

Estonia

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Tallinn** Check out the action in the Town Hall Square, Estonia's most happening space, nurse your beer and join the breakdancers on stage (p329)
- **Pärnu** Estonia's summer party capital, where you can go clubbing, then crash on the beach and be greeted by a sunrise across Pärnu Bay (p337)
- **Student Days Festival** Witness Tartu's change from smooth-flowing to totally insane in late April when university students let it all – and everything else – hang out (p334)
- **Best journey** Look for shy beavers, go canoeing and discover your own slice of deserted coastland at Lahemaa National Park (p334)
- **Off-the-beaten track** Get naked and sweat with new friends in a furnace-like sauna (p332)

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 45,226 sq km (1½ times the size of Belgium)
- **ATMs** Available everywhere
- **Budget** 300-450EEK per day
- **Capital** Tallinn
- **Country Code** ☎ 372
- **Famous for** supermodel Carmen Kass, Skype and Kazaa
- **Head of State** President Toomas Hendrik
- **Language** Estonian (a Finno-Ugric language)
- **Money** Kroon (EEK); A\$1 = 9.4EEK; CA\$1 = 10.9EEK; €1=15.65EEK; ¥100 = 10.9EEK; NZ\$1 = 7.9EEK; UK£1 = 23.26EEK; US\$1 = 13.04EEK
- **Phrases** *Tere!* (hi!), *aitäh* (thanks), *mis su nimi on?* (what's your name?), *kui palju see maksab?* (how much does this cost?)



- **Population** 1.34 million
- **Time** GMT/UTC + 2
- **Visas** None required for travellers from the EU, the USA, Canada and Australia. South Africans require visas but can enter on Latvian and Lithuanian visas.

TRAVEL HINTS

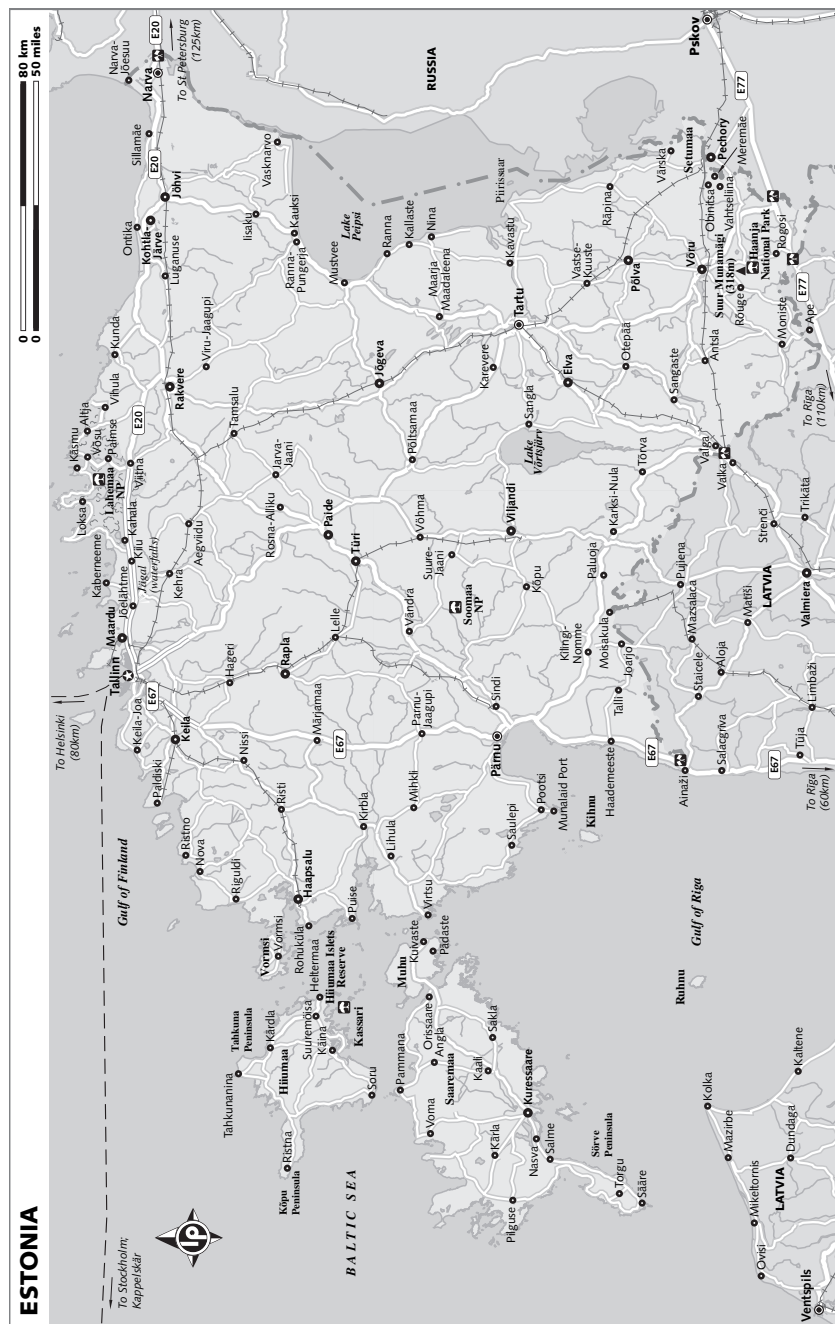
You'll get on well with Estonians if you can have fun while not being loud or showy.

ROAMING ESTONIA

Yes, Tallinn's Old Town is the main must-see, but get out of the city and check out Tartu or Pärnu's beaches too.

To the surprise of many, Estonia has become one of Europe's fast-growing tourist destinations – and not only among Finnish shoppers and British stag partiers. The quiet magic of the pretty little country that could – and did – is felt by millions every year.

Most never get further than the gorgeous, Unesco-protected Old Town, one of Europe's finest jewels, and a seductive ensemble of Gothic church spires and Medieval elements. Those who do discover endless stretches of rocky coastline and deserted beaches, unspoilt swaths of forest



crisscrossed by canoeable rivers, bucolic landscapes and tiny villages. All this in the context of a modern, technologically literate country.

Some might quibble about the climate. Sure, Estonia is perched by the frigid Baltic Sea and the temperatures, even in summer, can be discouragingly low, but there's an old Estonian adage that goes, 'There's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong choice of clothes'. So when it's cold, shed the clothes and jump into a sauna; fun can be had anytime, anywhere.

HISTORY

Most of Estonia's history has been one of occupation and domination. Banded about between European major powers, it has enjoyed only sparse periods of independence, notably in the 20th century between the World Wars and since 1991.

In the 3rd millennium BC Finno-Ugric tribes from the east mixed with the Baltic tribes already there. The Germanic Teutonic Order took control in 1346, placing Estonians under servitude to a German nobility that would last until the early 20th century despite Danish, Swedish and Russian rulers.

After the Great Northern War (1700–21), Estonia became part of the Russian Empire. During WWI, the Soviet government relinquished Estonia. Until 1940 Estonia was ruled by benevolent dictator Konstantin Päts, who was forced to accept Soviet occupation. After fabricated elections, over 10,000 Estonians were killed or deported before German occupation. Between 1945 and 1949 a further 60,000 Estonians were killed or deported.

Estonia declared independence from the USSR on 20 August 1991. The following decade saw frequent changes of government and no shortage of scandal as it tried to find its footing. Estonia is an independent parliamentary republic led by prime minister Andrus Ansip; the head of state is President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. It's currently a member of NATO and the EU, and intends to continue the Euro party until well into the wee hours.

