

instant  
**Tallinn**

Essential city guides

Autumn/Winter 2004  
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## Introducing Tallinn

Tallinn is always billed as “that charming medieval city,” and it certainly lives up to that reputation. But just take a good, long look at all those sparkling office towers, the busy people running around with wireless digital gadgets, the young people obsessing over the latest fashion trends and dressing better than you... This is *not* the Eastern Europe they talked about back home. Not by a long shot. It's no wonder so many first-time visitors to Tallinn wander through the streets of Old Town, eyes bulging, jaws dropping, and exhibiting all the signs of stark-raving madness. Tallinn is a very old city. But it's also a new city - a city ready to carve out its niche in 21st-century Europe. This instant guide will give you an excellent introduction to both Tallinns, the old and the new.

## Instant Tallinn



This small PDF guide has been written to aid the traveller to Tallinn who wants to get a taste of Tallinn's essentials before arriving in the city. A bold experiment in travel writing, it boils down the best bits of Tallinn and condenses them into one fun-sized read for the lightweight traveller. The best way to experience Tallinn is to pick up the full-fledged (but still pocket-sized!) *Tallinn In Your Pocket* city guide upon arrival.

## Communism

...is still very much a dirty word in Estonia. Before you start quoting *Das Kapital*, be warned that you won't find many people lamenting the 'good old days' of Soviet rule around here, not surprising when you consider the number of Estonians who wound up in Siberia or worse during that difficult chapter of the nation's history. Practically all hammers and sickles vanished back in 1991.

## Customs

EU residents really lucked out with the expansion of the bloc to include Estonia! Now each individual aged 18 and over may carry in (or out) duty-free from another EU country 90 litres of wine and 110 litres of beer and 10 litres of hard alcohol (over 21%alc/vol), 800 cigarettes, 400 cigarillos, 200 cigars and 1kg of pure tobacco. (Beware of special tobacco restrictions if you're going to Finland). Relatively unlucky travellers from non-EU countries can carry in 2 litres of wine (not exceeding €175EUR in combined value), 2 litres of beverages up to 21%alc/vol and 1 litre of hard alcohol; 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250g pure tobacco. When entering or leaving Estonia you must declare currency exceeding €15,000. For more information, contact the Customs Department, Lõkke 5, tel./fax 630 82 33, [info@keskus.customs.ee](mailto:info@keskus.customs.ee), [www.customs.ee](http://www.customs.ee), or call tel. 630 82 32 (24 hours).

## Electricity

The electrical current is 220 volts AC, 50Hz. The standard European plugs work in most sockets.

## Health

The answer is *yes*, you *can* drink the water. Foreign residents report drinking unfiltered tap water for years with no adverse effects, and recent improvements to Tallinn's water system have dramatically improved the taste. Health care services have also made great strides in recent years, but state-run hospitals are still underfunded and under-equipped. Most foreigners in need of serious medical care will seek it elsewhere.

## Tipping

Until recently, Estonia was a non-tipping culture. Now; however, with more Estonians travelling the world and more foreign visitors influencing the local habits, there is a growing tendency to leave tips in restaurants. There is still no rule per se, but the general practice is to leave roughly 10% in any restaurant where you ate a full meal and where your bill was brought to your table (i.e., you didn't order and pay at the bar).

## Language

If it sounds more foreign than foreign, there's a reason. Estonian is completely unrelated to Russian, Latvian, Swedish, German, or any other Indo-European tongue. Along with Finnish and Hungarian, Estonian belongs to the Finno-Ugric group of languages, thought to have originated somewhere beyond the Urals thousands of years ago. Luckily, the younger generation and those in the tourist industry understand the value of the international language, so you should have little trouble getting around in English.

## Money

The Estonian kroon (rhymes with 'tone') is pegged to the Euro at €1 to 15.65kr. Keep in mind that Euros are not legal currency here as Estonia won't join the common currency until at least 2007. Paper bills come in denominations of 2, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100 and 500kr. Some luggage lockers take 5kr coins, which are rare and have to be requested. 1kr coins are in common use, and the annoying 10, 20 and 50 senti coins are unavoidable.

ATMs operating on international systems are ever present. Credit cards are easy to use in Tallinn. Major hotels, most restaurants and a growing number of stores accept Visa, Mastercard and EC. American Express and Globus are less common. Banks offer cash advances on credit cards, usually for a 1% fee. Mastercard is slightly harder to find. American Express and Thomas Cook travellers' cheques are exchangeable at most banks. Krediidipank, Narva mnt. 4, tel. 640 50 12, offers Western Union wire transfers.

