been like that for centuries, and things didn't change much ever since: only the times are changing, and the waters of the river have seen these times pass by.



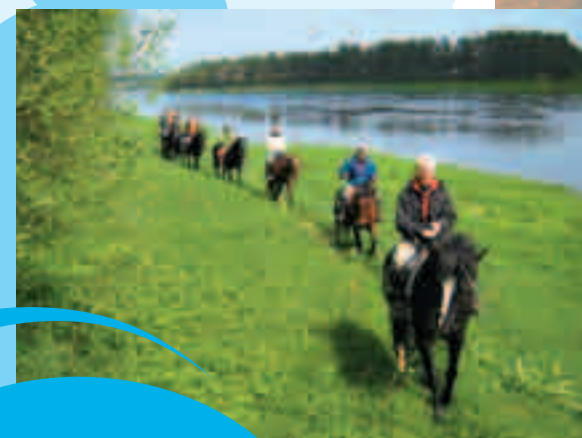
Bella Dvina attracts tourists and sensitive souls from all parts of the world. Here you will find all ingredients for the most incredible and savoury tourist meal, which even the most sophisticated travel gourmet will enjoy. For centuries, cities and villages

evolved along the banks of Zapadnaya Dvina – Daugava; they still conceal thousands of unresolved historical enigmas. Think of Polotsk, the oldest city of Belarus, or Vitebsk, with its rich cultural and festive traditions, or charming peaceful Disna, Belarus' smallest city, or Daugavas Loki Natural Park, residing on the steep banks of the Daugava, with its remarkable natural attractions, Latvia's rare plants, and rich historical and architectural heritage.

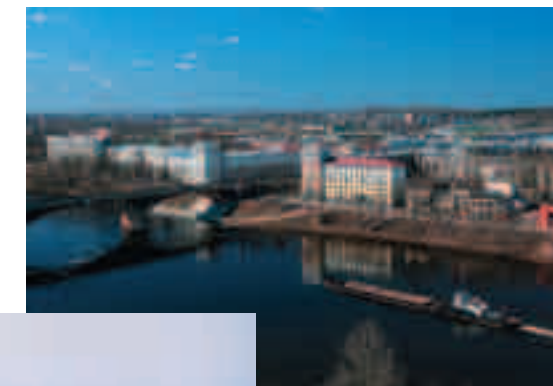


An inquisitive traveller, having an ear for what grey rocks and enduring historical sites can tell, will hear all kinds of exciting stories. These stories, be they humorous, fantastic, bizarre, mysterious, dramatic, or tragic, have one thing in common – they all take place on the banks of the beautiful old river. Take a pause and listen... The river remembers the Livonian War of 16th century,

the Great Northern War of 17th century, the Patriotic war of year 1812, tragic events of WWII... This land heard the voices of Ivan the Terrible and Stefan Batory, imperious orders of Peter the Great and Corsican accent of Napoleon. Dvina remembers great artists working and creating here: Ilya Repin, Marc Chagall. Charmed by the land and the river, they dedicated their works to them.



Major cities in the region – Vitebsk, Polotsk, Daugavpils – host places of historical and architectural significance, coming from the early times; museums carefully preserve material evidences of the foregone centuries. When cities pass by, deep forests and clear lakes are ready to embrace a traveller. Enjoying unique landscapes, created during ice age, bathing in clear lake waters, sitting with a fishing rod on a bank or in a boat in the middle of the lake, wandering along mysterious paths, gathering mushrooms and berries – so easy to wash away daily pains and forget about all your troubles and problems!

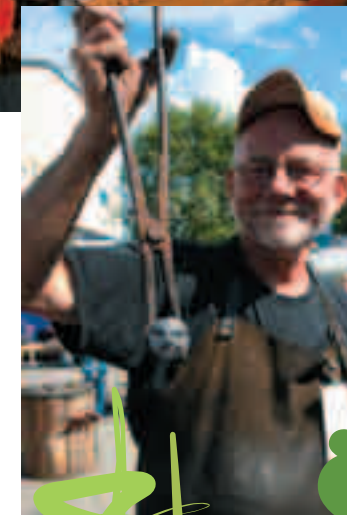


Bella Dvina is a door to a fairy tale flung open for travellers.

Bicycle riders choose their own pace here, on the roads that have nothing to do with cars.

Kayakers wander around the labyrinths of picturesque lakes, go down the stream on kayaks, catamarans and rafts and stop at islands, where ancient castle ruins dream their eerie dreams.

Legend lovers will get acquainted with the Black Officer, haunting the wall of Ivan the Terrible in Polotsk, and mysterious inhabitants of Rossony lakes – close relatives to Loch Ness monster.



Festival goers can meet celebrities and get autographs at the international festival "Slavic Bazaar" or get back to basics on the festival of rural tourism "Zaborsky Fest." Traditional crafts enthusiasts will get occupied by the world famous Latgale ceramics. Jars and pots, candlesticks and whistles became traditional trademark of the land. Every potter works in own original manner, leaving own peculiar style in pottery. You will have a chance to master this delicate craft - feel how soft and gentle clay is, how intricate the movements of a potter must be, find out the secrets of glazes and even take part in a sacred ceremony – firing of pots in the traditional wood-burning stove.

Those on pilgrimage mission can cast care aside while visiting holy places, of which there are many in the region: ancient Boris stones, beautiful churches with wonder-working icons. When you are in Daugavpils, you will be shown to the Holy Mount, where on one hill there are churches of four denominations. Here there are the Orthodox Church of Boris and Gleb, the church of Old Ritualists, Catholic and Lutheran churches. However, the most valuable pearl in the necklace of Latgale architecture is Aglona Basilica and the abbey. Today, it is considered one of the European centres of Catholicism, which welcomes hundreds of thousands pilgrims every year. The old Polotsk comes with the spirit of the holy tutelary saint Euphrosyne of Polotsk, who founded here a cloister that keeps the national relic of Belarus – Cross of Saint Euphrosyne...



While travelling about Bella Dvina region, enjoying its wonderful nature, learning traditions and culture of local nations, you will come to know that there are far less differences between our nations and traditions than one could expect from people divided by state borders. We have much more in common: legendary tales, cuisine recipes and secrets of the folk crafts. And of course our region's special – common national character: hospitality and warm heart, friendliness and inexhaustible sense of humour.



In a word, Bella Dvina region is the place where every human being can find something familiar and interesting for him- or herself. As a rule, if one visited this place once, one would return here again and again in order to admire green hills and crystal lakes, listen to long songs of Latgale, taste freshly-baked flavourful bread, and stay with hospitable and kind-hearted people.

Welcome to the Land Bella Dvina!