READING UP

Former president Lennart Meri's *Höbe Valge* (Silver White) masterfully incorporates history with folklore to weave a unique recounting of Estonia's history and destiny. Douglas Wells spent years in Estonia in the US Peace Corps and wrote the entertaining *Destination Estonia* as a result. Also worth reading is Jaan Kross' *The Czars' Madman*.

THE CULTURE

Estonia's population of 1.34 million is 68% Estonian, 26% Russian, and 3% Ukrainian and Belarusian. The Russian speakers are concentrated in Tallinn and in the industrial northeast, forming around 40% and up to 96% of the respective populations.

The Estonians are historically a rural people cautious of outsiders and stereotypically shy and reticent. They are nature lovers who enjoy a sauna with friends by a cool lake. Resident Russians tend to be more spontaneous and outgoing.

ENVIRONMENT

Estonia is a low-lying land whose highest peak (Suur Munamägi) stands but 318m tall. Despite its tiny size, it boasts some 1500 islands and 3794km of coastline.

Since independence there have been major 'clean-up' attempts to counter the effects of Soviet-era industrialisation. Toxic emissions in the industrialised northeast of Estonia have been reduced sharply and new environmental-impact legislation aims to minimise the environmental impacts of future development.

TRANSPORT

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

The national carrier **Estonian Air** (code OV; ☎ 640 1101; www.estonian-air.ee; Vabaduse väljak 10, Tallinn) links Tallinn with some 20 cities in Europe and Russia, and at reasonable prices. **Air Baltic** (code BT; ☎ 640 7750; www.airbaltic.com) and **Finnair** (code AY; ☎ 611 0905; www.finnair.com) also fly into the **Tallinn airport** (www.tallinn-airport.ee). **EasyJet** (www.easyjet.com) flies between Tallinn and both London and Berlin.

Copterline (www.copterline.ee) runs pricey helicopter flights between Helsinki and Tallinn's Copterline Terminal, at the Linnahall harbour, almost hourly from 7am to 7pm weekdays (one way 1395EEK to 3100EEK, 18 minutes).

Boat FINLAND

About 25 ferries, hydrofoils and catamarans cross between Helsinki and Tallinn daily. Ferries make the crossing in 2½ to 3½ hours, hydrofoils in just over an hour. All companies provide concessions. Prices are cheaper from mid-August through to May.

Tallink (☎ 640 9808; www.tallink.ee) runs three ferries (from 280EEK) and seven catamarans (from 390EEK) daily. **Lindaline** (☎ 699 9333; www.lindaliini.ee) makes eight hydrofoil trips each way daily (single/return 450/660EEK), leaving from the Linnahall harbour. **Eckerö Line** (☎ 631 8606; www.eckeroline.ee) has a daily car-carrying catamaran from Terminal B, taking 3½ hours (single/return 345/380EEK). **Nordic Jet Line** (☎ 613 7000; www.njl.ee) has several car-carrying catamarans departing Terminal C, making the trip in around 1½ hours, seven times daily (from 420EEK). **Silja Line** (☎ 611 6661; www.silja.ee) has ferries and catamarans leaving from Terminal A (singles from 520EEK) and has day-trip packages to Helsinki. **Viking Line** (☎ 666 3966; www.vikingline.ee) has large car ferries twice a day from Terminal A (from 735EEK).

SWEDEN

Tallink (☎ 640 9808; www.tallink.ee) runs nightly ferries from Tallinn's Terminal D to Stockholm (from 360EEK up to 5740EEK for a luxury suite, 15 hours), and daily ferries from Paldiski, 52km west of Tallinn, to Kappelskär near Stockholm (from 375EEK, 12 hours). Book tickets well in advance in Tallinn or Stockholm's **Frihamnen** (Free Harbour; ☎ 08-667 0001).

Bus

Buses can sometimes be the cheapest, though least comfortable, way of reaching the Baltics. **Eurolines** (☎ 680 0909; www.eurolines.ee; Bus Station, Lastekodu tänav 46, Tallinn) connects Tallinn with cities in Germany and Poland, and from there to cities throughout Europe. Direct services connect Tallinn to Rīga (200EEK to 230EEK, five to 5½ hours, 10 daily) and Vilnius (430EEK, 10½ hours, two daily).

Buses leave Tallinn for St Petersburg five times daily (270EEK to 350EEK, eight hours). There is also one bus from Tallinn to Kalinin-grad daily (350EEK, 15 hours).

Car & Motorcycle

From Finland, just put your vehicle on a Helsinki–Tallinn ferry.

Train

An overnight train runs every evening between Moscow and Tallinn (2nd/3rd class 870/530EEK, 15½ hours) operated by **GO Rail** (☎ 615 6850; www.gorail.ee).

GETTING AROUND Bicycle

Estonia is small and mostly flat, with relatively good roads and light traffic, perfect for this green mode of travel. However, Estonia is way behind other European countries in terms of bicycle use as a mode of transport and motorists can be frightfully inconsiderate of cyclists who dare get in their way. Estonia has some 4000km of well-signed bike trails crisscrossing its territory and is working hard to develop ecotourism. There are Tallinn cycling road maps at www.tallinn.ee, listed under public transport timetables, and on sale at bookstores.

Bus

Buses are a good option, as they're more frequent, and faster than trains, and cover many destinations not serviced by the limited rail network.

Buses to within about 40km of Tallinn leave from the local bus station beside the train station. Information and timetables can be had via **Harju Liinid** (☎ 644 1801; ☎ 24hr). For detailed bus information and advance tickets for all other country destinations, contact the central bus station **Autobussijaam** (☎ 680 0900; www.bussireisid.ee; Lastekodu tänav 46, Tallinn; ☎ 6.30am–9pm).

Car & Motorcycle

An International Driving Permit (IDP) is necessary, as are your vehicle's registration papers and compulsory accident insurance, which can be bought at border crossings.

Train

Regional train schedules are listed at www.edel.ee.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Fire, ambulance or urgent medical advice ☎ 112
- First-aid hotline ☎ 697 1145
- Info Line ☎ 626 1111
- Police ☎ 110
- Roadside assistance ☎ 1188

TALLINN

pop 400,000

One of Europe's smallest capitals is in the mood to celebrate these days and it's inviting everyone along to the party. To a city that already had a lot going for it (beaches, parks, one of Europe's most enchanting and best-preserved Old Towns, raucous nightclubs and cheap beer), add a freshly built, new downtown and recent entry into the EU. With every reason to expect a bright future, Tallinn is strutting its stuff and waiting to be admired.

The jewel in Tallinn's crown remains the beautiful two-tiered Old Town, a 14th- and 15th-century jumble of turrets, spires and winding cobbled streets. An old Hanseatic trading town, Tallinn was dominated mainly by German barons, then Russian-Soviet forces until its rebirth as an independent capital in 1991. Despite its small size and easy-going rhythm of life, it boasts a vibrant populace of Estonians and Russians (about 40% of the population), and loads of opportunities for fun and discovery.

ORIENTATION

The medieval Old Town, just to the south of Tallinn Bay, comprises Toompea (the upper town) and the lower town, which is still surrounded by much of its 2.5km defensive wall. Its centre is Raekoja plats (Town Hall Square). Immediately west of the Old Town is the modern city centre, with shopping plazas and the closest Estonia has to skyscrapers.

INFORMATION Discount Cards

Tallinn Card (130EEK to 450EEK) Offers free rides on public transport, admission to museums, free excursions and discounts at restaurants; valid for six to 72 hours.