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## Arriving

As European capitals go, Tallinn is a remarkably easy-access city. The passenger port and train station are both within easy walking distance of the centre and Old Town, and the bus station and airport are a fast and cheap 10 - 15 minute taxi ride away.

## By plane

Tallinn's airport may be a super-modern affair, but it's so small you're in no danger of getting lost. **ATMs** and **currency exchange** are located in the centre of the hall. Car rental offices are downstairs.

**Getting to town** A taxi from the airport should cost roughly 70kr. The more frugal can take bus N<sup>o</sup> 2 which leaves every 20 - 30 minutes from in front of the arrivals hall to the centre of town, i.e. the Teenindusmajaja stop, next to the Viru Hotel/shopping centre. A ticket from the driver costs 15kr, and the ride takes nine minutes.

## By ship

Most ferries and catamarans arrive at the Passenger Port (*reisiasadam*), terminals A, B and C. **Left Luggage** and a helpful **tourist information** booth can be found in the main hall of terminal A. Here **exchange offices** are plentiful but not always economical. **ATMs** are easy to find. Terminal D, just across the small neck of water, has similar services. Lindaline's boats arrive at the neighbouring Linnahall Speedboat Harbour, but keep in mind that this service usually suspends operation for the season sometime in late autumn, depending on the weather. In this harbour, a **currency exchange** booth is open whenever boats are arriving. Rates here are decent.

**Getting to town** You can just head for the spires of Old Town on foot, but a taxi from the Passenger Port or the Linnahall should cover the short ride to town for 35 - 40kr.

## By helicopter

Copterline, the 18-minute helicopter service from Helsinki, lands at the Linnahall harbour. See the 'By ship' section for details of how to get into town.

## By car

Crossing the border from Latvia may take up to an hour if there's a long queue, but it should be fairly hassle-free, especially now that both countries are now in the EU. Getting over the border from Russia can take quite a bit longer thanks to that country's notoriously strict border controls. In both cases, be sure to bring your car's registration papers and a valid insurance policy, such as the international green card. If you don't have international insurance, you can buy it right at the border station. For fares and regulations on bringing a car by ship from Finland or Sweden, contact the ferry companies or a travel agent.

## Tourist information

**City Tourist Office** Niguliste 2/Kullassepa 4, tel. 645 77 77, fax 645 77 78, [turismiinfo@tallinnlv.ee](mailto:turismiinfo@tallinnlv.ee), [www.tourism.tallinn.ee](http://www.tourism.tallinn.ee). Oct - April, open 09:00 - 17:00, Sat 10:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun.

## Visas

You can enter Estonia visa-free for up to 90 days if you're a citizen of any EU country, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Israel, Argentina and a number of other countries listed on the website below. All others, including South Africans, Russians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians *do* need a visa to come to Estonia. South Africans may enter Estonia if they hold a visa for Latvia or Lithuania. Visas are not issued at the border. Anyone staying in Estonia for more than 90 days (180 days for UK citizens) needs either a residence permit or a visa, though there are certain very specific exceptions for EU citizens. For all the details, contact the consular department of the Foreign Ministry, tel. 631 74 40, or check their website, [www.vm.ee](http://www.vm.ee).

## By bus

Buses arrive at the bus station (*autobussijaam*), off the main highway from Tartu, but Eurolines passengers coming in from Riga or Vilnius should strongly consider hopping off at the much more central Viru väljak stop (ask other passengers where), rather than continuing on to the bus station itself. Once at the station, you'll find **Left luggage** in the basement. The cash-only **currency exchange** takes all major currencies, including Russian roubles, but gives appallingly bad rates. The ATM by the main entrance is probably a better bet.

**Getting to town** The city centre is just 1km away, down Juhkentali tänav from behind the station. Buses N<sup>o</sup> 17, 17A, 23 and 23A leave directly from the station to Vabaduse väljak (4th stop) in the centre, while trams N<sup>o</sup> 2 and 4 run from nearby Tartu maantee to Viru väljak (4th stop), also in the centre. A taxi to Old Town should cost 50kr.

## By train

Arriving by train at Tallinn's Balti Jaam puts you just a couple hundred metres from the walls of Old Town. The **left luggage** is open 09:00 - 22:00 on even days and 09:00 - 17:00 on odd days. **Exchange booths** here offer decent rates on all Scandinavian, Baltic and Russian currencies and are open standard business hours seven days a week. **ATMs** are next to the front doors. **Getting to town** Just cross the street at the underpass and walk up Nunne tänav into Old Town, or take trams N<sup>o</sup> 1, or 2, from behind the station four stops to Viru or Viru väljak.