Internet Access

Metro (Viru väljak 4/6; ☎ 7am–11pm Mon–Fri, 10am–11pm Sat & Sun; per hr 35EEK) Downstairs on the bus terminal level.

Medical Services

Aia Apteek (☎ 627 3607; Aia tänav 10; ☎ 8.30am–midnight) One of the many well-stocked pharmacies around town.

East Tallinn Central Hospital (☎ 620 7015; Ravi tänav 18; ☎ 24hr) Full range of services, including a polyclinic and a 24-hour emergency room.

Money

Estravel (☎ 626 6266; www.estravel.ee; Suur-Karja tänav 15) Agents for American Express.

Tavid (☎ 627 9900; Aia tänav 5; ☎ 24hr) Currency exchange.

Post

Central post office (☎ 625 7300; fax receiving service 661 6054; Narva maantee 1; incoming faxes per page 12EEK; ☎ 7.30am–8pm Mon–Fri, 8am–6pm Sat) Full postal services.

Telephone

If you're one of the few not sporting a mobile phone, you can buy 30EEK, 50EEK and 100EEK chip cards from newsstands to use for local and international calls at any of the blue phone boxes scattered around town.

Tourist Information

Tourist Information Centre (☎ 645 7777; www.tourism.tallinn.ee; Niguliste tänav 2; ☎ 9am–7pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm Sat & Sun May–Jun, 9am–8pm Mon–Fri, 10am–6pm Sat & Sun Jul–Aug, 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm Sat & Sun Sep, 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–3pm Sat Oct–Apr)

Travel Agencies

Estonian Holidays (☎ 627 0500; www.holidays.ee; Rütüli tänav 28/30)

Union Travel (☎ 627 0627; www.uniontravel.ee; Vana Posti 2) Can easily arrange visas to Russia and the former Soviet Union.

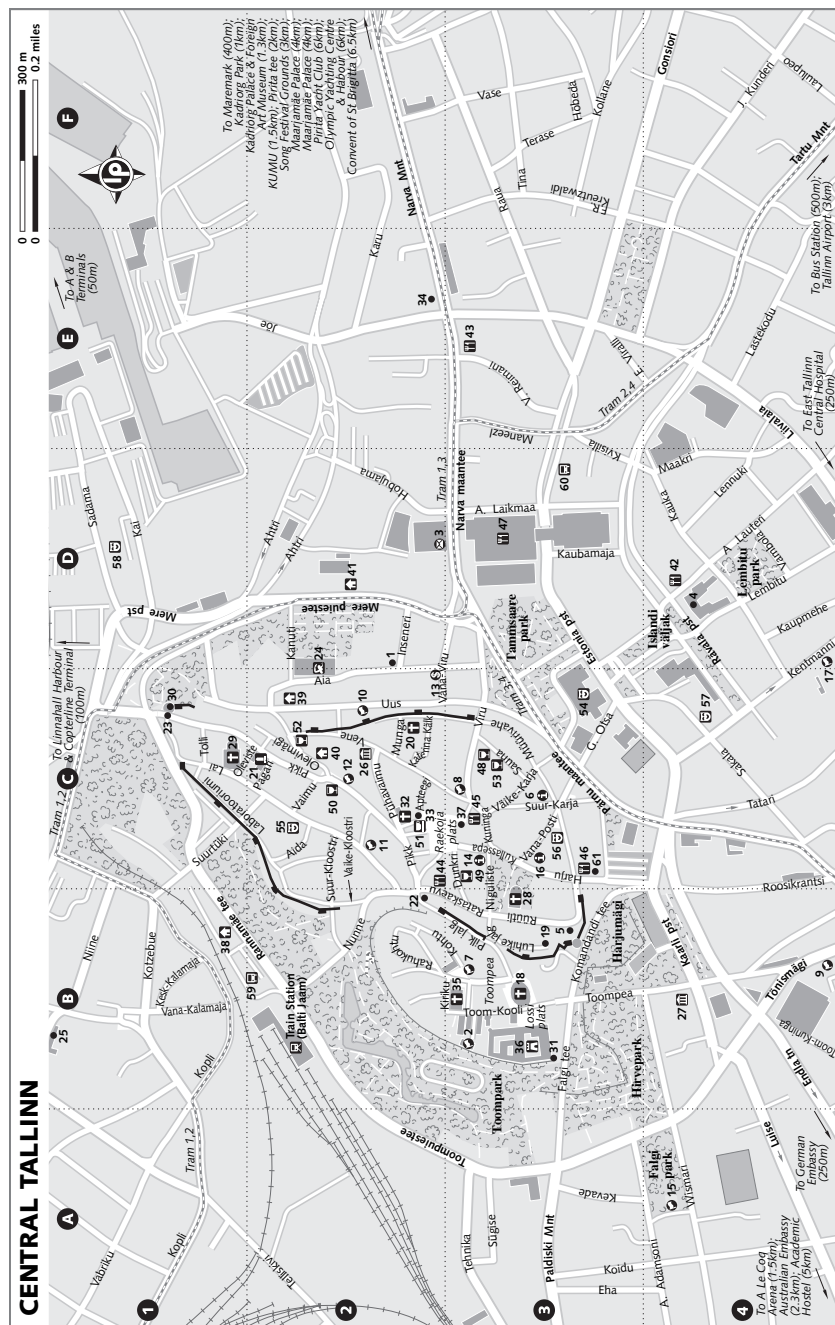
SIGHTS

Raekoja Plats & Lower Town

Compact Raekoja plats (Town Hall Square) has been the centre of Tallinn life since the 11th century. It's dominated by northern Europe's only surviving Gothic **town hall** (☎ 645 7900; adult/student 35/20EEK, tower 25/15EEK; ☎ 10am–4pm

GETTING INTO TOWN

From the airport, just 3km from the centre, take bus 2 for five stops; the taxi mafia outside should not charge more than 60EEK to 80EEK for the same journey. From the Autobussijaam (bus station), walk one block east to Tartu maantee, cross the street and hop on any tram into town; the Old Town's but four stops away. The train station is directly across the street, to the northwest, from the Old Town and is served by trams 1 and 2, which whisk you downtown in three or four stops.



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Mon-Sat Jun-Aug, by appointment Sep-May, tower 11am-6pm Jun-Aug), built from 1371 to 1404. Vana Toomas (Old Thomas), Tallinn's symbol and guardman, has been keeping watch perched on his weathervane atop the building since 1530. The **Raekoja Apteek** (Town Council Pharmacy), on the north side of the square, is another ancient Tallinn institution; there's been a pharmacy or apothecary's shop here since at least 1422. An arch beside it leads into narrow Saia käik (White Bread Passage), at the far end of which is the lovely 14th-century Gothic **Pühavaimu Kirik** (Holy Spirit Church; ☎ 644 1487; ☎ 10am-3pm), with carvings from 1684 and a tower bell cast in 1433.

A medieval merchant's home at Vene tänav 17, on the corner of Pühavaimu tänav, houses Tallinn's most interesting museum – the **Linnamuuseum** (City Museum; ☎ 644 6553; www.linnamuuseum.ee; Vene tänav 17; adult/student 35/10EEK; ☎ 10.30am-6pm Wed-Mon Mar-Oct, 10.30am-5pm Wed-Mon Nov-Feb), which traces Tallinn's development through to 1940 via creative interactive displays, period recreations and old documents. The 20th-century section will satisfy any thirst for Soviet propaganda material.

Also on Vene tänav, in the courtyard at No 18, is the 1844 **Sts Peter & Paul Catholic Church**, and the **Dominican Monastery** (☎ 644 4606; Vene tänav 16/18; adult/student 45/15EEK; ☎ 9.30am-6pm mid-May-mid-Sep), founded in 1246 as a base for Scandinavian monks. Today the monastery

complex houses Estonia's largest collection of **stone carvings**.

The majestic **Niguliste Church** (☎ 631 4330; Niguliste tänav 3; adult/student 35/20EEK; ☎ 10am-5pm Wed-Sun), a minute's walk south of Raekoja plats, is now used to stage concerts and also serves as a museum of medieval church art.

At the foot of the slope below the Niguliste are the exposed foundations of buildings that stood there before the Soviet bombing of Tallinn on the night of 9 March 1944.

Pikk tänav, running north from Raekoja plats to the **Great Coast Gate** (the medieval exit to Tallinn port), is lined with many 15th-century houses of medieval merchants and gentry.

Near the end of Pikk tänav stands a chief Tallinn landmark, **Oleviste Kirik** (St Olaf's Church). A great place to start any Tallinn expedition is the superb **observation deck** (☎ 621 2241; adult/student 20/10EEK; ☎ 10am-6pm, mid-Apr-mid-Oct) halfway up its 124m structure, offering the city's best views of the Old Town. First built in the early 13th century, this was once the world's tallest building (it was 159m high before a major fire and several reconstructions).

Just south of the church is the **former KGB headquarters** (Pikk tänav 59); the basement windows were sealed to conceal the sounds of cruel interrogations.

Toompea

A regal approach to Toompea is through the red-roofed 1380 **gate tower** at the western end of Pikk tänav in the lower town, and then along Pikk jalg (Long Leg). The 19th-century, still-active Russian Orthodox **Alexander Nevsky Cathedral** (☎ 644 3484; ☎ 8am-7pm) dominates Lossi plats at the top of Pikk jalg, planted strategically across from **Toompea Castle**, which is traditionally Estonia's seat of power. Only a section of the Old Town wall and the **Pikk Herman Bastion**, from which the state flag flies, are left from medieval times. The *riigikogu* (parliament) meets in the pink, baroque-style building in front, which is an 18th-century addition. A path leads down from Lossi plats through an opening in the wall to the **Danish King's Courtyard**, where, in summer, artists set up their easels.

The Lutheran **Toomkirik** (Dome Church; ☎ 644 4140; Toomkooli tänav 6; ☎ 9am-4pm Tue-Sun) is Estonia's oldest church, first built in 1240 (the exteriors date from the early 14th century). From Toomkirik, follow Kohtu tänav to the city's favourite lookout over the Lower Town.

The **Museum of Occupation & Fight for Freedom** (☎ 668 0250; Toompea tänav 8; adult/student 10/5EEK; ☎ 11am-6pm Tue-Sun), just down the hill from Toompea, has a worthwhile exhibit on Estonia's history of occupation, focussing on the most recent Soviet one.

ACTIVITIES

The sauna is an Estonian institution and is seen as an institution that needs to be indulged in! If you don't receive an invitation to a private sauna party, head to **Kalma Saun** (☎ 627 1811; Vana-Kalamaja tänav 9A; ☎ 10am-11pm), the best public sauna in Estonia.

The most popular beaches are at Pirita and Stroomi.

Water parks are all the rage in Estonia; the biggest in Tallinn is the **Kalev Spa** (☎ 649 3300; www.kalevspa.ee; Aia tänav 18; adult/student from 80/60EEK).

See p338 for more suggestions on how to get the adrenalin pumping.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Old Town Days Usually lasting four days, this festival in early June sees the Old Town come alive with market stalls, concerts, dancing and medieval-themed merrymaking.

Beer Festival Fun of a different kind happens in early July.

SPLURGE

Olevi Residents (☎ 627 7650; www.olevi.ee; Olevimägi tänav 4; s/d/ste from 1100/1600/3500EEK; ☎ ☎) Want your first or last night to be something special? Try Olevi. Each splendid room has its own character in this Old Town oasis, some with antiques, others with arched ceilings and bits of the original medieval building showing through. The suites are worth a splurge. The rooms on the top floor have a sea view.

SLEEPING

Rasastra Bed & Breakfast (☎ 661 6291; www.bedbreakfast.ee; Mere puiestee 4) Can set you up with a room in a private home from 275EEK per person.

Hostel Alur (☎ 631 1531; www.alurhostel.com; Rannamäe tee 3; dm/s 235/500, d 720-875EEK, tr 845EEK) Not the liveliest of hostels, but it's clean, friendly, (a bit too) quiet and just a stone's throw from the train station and Old Town. There's 10% discount for holders of International Student Identity Cards (ISIC) and YHA cards. Prices are about 15% cheaper from September to April.

our pick Academic Hostel (☎ 620 2275; www.academichostel.com; Akadeemia tee 11; d 495EEK) Situated on the edge of the Tallinn Technical University campus grounds, this is a bright, happy, freshly-done-up hostel with a lively atmosphere. With 108 rooms spread out along five colour-coded floors, it feels more like a modern budget hotel than a hostel, and has a young, vivacious, international clientele.

Old House (☎ 641 1464; www.oldhouse.ee; Uus tänav 22 & 26; dm 290EEK, 1-/2-/3-/5-/6-person r 550/650/975/1450/1740EEK, guesthouse s/d/tr 450/650/975EEK, apt 1300-2500EEK) This hostel-guesthouse fills two nearly adjacent houses in the Old Town. Walls are paper thin, but it's cosy and spotless, and a hearty breakfast is included. The apartments are a good splurge. An ISIC gets 10% off all rates.

EATING

Reasonable lunch specials (35EEK to 60EEK) abound in the city, so it's economical to fill up in the daytime. There are fast-food options along Viru tänav and inside the **Viru Keskus shopping centre** (Viru väljak 4/6). All places listed in the drinking section also serve up tasty grub.

SPLURGE

Olde Hansa (627 9020; Vana turg 1; mains from 175EEK) One of the few touristy places that's truly worth a visit, this Medieval-themed restaurant boasts the friendliest service in the country, delicacies like juniper cheese and exotic dishes such as boar and bear, all impeccably presented.

Kohvik Narva (☎ 660 1786; Narva maantee 10; mains 35-65EEK) One of the only places left in Tallinn where you can step back into the USSR, this is kitsch without being aware of it. The décor is decidedly brown and faded red, the service dismissive and the menu full of Russian staples from times of yore. Have fun!

Kompressor (☎ 646 4210; Rataskaevu tänav 3; mains from 40EEK) Eat one of the enormous, stuffed pancakes and you'll be full for the rest of the day. The large hall and casual atmosphere make it a great hang-out too; the big tables make it easy to chat up locals.

Pizza Americano (☎ 644 8837; Müürivahe tänav 2; pizzas from 85EEK; ☎ 11.30am-10.30pm) Thick, tasty pizzas of every possible permutation and combination are on offer here, including several vegetarian options.

Eesti Maja (☎ 645 5252; www.eestimaja.ee; A Lauteri tänav 1; buffet 75EEK, meals from 125EEK; ☎ 11am-11pm) Here's a good place to sample some traditional Estonian fare in a folksy interior. The weekday lunch buffet is a good deal and lets you try some of the heavy, exotic fare without a full-plate commitment.

DRINKING

Tallinn without its café and bar culture is simply inconceivable. Even in Soviet times, Tallinn was renowned for its cafés. Due to the charm of the surroundings, the Old Town is the obvious place to head to for cellar bars and absurdly cosy cafés.