## Restaurants

Tallinn's restaurants have upped their standards in the last few years and nowadays most of them will meet the expectations of the international traveller. The number of ethnic restaurants has also increased. Even with all this development, there's still good value for money. It's not hard to find a full meal for €6 - 8. Service is nearly always English-speaking and foreign-language menus are the rule, not the exception. VAT (18%) is always included and service is never added to the bill.

**African Kitchen** Uus 32/34, tel. 644 25 55, fax 627 26 26, [info@afrikankitchen.ee](mailto:info@afrikankitchen.ee), [www.afrikankitchen.ee](http://www.afrikankitchen.ee). One of the most daring debutantes on Tallinn's restaurant scene in 2004 is this highly funky African-themed establishment brought to us by the same team that runs the popular Café VS. Traditional and contemporary cuisine from the continent is served in a hip, colourful atmosphere. Loungey tables in the main room may be a bit low for comfortable eating, so reserve a spot in the cosier 'Cave Room.' Open 10:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 04:00.

**Argentiina** Pärnu mnt. 19, tel. 660 51 77. Believe it or not, they actually played 'Don't cry for me Argentina' when we were here, but that's not why we recommend the place. The truth is it's actually a well-established, popular and slightly swanky cellar restaurant where South American cooks grill slabs of steak and fish right in the centre of the dining room. The formalish look of the place is offset by some very quirky Mexican-style wall décor, as well as a lovably kitschy floor show on weekends. Open 12:00 - 24:00. (155kr) [\[E\]](#) [\[P\]](#)

**Balthasar** Raekoja plats 11, tel./fax 627 64 04, [balthasar@ag.ee](mailto:balthasar@ag.ee), [www.restaurant.ee](http://www.restaurant.ee). Tastefully-restored dining rooms overlooking Town Hall Square provide Balthasar the perfect aristocratic setting for its refined establishment. The speciality of the house is garlic, and everything that can be made with it. The number of bulbs next to each menu item indicates the dent it will put in your evening's social prospects. Reserve on weekends. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Bocca** Olevimägi 9, tel. 641 26 10/641 26 11, fax 641 26 11, [bocca@bocca.ee](mailto:bocca@bocca.ee), [www.bocca.ee](http://www.bocca.ee). A smart, slick establishment where you'd expect to run into super-chic members of Tallinn's A-list, or maybe a supermodel or two. Bocca delivers formal, professional service and an inventive array of pastas and *filletos* (fillets), all under the glow of gigantic lamps that look like an artist's representation of the sun. Make reservations on weekends. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

## Vegetarian

Unless you've got an odd fascination with potatoes and cabbage, you probably won't find Estonia to be a very vegetarian-friendly country. On many menus it's hard to find anything that doesn't involve the ever-present pork chop. Your best bet is to go the ethnic food route. Indian, Thai and Chinese restaurants usually have vegetarian sections, and Italian/Pizza restaurants can always make something without meat. Beware that soups and salads can surprise you with their ingredients, so if you're strict, ask before ordering.

## Cheap lunches

Most cafés and pubs offer a *päevapraad* (daily special) - typically a basic meat-and-potatoes ensemble for about 35kr. Aside from that, here are our favourite cheap lunch destinations:

**Kompressor** Rataskaevu 3, tel. 646 42 10. Enormous portions of pancakes (in Estonia they're not just for breakfast) can be had here for 20 - 45kr. Fillings like garlic cheese, shrimp and smoked turkey make them a hearty, if not over-sized meal. Open 11:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 02:00.

**St. Patrick's** Suur-Karja 8, tel. 641 81 73, [www.patricks.ee](http://www.patricks.ee). Whereas most pubs have one *päevapraad* (daily special) on the menu, on weekdays St. Patrick's usually offers a choice of five (count 'em!) different plates for a mere 35kr. Beware the relatively expensive drinks though. Open 11:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 04:00.

**Von Krahli** Baar Rataskaevu 10, tel. 626 90 96, [vanaema.juures@mail.ee](mailto:vanaema.juures@mail.ee), [www.vonkrahli.ee](http://www.vonkrahli.ee). This live music club has become a popular daytime spot for an economical meal. Even a half-portion of the cheese-and-mushroom-filled pancakes (35kr) is enough to cure the hungries. Open 12:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00.