Kehrwieder (☎ 644 0818; Saiakäik 1) The city's cosiest café. Excellent coffees, teas, light meals and ambience galore. A must.

Beer House (☎ 627 6520; Dunkri tänav 5) Tallinn's only microbrewery offers up the good stuff in a huge, tavern-like space, where, come evening, the oompah-pah music can rattle the brain into oblivion. Fun and sometimes raucous.

Hell Hunt (☎ 681 8333; Pikk tänav 39) A trooper on the pub circuit for years, this place boasts

an amiable atmosphere and reasonable prices for locally brewed beer and cider (half-litre for 24EEK).

Levist Väljas (☎ 507 7372; Olevimägi tänav 12) In this cellar bar it's not only telephones that are 'out of range' (which is what its name translates to) – so are the clientele! The wobbly seats, cheap booze and draughty interior attracts a refreshingly motley crew of friendly punks, grunge kings, has-beens and anyone else who strays from the well-trodden tourist path.

CLUBBING

Club Hollywood (☎ 627 4770; www.club-hollywood.ee; Vana-Posti tänav 8; ☎ 10pm-5am Wed-Sat) A multilevel emporium of mayhem, this is the one to draw the largest crowds. Its Friday hip-hop eves are the most popular.

Terrarium (☎ 661 4721; Sadama tänav 6; ☎ 10pm-5am Wed-Sat) A more down-to-earth club experience is ensured here – prices are lower and there's less attitude than in the posher Old Town clubs. The DJs still kick out the disco and the 20-something crowd eats it up.

ENTERTAINMENT

Buy tickets for concerts and main events at any central branch of **Piletilevi** (www.piletilevi.ee), such as the one inside Viru Keskus.

Theatre

Estonia Theatre & Concert Hall (☎ theatre 626 0215, concert hall 614 7760; Estonia puiestee 4) The city's biggest concerts and shows are held here. This is Tallinn's main theatre, also housing the Estonian national opera and ballet.

Teater No99 (☎ 660 5051; www.no99.ee; Sakala tänav 3) More-experimental productions happen here, but definitely come by for the jazz bar

GAY & LESBIAN TALLINN

Check out www.gay.ee for full listings.

X-Baar (☎ 692 9266; Sauna tänav 1) The only place in the Old Town flying the rainbow flag is Tallinn's premier gay bar.

Angel (☎ 641 6880; Sauna tänav 1) Open to all sexes and orientations, this mainly gay club has become one of the liveliest spots in town for fun of all kinds. A heady mix of dark corners, sweat, Madonna impersonators and throbbing beats – among other things.

downstairs on Friday and Saturday evenings – a true jazz club the likes of which Tallinn has been sorely lacking for years.

Linnateater (City Theatre; ☎ 665 0800; www.linnateater.ee; Lai tänav 23) This theatre always stages something memorable – watch for its summer plays on an outdoor stage.

Sport

The modern arena **A Le Coq Arena** (☎ 627 9940; Asula tänav 4c) is home to Tallinn football team Flora, Estonia's toughest, meanest players. Watching a match is great fun.

Cinemas

Check out www.superkinod.ee for what's on. **Sõprus** (☎ 644 1919; Vana-Posti tänav 8) is housed in a magnificent Stalin-era theatre. This arthouse cinema has an excellent repertoire of European, local and independent productions.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

See p327 for international flights to Tallinn. See p328 for information on getting to Tallinn from within Estonia.

GETTING AROUND

Tallinn has an excellent network of buses, trolleybuses and trams that run from 6am to midnight. In Estonia, *piletid* (tickets) are sold from street kiosks (adult/student 10/7EEK) or from the driver (15EEK). Validate your ticket using the hole-punch inside the vehicle. All public transport timetables are posted at www.tallinn.ee.

Taxis cost from 5.50EEK to 9EEK per kilometre. Try **Iks Takso** (☎ 638 1381) or **Taxi Marabu** (☎ 650 0006). Throughout central Tallinn, the ecologically sound **Velotakso** (☎ 508 8810) offers rides on egg-shaped vehicles run by pedal power and enthusiasm, and charges 35EEK anywhere within central Tallinn.

AROUND TALLINN

LAHEMAA NATIONAL PARK

A rocky stretch of the north coast – encompassing 251 sq km of marine coast plus 474 sq km of hinterland with 14 lakes, eight rivers and many waterfalls – forms the lovely Lahemaa National Park. Roads crisscross the park from the Tallinn–Narva highway, and some places are accessible by bus. This is the perfect Tallinn getaway.

Before heading out it's worth getting in touch with the **visitors centre** (☎ 329 5555; www.lahemaa.ee; ☎ 9am–7pm May–Aug, 9am–5pm Sep, 9am–5pm Mon–Fri Oct–Apr) in Palmse, 8km north of Viitna (71km east of Tallinn) in the park's southeast. Nearby is the **Palmse Manor** (adult/student 40/15EEK; ☎ 10am–7pm May–Sep, 10am–1pm Oct–Apr). Some of the park's other manors are open to visitors.

There are unlimited sightseeing, hiking, biking and canoeing/rafting possibilities, as well as remote islands to be explored. The park has well signposted nature trails and cycling paths winding through it. The small coastal towns of **Võsu**, **Käsmu** and **Loksa** are popular but peaceful seaside spots. There are also **prehistoric stone barrows** at Kahala, Palmse and Vihula, and a **boulder field** on the Käsmu Peninsula.

The visitors centre arranges accommodation to suit all budgets and can advise on the best camping spots. **Ojaäärse hostel** (☎ 628 1532; puhkus@rmk.ee; dm 200–250EEK, s 300EEK) is a dream hostel, in a lushly converted 1855 farmhouse 1.5km southeast of Palmse by a lake. **Toomarahva** (☎ 325 2511; www.zone.ee/toomarahva; Altja village; camp sites/s/d/2-person barn/apt 25/400/600/500/800EEK) is a two-minute walk from the sea in the village of Altja (10km by road east of Võsu). The split-level barn is bucolic heaven. **Vihula Manor** (☎ 322 6985; www.vihulamois.ee; s 350–500EEK, d 700–1200EEK, tr 800–900EEK) is probably the park's most impressive accommodation option, 6km east of Sagadi.

There are about 20 buses daily from Tallinn to Rakvere, which stop at Viitna (40EEK to 60EEK, one hour), and one a day from Tallinn to Võsu (40EEK, 1¼ hours). From Viitna, you can hike or hitchhike to the visitors centre, or call a **taxi** (☎ 509 2326) from Võsu to pick you up. You can bring your bikes on the bus.

SOUTHEASTERN ESTONIA

The focus of southeastern Estonia is the historic university town of Tartu, Estonia's second city. Beyond is a pretty region of gentle hills and beautiful lakes – old Livonia.

TARTU

pop 100,000

Tartu lays claim to being Estonia's spiritual capital and locals talk about the special Tartu

vaim (spirit). Small and provincial, it's also a university town, with students forming nearly one-fifth of the population; this injects a boisterous vitality into the leafy, serene surroundings. During the Student Days festival at the end of April, carnival-like mayhem erupts throughout the city.

The university was founded in 1632. The Estonian nationalist revival in the 19th century had its origins here and Tartu was the location for the first Estonian Song Festival in 1869. Tartu provides visitors with a true glimpse of the Estonian rhythm of life, boasts great museums and is a convenient gateway to exploring southern Estonia.

Orientation

Toomemägi Hill and the area of older buildings between it and the Emajõgi River are the focus of 'old' Tartu. At its heart is Raekoja plats (Town Hall Square).

Information

Central post office (☎ 744 0600; Vanemuise tänav 7; ☎ 8am–7pm Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm Sat)

Estravel (☎ 744 0300; www.estravel.ee; Vallikraavi tänav 2) Official Amex agent; can offer general help.

ZumZum (☎ 742 3443; Küüni 2; per hr 25EEK; ☎ 11am–11pm) Basement internet café.

Tourist information centre (☎ /fax 744 2111; www.visittartu.com; Raekoja plats 14; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–3pm Sat & Sun) It has an excellent range of local maps, books and brochures, can book accommodation and tour guides and sells listings guides.

Sights & Activities

At the town centre on Raekoja plats is the beautifully proportioned **town hall** (1782–89), topped by a tower and weather vane, and fronted by a statue of lovers kissing under an umbrella. Nearby at No 18, the former home of Colonel Barclay de Tolly (1761–1818) is a wonderfully crooked building housing the **Tartu Art Museum** (☎ 744 1080; www.tartmus.ee; Raekoja plats 18; adult/student 25/10EEK; ☎ 11am–6pm Wed–Sun).

The main **university building** (☎ 737 5100; Ülikooli tänav 18) dates from 1803. It houses both the **Tartu University Art Museum** (☎ 737 5384; adult/child 8/5EEK; ☎ 11am–5pm Mon–Fri) and the **Student's Lock-Up** (adult/child 5/4EEK; ☎ 11am–5pm Mon–Fri), where 19th-century students were held for their misdeeds. Further north, the Gothic brick **Jaani Kirik** (St John's Church; ☎ 744 2229; Jaani tänav 5; admission free), which was founded in 1330,

boasts a proud collection of some 1000 rare terracotta sculptures surrounding the main portal.

Rising to the west of Raekoja plats is the splendid Toomemägi Hill, landscaped in the manner of a 19th-century English park and perfect for a leisurely stroll. The 13th-century Gothic **cathedral Toomkirik** at the top was rebuilt in the 15th century, despoiled during the Reformation in 1525, and partly rebuilt in 1804–07 to accommodate the university library, which is now the **Museum of University History** (☎ 737 5674; adult/student 20/5EEK; ☎ 11am–5pm Wed–Sun).

Also on Toomemägi Hill are the 1838 **Inglisild** (Angel's Bridge), with a good view of the city, the 1913 **Kuradisild** (Devil's Bridge) and the **observatory**.

Tartu, as the major repository of Estonia's cultural heritage, has an abundance of first-rate museums. Among them is perhaps the country's best, the **Estonian National Museum** (☎ 742 1311; www.erm.ee; Kuperjanovi tänav 9; adult/student 20/14EEK, free Fri; ☎ 11am–6pm Wed–Sun), which traces the history, life and traditions of the Estonian people.

The former KGB headquarters now house the sombre and highly worthwhile **KGB cells** (☎ 746 1717; Riia maantee 15b; adult/student 5/3EEK; ☎ 11am–6pm Tue–Sat).

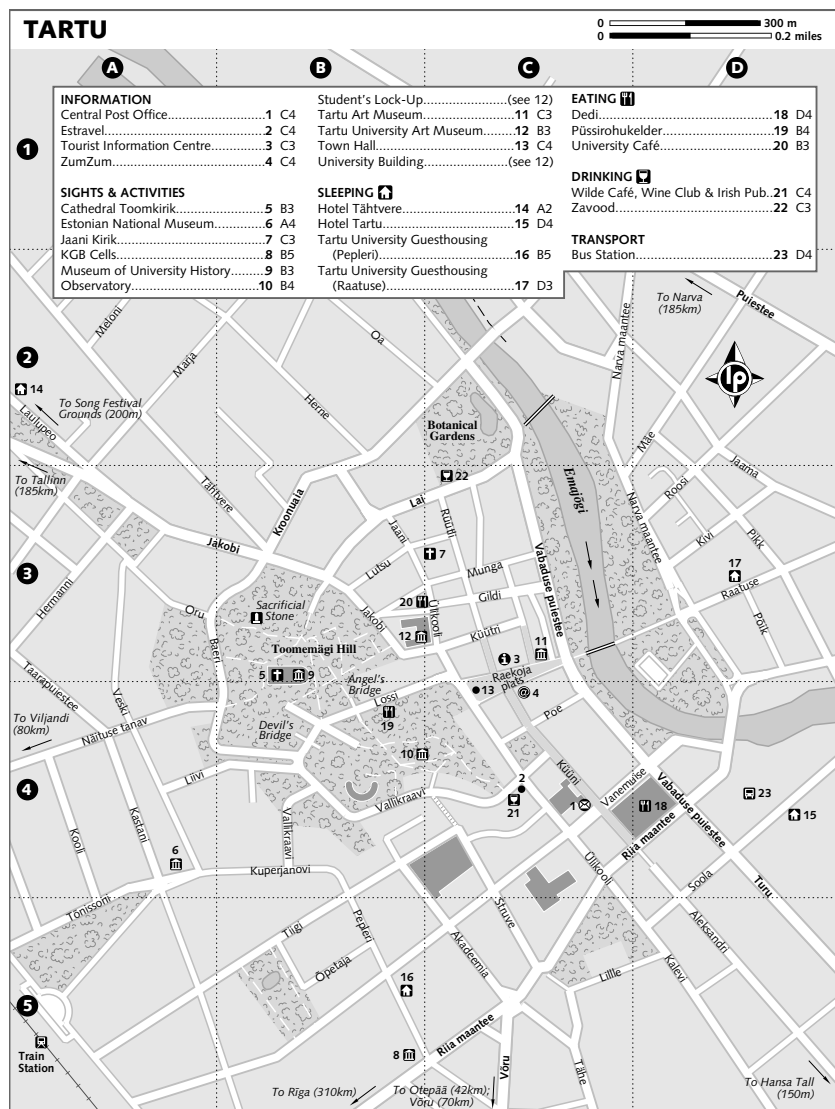
For information about Emajõgi River **cruises** from Tartu's **river port** (Sadam; ☎ 734 0026; Soola tänav 5), contact **Laevatöö** (☎ 734 0025). Services run twice weekly to the remote island of Piirissaar.

Sleeping

Hotel Tähtvere (☎ 742 1708; Laulupeo puiestee 19; s/d from 125/250EEK) A 1km walk west from the centre, this run-down but perfectly decent place has comfortable if nondescript rooms with TV and private toilet.

Tartu University Guesthousing (☎ 740 9955; www.kyla.ee; s 250–300EEK, d 400–500EEK; ☎); Raatuse (Raatuse tänav 22); Pepleri (Pepleri tänav 14) Two student dorms offer cheap, clean, central accommodation. The Raatuse locale is functional but bathrooms are shared between three rooms; better is the more expensive Pepleri, also modern and spiffy, but each room has a private toilet. Advance reservations are a must.

Hotel Tartu (☎ 731 4300; Soola tänav 3; dm/s/d 300/725/1075EEK) Across from the bus station, this hotel's recently renovated rooms are sleek



and comfy. The dorm rooms hold only three and are spotless. There's an additional 15% student discount.

Eating & Drinking

University Café (☎ 737 5405; www.kohvik.ut.ee; Ülikooli tänav 20; mains from 35EEK) Some of the best budget food in town is at the 1st-floor cafeteria-style

café, while upstairs is a labyrinth of elegantly decorated rooms where delicious meals are served.