**Cantina Carramba** Weizenbergi 20a, tel. 601 34 31, [carramba@hot.ee](mailto:carramba@hot.ee), [www.carramba.ee](http://www.carramba.ee). If the amazing pueblo décor isn't enough to get you out to Kadrioru for a Mexican meal, the spice level might be: Unlike many 'ethnic' restaurants in Tallinn, Carramba isn't afraid to pour on the peppers, and the huge burritos we ordered arrived on our table still sizzling. Cool down after dinner with the Mexican fried ice cream - a lot like oatmeal cookies and milk. Open 12:00 - 23:00, Sun 12:00 - 20:00.

**Controvento** Vene 12/Katarilina käik, tel. 644 04 70, fax 646 46 77, [controvento@neti.ee](mailto:controvento@neti.ee), [www.controvento.ee](http://www.controvento.ee). It is near impossible to select a disappointing meal at Controvento. This stylish Italian eatery has been a well deserved favourite of expats and locals for years now and its popularity seems unlikely to diminish considering the consistent superb quality of food. A cosy rustic setting and good selection of Italian wine further compliments the excellent cuisine. Best to make a reservation, as you will never be the lone diner. Open 12:00 - 23:00.

**Elevant** Vene 5, tel. 631 31 32, [elevant.contact@mail.ee](mailto:elevant.contact@mail.ee), [www.elevant.ee](http://www.elevant.ee). This is an exceptional Old Town alternative to medieval theme restaurants. Beautiful décor from the entry foyer's antique wrought iron staircase to the sparse earthy sheik furnishings make it a place to linger over your meal. The sophisticated East meets West style also extends to the menu, offering a wide selection of innovative, carefully prepared dishes. Open 12:00 - 23:00.

## Pizza

**Americana** Müürivahe 2, tel. 646 42 65/644 88 37, [pizza@americana.ee](mailto:pizza@americana.ee), [www.americana.ee](http://www.americana.ee). Nearly 60 varieties of thick, tasty pizza that will keep your stomach full for days. Delivery 45kr. Open 11:30 - 22:30.

**Peetri Pizza** Mere pst. 6; Pärnu mnt. 22, tel. 661 61 81, [www.peetripizza.ee](http://www.peetripizza.ee). Estonia's fast food pioneer. Eat in or take away. Open 11:00 - 22:00.

## Cafés

### Café Anglais Raekoja plats 14, tel. 644 21 60.

Extremely popular among Tallinn's expat community, and with good reason, Anglais' formula is simple: consistently excellent food and a friendly atmosphere. The menu is made up of a handful of hearty sandwiches, quiche, and salads, heavy on the fresh greens. Tempting cakes and one of the finest cups of coffee in town. Open 11:00 - 23:00.

### Chocolaterie Café Vene 6 (In the courtyard), tel. 641 80 61.

The master chocolatier working out of this 19th-century style café in the Master's Courtyard cooks up decadent treats made from scratch. Pick up a package to take home, or stick around to soak up the old-fashioned ambience while sipping a coffee. Open 10:00 - 23:00.

### Tristan ja Isolde Raekoja plats 1 (Town Hall), tel. 644 87 59.

The winner of Tallinn In Your Pocket's Café Contest, this tiny café in the corner of the Town Hall has something other Tallinn cafés lack: a sense of style. Jazz floats through the stone-lined rooms while the staff serve up 12 varieties of fresh-roasted, gourmet coffee (to go if you need). Open 08:00 - 23:00.

**Gloria Müürivahe 2, tel. 644 69 50, gloria@gloria.ee, www.gloria.ee.** All we need to say is this: the Pope has eaten here, as have George Soros, Lech Walesa and Finnish presidents Urho Kekkonen and Martti Ahtisaari. Condé Nast named Gloria one of the world's 100 best. In its exclusive Tabacalera smoking is not only permitted, it is required. More than 500 kinds of cigars. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Kuldse Notsu Kõrts Dunkri 8, tel. 628 65 67, fax 628 65 77, knk@schlossle-hotels.com, www.schlossle-hotels.com.** Heaven for pork-lovers, at the Golden Piggy Tavern the cooks even put bacon in the bread! This country-style restaurant undeniably caters to the tourist crowd, but we really liked the bright, folk-art motif. And the menu is just as original, offering old witch's mushroom soup and something called 'big pig head cheese'. Despite the carnivorous theme, a good-sized selection of vegetarian dishes is available. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Malkrahv Raekoja plats 8, tel. 631 42 27, reserve@malkrahv.ee, www.malkrahv.ee.** Less earthy and more polished than Tallinn's other medieval restaurants, this respectable establishment hidden under Town Hall Square caters to the jacket-and-tie crowd. Piped-in harpsichord music and waitresses in costume affect the Estonia-of-old theme, while the menu presents decidedly international choices like Hungarian duck leg and Norwegian trout. Delicately prepared food and professional service made the experience come off without a hitch. Open 12:00 - 23:00.