Dedi (☎ 731 4850; Tartu Kaubamaja, 3rd fl; mains from 35EEK) A sleek cafeteria provides some of the most economical and tasty meals in town, while the adjacent bar-restaurant ups the ante with great food, cocktails and design.

Wildie Café, Wine Club & Irish Pub (☎ 730 9764; Vallikraavi tänav 4; mains from 55EEK) Choose grace and elegance in the café-wine club or something more lively at the upstairs pub (with a killer terrace and varied menu).

Püssirohukelder (☎ 730 3555; Lossi tänav 28; mains 40-100EEK) Set majestically in a cavernous old gunpowder cellar, this doubles as a boisterous pub and has hearty meals.

Zavood (☎ 744 1321; Lai tänav 30) This low-key bar attracts an alternative, down-to-earth crowd with its inexpensive drinks and lack of attitude. It sometimes features a student band.

Getting There & Away

Some 50 buses a day run to/from Tallinn (65EEK to 100EEK, 2½ to 3½ hours). There are also four trains daily (85EEK to 125EEK, 3¼ hours).

OTEPÄÄ & AROUND

pop 2200

The tiny hill-top town of Otepää, 44km south of Tartu, is the centre of a pretty area beloved by Estonians for its hills and lakes – and thus its endless opportunities for sports.

The centre of town is the triangular main 'square', Lipuväljak, with the bus station just off its eastern corner. There you'll find the **tourist information centre** (☎ 766 1200; www.otepea.ee; Lipuväljak 13; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun mid-May-mid-Sep, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat mid-Sep-mid-May). It can suggest activities in the nearby **Otepää Nature Park** (☎ 765 5876; Kolga tee 28). The post office, bank and main food shop are beside the bus station.

Otepää's pretty little 17th-century **church** is on a hill about 100m northeast of the bus station. It was in this church in 1884 that the Estonian Students' Society consecrated its new blue, black and white flag, which later became the flag of independent Estonia. The best views are along the shores of the 3.5km-long **Pühajärv** (Holy Lake), on the southwestern edge of the town. The lake was blessed by the Dalai Lama in 1992. Every summer the lake is blessed by thousands of raucous partiers during the **Beach Party Festival** in early June.

Sleeping & Eating

Edgari (☎ 765 4275; www.hot.ee/karnivoor; Lipuväljak 3; s/d from 200/400EEK) One of the cheapest places to stay right in town, this is a guesthouse that feels like a hostel, with thin walls, a shared

kitchenette and communal lounge, all in a pleasant but bland atmosphere.

Pühajärve Spa Hotel (☎ 766 5500; www.pyhajarve.com; Pühajärve village; s/d/ste 700/900/1490EEK) Situated right by the lake, this refurbished complex offers a full range of activities, sports and services, and an excellent restaurant.

Getting There & Away

Daily bus services to/from Otepää include Tartu (25EEK to 30EEK, 45 minutes to 1½ hours, 15 daily), Tallinn (100EEK, 3½ hours, three daily) and Võru (30EEK, 1¼ hours, one daily).

SOUTHWESTERN ESTONIA

PÄRNU

pop 43,700

Pärnu is Estonia's leading seaside resort and it's a magnet for party-loving Estonians and spa-seeking Finns. Those looking for relaxation will enjoy the wide leafy streets and white sandy beaches.

Orientation & Information

The town lies on either side of the estuary of the Pärnu River, which empties into Pärnu Bay. The tourist office is on the main commercial street in the heart of the Old Town, around 150m south of the bus station.

Central post office (☎ 447 1111; Akadeemia tee 7;

☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat)

Rüütli Internetipunkt (☎ 443 1552; Rüütli tänav 25; per hr 25EEK; ☎ 9am-9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat & Sun) You can access the internet here and at the New Art Museum; 30EEK per hour)

Tourist information centre (☎ 447 3000; www.parnu.ee; Rüütli tänav 16 ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri 10am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri Sep-May)

Ühispank (☎ 447 7100; Rüütli tänav 40A) Behind the bus station; cashes travellers cheques and gives cash advances on credit cards.

Sights

The **Punane Torn** (Red Tower; Hommiku tänav 11; adult/student 10/5EEK; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat), the city's oldest building (and despite the name, it's white), survives from the days of the Knights of the Sword. Parts of the 17th-century Swedish moat and ramparts remain in Vallikäär Park, including the tunnel-like

Tallinna Värav (Tallinn Gate) at the western end of Kuninga tänav.

The **New Art Museum** (☎ 443 0772; www.chaplin.ee; Esplanaadi tänav 10; adult/student 25/10€; 🕒 9am–9pm), southwest of the centre, is among Estonia's cultural highlights, with its café, bookshop and exhibitions that always push the cultural envelope.

The wide white-sand **beach** south of Ranna puistee is Pärnu's finest attraction. **Veekeskus** (Water Park; ☎ 445 1166; www.terviseparadiis.ee; Side tänav 14; adult 180–270€€€, student 120–190€€, up to 40% cheaper Sep–May; 🕒 10am–10pm), a sparkling new water park with pools, slides, tubes and other slippery fun, is a big draw, especially when bad weather ruins beach plans.

Sleeping

Camping Kõne (☎ 53 435 092; www.kõne.ee; Suur-Jõe 44a; camp sites/d/tr from 60/650/850€€€) Perched on a perfect spot by the river only 1km from the Old Town, it offers tent and camper sites and a variety of bright, perky rooms with shared facilities. There's a sauna, a rowboat and bike rental. It can get crowded, but that makes it easier to meet people!

Lõuna Hostel (☎ 443 0943; www.hot.ee/hostellouna; Lõuna tänav 2; dm 200–250€€, s 500–575€€, d 500–800€€, st 1350€€€) This hostel in a grand Jugendstil building offers quality budget accommodation in two- to eight-bed spacious rooms with high ceilings. The shared kitchen doubles as a social room, where people exchange fun-in-the-sun tales.

Green Villa (☎ 443 6040; www.greenvilla.ee; Vee tänav 21; s 600€€, d 700–1200€€, tr/ste 1300/1600€€€) This refurbished villa is impossible to miss, standing stately and grand in all its greenness. Most rooms have private bathrooms, the eyesore décor is post-Soviet kitsch, but price and location are right.

Eating & Drinking

Georg (☎ 443 1110; Riiüüli tänav 43; mains 30–55€€€) This smoky cafeteria-style café has the cheapest eats in town, including soups, salads and daily specials for a quick fill-up.

Tex Mex (☎ 443 0929; Akadeemia tänav 5; mains 50–100€€€) The colourful, cheerful interior is reason enough to chow down here, and the menu boasts a tempting array of first-rate Mexican fare.

Veerev Õlu (☎ 442 9848; Uus tänav 3A; mains 50–85€€€) This wins the Friendliest and Cosiest Pub Award by a long shot – a tiny space with lots

of good vibes, cheap beer and killer live rock-folk bands. There are also decent meals.

Entertainment

Sunset Club (☎ 30 670; Ranna puistee 3; 🕒 10pm–4am Wed, Thu & Sun, 10pm–6am Fri & Sat) Pärnu's most famous nightclub, set in a grandiose sea-front building dating from 1939.

Citi (☎ 444 1847; Hommiku tänav 8) One of downtown's liveliest spots.

Getting There & Away

More than 20 buses daily connect Pärnu with Tallinn (80€€€ to 100€€€, two hours). Tickets for a multitude of other destinations including Riga and beyond are available at the Pärnu bus station **ticket office** (☎ 447 1002; Ringi tänav; 🕒 5am–8.30pm), across from the bus station. There are also two daily Tallinn–Pärnu trains (60€€€, 2¼ hours), though the train station is an uncomfortable 5km away from the centre, down Riia maantee.