**Möökkala Kuninga 4, tel. 641 82 88.** An exercise in edgy, blue semi-formality, the Swordfish's interior is marked out by interesting lighting effects and other funky artistic touches. The restaurant, which is something of an institution in Tallinn, has fairly good service and a relaxed feel. The signature swordfish dish runs 280kr. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Olde Hansa Vana turg 1, tel. 627 90 20, reserve@oldehansa.ee, www.oldehansa.com.** Many frequent travellers would say that you haven't really been to Tallinn unless you've visited Olde Hansa. This mecca of medievalism in the heart of Old Town doesn't just serve historically authentic fare made from carefully-researched recipes, it provides guests with a whole experience using a combination of candlelight, waiters and waitresses in period costume and medieval background music. Open 11:00 - 24:00.



**Royal Siam Mündi 3, tel./fax 641 24 56, reserve@siam.ee, www.siam.ee.** Royal Siam's newly-built underground venue creates an exotic, otherworldly effect with subdued lighting, Asian furnishings and a ceiling criss-crossed with little wooden lanterns. A long and varied list of intriguing meat, cashew and noodle dishes (including a whole vegetarian section) make up the menu. If you can't pronounce the item, order by number. The restaurant's reputation for quality and enviable location have made it popular, so it's best to reserve. Open 12:00 - 23:00.

**Pegasus Harju 1, tel. 631 40 40, pegasus@restoranpegasus.ee, www.restoranpegasus.ee.** This innovative, three-storey restaurant overlooking Niguliste Church has already made quite a mark on Tallinn's dining scene with its daring menu of world cuisine and progressive interior design, but Pegasus stays in the limelight with its constantly-changing selection of dishes. Stop by the bar on a Friday night to hang with Tallinn's movers and shakers. Open 08:00 - 01:00, Fri 08:00 - 02:00, Sat 10:00 - 02:00. Closed Sun.

**Rusthaveli Maakri 19/21, 2nd floor, tel. 610 85 15, rusthaveli@rusthaveli.ee, www.rusthaveli.ee.** Georgian restaurants tend to be modest affairs, but Rusthaveli seem to have defied that stereotype - the modern, brick interior subdivided by hanging silk puts most of Tallinn's other dining establishments to shame. Chose from an array of menu items as intriguing as they are unpronounceable. The spicy, stew-like *lobio* and delicate *khachapuri* were both excellent, so we'll definitely be back. Open 12:00 - 23:00.

**Sushi House Rataskaevu 16, tel. 641 19 00, info@sushihouse.ee, www.sushihouse.ee.** An awe-inspiring affair where the décor is a combo of medieval stone retro and 21st-century chic. Immaculate sushi is served on banana leaves, and sake cocktails flow freely. There's even a cigar room hidden inside here somewhere. If you were looking for a way to impress someone, you've found it. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Troika Raekoja plats 15, tel. 627 62 45, fax 631 40 91, restoran@troika.ee, www.troika.ee.** The romantic, almost mystical ambience found in this cellar restaurant has to be seen to be believed. An elegant combination of 19th-century village touches, bourgeois furnishings and candlelight might make you think you've just walked into a Tolstoy novel. A very palatable selection, attentive service and surprisingly reasonable prices. Open 12:00 - 24:00.

**Vanaema Juures Rataskaevu 10, tel. 626 90 80/626 90 99, vanaema.juures@mail.ee.** True to its name, Grandmother's Place treats its guests to a warm welcome and a cosy dining room filled with antiques. Take heart that there's no sign of the big, bad wolf here, though wild boar is occasionally on the menu. Elk roast is a regular feature and the lamb with bleu cheese comes highly recommended. Reservations are a good idea for Friday and Saturday evenings. Open 12:00 - 22:00, Sun 12:00 - 18:00.

## Bars

One could get the impression that Estonians are hopeless party animals. For a town its size, Tallinn has a suspiciously high number of bars. Here are a few that you should definitely not miss.

## Local favourites

**Cafe VS Pärnu mnt. 28, tel. 627 26 27, info@cafevs.ee, www.cafevs.ee.** You will never be alone in this groovy well-established favourite bar of locals and expats alike, which interestingly doubles as an Indian restaurant. There's always a vibrant ambience which, depending on the time of day, will have you chilling on the comfy lounges or grooving when the DJs are in the house later in the evening. Open 10:00 - 01:00, Fri 10:00 - 03:00, Sat 12:00 - 03:00, Sun 12:00 - 01:00.

**Hell Hunt Pikk 39, tel. 681 83 33, hellhunt@hellhunt.ee, www.hellhunt.ee.** An open, comfortable drinking establishment with a strong sense of style, the recently revamped Gentle Wolf has been pulling the customers in by the droves with its no-nonsense atmosphere, good bar service and cheap beer. It even sells its own Hell Hunt brand of light and dark beers (brewed in Saaremaa) for a very reasonable 25kr. Open 12:00 - 02:00.

**Molly Malone's Mündi 2, tel. 631 30 16, www.jjj-bars.com.** The location right on Town Hall Square makes Molly's an easy meeting spot, and it's not a bad one at that. A healthy amount of space and a laid-back atmosphere make this classic Irish pub a magnet for all sorts of travellers as well as the more mature expat set. Live bands get the place buzzing on weekends, but you can find at least a small crowd here just about every night of the week. Open 11:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 04:00.

**Nimeta Baar (The Pub with No Name) Suur-Karja 4, tel. 641 15 15, nimetabaar@hotmail.ee, www.nimetabaar.ee.** Nimeta is the quintessential expat bar. At times it looks like something between a British stag party hangout and an expat boys' club, but a good number of locals and backpacker types make it more interesting. A good place to watch sports and/or eat pub food. Open 11:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 04:00.

**Scotland Yard Mere pst. 6e, tel. 653 51 90, scotlandyard@scotlandyard.ee, www.scotlandyard.ee.** Take an old English sitting room, expand it to 20 times its size, add a dance floor and a tankful of hungry fish and you've pretty much described this quirky pub just outside Old Town. Despite the pub's gargantuan size it still fills to the brim on weekends, when there's almost always a band playing on the stage. Open 12:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00.

## Posh

**Kaheksa Vana-Posti 8 (entrance from Müürivahe), tel. 627 47 70, kaheksa@bdg.ee.** A sophisticated establishment, Kaheksa is popular with Tallinn's young, social elite who can often be caught taking advantage of the lounge's boxing-ring layout to compare fashion notes. Strong hints of the tropics (latticed panels, palm leaves) give it the right touch of class. Don't leave without trying one of the fruit smoothies. Open 12:00 - 24:00, Wed, Thu 12:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 04:00.

## Clubs

Tallinn's clubs range from dull hotel affairs with sad, tie-wearing businessmen to wild party spots teeming with sexual tension. Here's a few that tend towards the latter.

## Hot & Happening

**BonBon B-4, Mere pst. 6e, tel. 661 60 80, info@bonbon.ee, www.bonbon.ee.** Now one of Tallinn's hottest clubs, the trendy BonBon has benefited hugely from changes in décor and philosophy. Management finally dropped their ill-advised members-only policy and, surprise, people started coming! The club now sports a fairly decadent look, with huge chandeliers and a portrait of Bacchus watching over the dance floor. Often packed to the gills. Open 23:00 - late. Closed Mon, Tue, Thu, Sun. Entrance 0-100kr.

**Hollywood D-2, Vana-Posti 8, tel. 627 47 70, bdg@bdg.ee, www.club-hollywood.ee.** Always a bit of a teen scene, Club Hollywood still manages to hold onto its reputation as *the* destination for Tallinn's young party crowd. The enormous dance floor, which is flanked by bars on two levels, features raised platforms where scantily-clad go-go dancers jiggle to the beat. Wednesday night is the infamous Ladies' Night - free entrance for ladies, and a meat market for the blokes. Open 22:00 - 04:00, Fri, Sat 22:00 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun. Entrance 0-130kr.

**Nightman Vineeri 4, info@nightman.ee, www.nightman.ee.** Popular for its danceable music and raucous crowd, this smallish club a short taxi-ride from Old Town usually gets going in the wee hours, when other clubs are emptying. Nightman is still nominally a gay club, but there are so many straight people here that you might not notice the difference. A word of warning: when the club gets full the entrance policy gets more restrictive, especially for locals without club cards. Open 22:00 - 06:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun.

**Parlament H-3, Tartu mnt. 17, tel. 666 29 00, fax 666 29 01, www.clubparlament.com.** This popular, new club has become an instant hit with its full schedule of performers and events, as well as enough space to accommodate you and 2,500 of your closest friends. Everything you could ask for in a Tallinn nightclub - the crowd is young, the music mainstream, and the floor sticky. An unusually large number lounge sofas is a bonus, but there's quite a long wait at the bar. Open 21:00 - 04:00, Fri, Sat 21:00 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun.