ESTONIA DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

Finding a decent place to lay your head in Estonia is not a problem; even budget options are usually clean and very orderly. There are a few *kämpingud* (camping grounds), which are open from mid-May to September and allow you to pitch a tent, though most consist mainly of permanent wooden cabins, with communal showers and toilets.

There are a number of homestay organisations that will rent you a room in a private home, which is an excellent way to experience local life. Farms offer more than a choice of rooms; in many cases meals, a sauna and a wide range of activities are also available.

The following websites are useful:

Estonian Rural Tourism Board (www.maaturism.ee)

In Your Pocket (www.inyourpocket.com)

Tourism Information Centre (www.visitestonia.com)

Has a search engine for all types of accommodation throughout the country.

ACTIVITIES

Many travel agencies can arrange a variety of activity-based tours of Estonia. A detailed list of companies keeping tourists active can be found at www.turismiweb.ee. **Matkad.ee** (☎ 508 7600; www.matkad.ee; Kadaka puistee 31, Tallinn)

is an excellent contact. It organises superb rafting, and canoe (daytime as well as night) and hiking trips among other things, and can tailor an expedition to suit your adrenalin levels. **Raeturist** (☎ 668 8400; www.raeturist.ee; Narva maantee 13A, Tallinn) offers a nine-day bicycle trip throughout Estonia.

Cross-country skiing is extremely popular. Head to Otepää (p337) where there are several skiing centres that hire out equipment. See www.otepeaa.ee for more information.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

For up-to-date contact details of Estonian diplomatic organisations, and foreign embassies and consulates in Estonia, contact the **Estonian Foreign Ministry** (☎ 631 7600; www.vm.ee; Islandi Väljak 1, Tallinn).

Embassies & Consulates in Estonia

Australia (☎ 650 9308; mati@standard.ee; Marja tänav 9)

Canada (☎ 627 3311; tallinn@canada.ee; Toomkooli tänav 13)

Finland (☎ 610 3200; www.finland.ee; Kohtu tänav 4)

Germany (☎ 627 5300; www.tallinn.diplo.de; Toom-Kuninga tänav 11)

Ireland (☎ 681 1888; embassytallinn@eircom.net; Vene tänav 2)

Latvia (☎ 627 7850; embassy.estonia@mfa.gov.lv; Tõnismägi tänav 10)

Lithuania (☎ 641 2014; www.hot.ee/lietambasada; Uus tänav 15)

Russia Tallinn (☎ 646 4146; www.estonia.mid.ru; Lai tänav 18); Narva (☎ 356 0652; konsot@narvanet.ee; Kiriku tänav 8)

Sweden (☎ 640 5600; www.sweden.ee; Pikk tänav 28)

UK (☎ 667 4700; www.britishembassy.ee; Wismari tänav 6)

USA (☎ 668 8100; www.usemb.ee; Kentmanni tänav 20)

Estonian Embassies & Consulates Abroad

Australia (☎ 02-9810 7468; estikon@ozemail.com.au; 86 Louisa Rd, Birchgrove, Sydney NSW 2041)

Canada (☎ 416-461 0764; www.estemb.ca; 202-958 Broadview Ave, Toronto, Ontario M4K 2R6)

Finland (☎ 9-622 0260; www.estemb.fi; Itäinen Puistotie 10, 00140 Helsinki)

Germany Berlin (☎ 30-25 460 600; www.estemb.de; Hildebrandstrasse 5 10785 Berlin); Hamburg (☎ 40-450 40 26; Badestrasse 38, 20143 Hamburg)

Ireland (☎ 1-219 6730; embassy.dublin@mfa.ee; Riversdale House St Ann's, Ailesbury Rd, Dublin)

Latvia (☎ 781 20 20; www.estemb.lv; Skolas iela 13, Rīga)

Lithuania (☎ 5-278 0200; www.estemb.lt; Mickeviciaus gatvė 4a, Vilnius)

Russia Moscow (☎ 495-290 5013; www.estemb.ru; Malo Kislowski 5, 103009 Moscow); St Petersburg (☎ 812-702 0920; Bolsaja Monetnaja 14, St Petersburg)

Sweden (☎ 08-5451 2280; www.estemb.se; Tyrgatan 3, Stockholm)

UK (☎ 020-7589 3428; www.estonia.gov.uk; 16 Hyde Park Gate, London SW7 5DG)

USA Washington DC (☎ 202-588 0101; www.estemb.org; 2131 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington DC 20008); New York (☎ 212-883-0636; www.nyc.estemb.org; 600 3rd Ave, 26th fl, New York, NY)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Estonia has a busy festival calendar, encompassing all kinds of cultural interests. A good list of upcoming major events throughout Estonia can be found at www.culture.ee.

All-Estonian Song Festival (www.laulupidu.ee) Convenes every five years and culminates in a 30,000-strong traditional choir, due in Tallinn in 2009.

Baltika International Folk Festival A week of music, dance and displays focusing on Baltic and other folk traditions, this festival is shared between Riga, Vilnius and Tallinn; the next one will be in Tallinn in June 2007.

Jaanipäev (St John's Eve) June 23 is the biggest occasion in Estonia; a celebration of the pagan Midsummer's Night, best experienced far from the city along a stretch of beach where huge bonfires are lit for all-night parties.

HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day 1 January

Independence Day 24 February

Good Friday & Easter March to April

Spring Day 1 May

Victory Day (commemorating the Battle of Võnnu, 1919) 23 June

Jaanipäev (St John's Day or Midsummer Day) 24 June

Day of Restoration of Independence (1991)

20 August

Christmas Day 25 December

Boxing Day 26 December

MONEY

Estonia introduced its own currency, the kroon (EEK; pronounced krohn) in June 1992; it's now pegged to the euro. The kroon comes in two, five, 10, 25, 50, 100 and 500 kroon notes. One kroon is divided into 100 sents, and there are coins of 10, 20 and 50 sents, as well as one- and five-kroon coins. The euro is expected to be introduced as common currency by 2008.

The best foreign currencies to bring into Estonia are euros and US dollars, although all Western currencies are readily exchangeable.

All major credit cards are widely accepted; Visa is the most common, Amex the least. Most banks (but not stores and restaurants) accept travellers cheques, but their commissions can be quite high. There are frequent student, pensioner and group discounts on transport, in museums and in some shops upon presentation of accredited identification.

The *käibemaks* consumption tax (VAT), levied on most goods and services, is 18%. Tipping in service industries has become the norm, but generally no more than 10% is expected.

POST

To post a letter up to 20g to Europe/rest of the world costs 6.50/8EEK. The mail service in and out of Estonia is highly efficient.

TELEPHONE

All telephone numbers in Estonia are written as full seven-digit numbers, the first two of which used to be indicated separately as regional codes. To call Estonia from abroad, dial the country code ☎ 372 followed by the seven-digit local number or the seven- or eight-digit mobile phone number, which always begins with ☎ 5. There is no international operator here: the regular operator (no English spoken) is ☎ 165.

VISAS

Ensure your passport is valid for two months more than your travels. Citizens of EU countries, plus Australia, Canada, the USA and many other countries can enter Estonia visa-free for a maximum 90-day stay over a six-month period. Check with an Estonian consulate or embassy, or with the **Estonian Foreign Ministry** (☎ 631 7600; www.vm.ee; Islandi Väljak 1, Tallinn). Visas cannot be obtained at the border.