**Venus Vana-Viru 14, tel. 641 81 84, venus@venusclub.ee, www.venusclub.ee.** Popular like Hollywood, but for grown-ups, Venus fills up with hip, dressed-up 20- and 30-somethings looking to groove to some pop dance beats. In keeping with the goddess of love's reputation, Venus is a bit of a singles market, and the management keeps the scene spicy by offering erotic shows on some nights. Open 22:00 - 04:00, Fri, Sat 22:00 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun.

## Live music

**Von Krahli Baar Rataskaevu 10/12, tel. 626 90 96, vanaema.juures@mail.ee, www.vonkrahli.ee.** Who glued that table to the ceiling? A quirky club with wooden furniture, cheap beer and an unassuming crowd, Von Krahli is one of the best places in town to see live rock performances. It can be either packed or desolate depending who's on stage, so be sure to check the schedules posted outside during the day. Open 12:00 - 01:00, Sat 12:00 - 03:00.

## Sights

Tallinn is a sightseer's dream, in no small part due to its compact nature. Almost all the major sights are conveniently located in and around the medieval Old Town.

### Toompea hill

Climb Pikk jalg and you'll find yourself on Castle Square (Lossi plats), smack-dab between the seat of the Estonian government at Toompea Castle and the 19th-century symbol of the Tsar's power in Estonia, Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. You are standing at the birthplace of Tallinn, where the Knights of the Sword built a fortress in 1229. The limestone mound is held to be the grave of Old Kalev, the hero of the Finnish national epic, but others say it is the resting place of his son, Kalevipoeg.

**View platforms** The Kohtuotsa and Patkuli view platforms are usually the first place that tourists want to see when they visit Tallinn. From here, sweeping views of the town, its red-tiled roofs, its towers, its walls and all of its charm open up. Get your camera ready.

**Toompea Castle** The part you see is actually a 20th-century building with a pink Art Nouveau facade built on the foundations of a medieval convent-style structure. It now houses the Riigikogu, Estonia's parliament. Fittingly, the parliament rests solidly on an embankment of limestone, one of Estonia's most plentiful resources. On one corner of the castle you can see Pikk Hermann tower with the blue, black and white tricolour flag waving above it. It's commonly recognised that whoever's flag flies on top of this tower is the ruler of Estonia. For a more castle-like view of this building, head behind it, down the opposite side of the hill.

**Alexander Nevsky Cathedral** Lossi plats 10, tel./fax 644 34 84. Toompea's dominating landmark is the Russian Orthodox cathedral named for the duke who attacked southeastern Estonia and Pskov in the early 13th century. Tsar Alexander III ordered the cathedral designed in 1894 by St. Petersburg master Mikhail Preobrzhenky and it was completed in 1900. According to legend, the cathedral was built on the grave of Estonian hero Kalevipoeg and has suffered structurally as a result. **Open 08:00 - 19:00.**

**Dome Church (Toomkirik)** Toomkooli 6, tel./fax 644 41 40, tallinna.toom@eelk.ee, www.eelk.ee/tallinna.toom. The oldest church in Estonia was founded in 1219 by the first wave of Danish forces. The Gothic exterior dates to the 14th century, but the interior was rebuilt after the 1684 fire. The Baroque pulpit (1686) and organ loft (1780) are worth a look. As you enter be sure to step on the tomb of Otto Johann Thuve, who asked that his grave be placed in this humbling location. **Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon.**

### Town fortifications

The city of Tallinn has been under siege or threat of siege for most of its history, spurring near-constant reinforcement of the town walls. With 66 towers, medieval Tallinn was known as 'one of the most fortified burghs in all Northern Europe'. Today only 19 towers survive, many serving as museums, such as Fat Margaret, and Kiek in de K ok, and restaurants, including Hellemann Tower and Neitsitorn. Others are office and residential space. The oldest towers, Nunna, Sauna and Kuldjala, are open to the public.

### Lower Town

**Town Hall (Raekoda)** Raekoja plats 1, tel. 645 79 00, raekoda@tallinniv.ee, www.tallinn.ee/raekoda. Tallinn's civic life has been centred here at the southern edge of Town Hall Square since 1341, but the imposing Gothic building of today dates to 1404. Old Thomas, the weather vane who symbolises Tallinn, has been keeping watch since 1530. The town hall is still used for state functions and is generally closed to the public this time of year, but tours can be arranged by phoning in advance. **Exhibition Hall (cellar) open 11:00 - 16:00. Closed Sun.**

**Town Hall Square (Raekoja Plats)** As a medieval market and a modern meeting place, Town Hall Square, has been the heart of city life for seven centuries. With the Town Hall at your back, you can survey some of the most impressive examples of Gothic architecture in Tallinn. The most significant may be the unassuming building at Raekoja plats 11, the town's apothecary since 1422, passing through 10 generations of the same family. Hunt for an L-shaped stone marking the spot of a notorious 17th-century execution.

**Raeapteek** Raekoja plats 11, tel. 631 48 60, fax 631 48 61, raeapteek@apotheka.ee. One of the oldest continuously running pharmacies in Europe is on Town Hall Square. Records show that the Raeapteek was already on its third owner in 1422. In Medieval times patients could buy mummy juice and burnt bees for treatment, and healthy folks could even drop in for a glass of spiced wine. Keeping up with the times, the pharmacy sells the usual aspirin and condoms, but part of the shop is also a museum, displaying old medical instruments and other curiosities. **Open 09:00 - 19:00, Sat 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun. Admission free.**



**Dominican Monastery (Dominiiklaste klooster)** Vene 16, tel. 644 46 06/51 554 89, kloostri@hot.ee, www.kloostri.ee. One of Tallinn's oldest existing buildings is this monastery founded 1246. The part of the monastery administered by the museum includes the courtyard and surrounding passageways, where fascinating 15th- and 16th-century stone carvings are on display. To see the inner rooms, visit the Clastrum, at Muurivahe 33, tel. 644 65 30. This time of year, both parts of the monastery museum are only open for groups, by prior arrangement.

**Holy Spirit Church (Puhavaimu kirik)** Puhavaimu 2, tel./fax 644 14 87, tel. 646 44 30, www.eelk.ee/tallinna.puhavaimu. Built in the late 13th century by the Order of the Holy Ghost, who built almshouses and churches for common folk all over Europe, Puhavaimu remained a church for the people: after the Reformation, it was here that the first sermons were given in Estonian. From 1563 to 1600 Balthasar Russow, from whose Livonian Chronicle most of Estonia's medieval history has come down to us, served as priest here. The interior and furnishings are a mixed bag of styles, including Baroque pews and a Renaissance pulpit (the oldest in Tallinn). **Open 10:00 - 16:00.**

**Niguliste Museum-Concert Hall** Niguliste 3, tel. 644 99 11, niguliste@ekm.ee, www.ekm.ee. This 13th-century Gothic church, now an affiliate of the Estonian Art Museum, houses a fascinating collection of medieval art, with altars from the 15th and 16th centuries and a collection of Baroque and Renaissance chandeliers. Most notable is a fragment of Bernd Notke's 15th-century masterpiece, *Dance Macabre*. Organ concerts are held here every Saturday and Sunday in the late afternoon. **Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 35k.**

### Elsewhere in Tallinn

**Kadriori Palace** Weizenbergi 37, tel. 606 64 00, fax 606 64 01, muuseum@kadriori.ekm.ee, www.ekm.ee. Designed by Italian master Nicolo Michetti at the request of Peter the Great in 1718, the Kadriori Palace is an essential stop on any Tallinn tour. The palace is named in honour of Peter's wife, Catherine I, for whom it was built. (Catherine = Kadri in Estonian.) Not only is it the best example of the Northern Baroque architectural style in the country, the palace is also home to the Foreign Art Museum of Estonia (see Culture for details.) Don't miss the manicured gardens, out back. **Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 45k.**

**Rocca al Mare Open Air Museum** Vabaohumuseumi tee 12, tel. 654 91 00/654 91 17, fax 654 91 27, ev.@evm.ee, www.evm.ee. Nearly 100 farm buildings nestle on 84ha of forest on the shore of the Kopli Gulf. Informative signs in Estonian, Russian, English and German guide you through 150 years of farming history. Exhibitions installed in the farm buildings range from farm architecture to the 1949 deportations. Sample the pea soup and other traditional foods at Kolu Tavern (Kolu K orts). Take bus N 21 from the centre. **Open 10:00 - 18:00. Admission 28k.**

### History museums

**Estonian History Museum (Ajaloomuseum)** Pikk 17, tel. 641 16 30, fax 644 34 46, post@eam.ee, www.eam.ee. Housed in the Great Guild Hall, the museum's exhibitions cover Estonia's earliest history up through the 18th century, with text in Estonian, English and Russian. The building itself (built 1407 - 1410) is significant as the home of Tallinn's union of wealthy merchants. **Open 11:00 - 18:00. Closed Wed. Admission 10k.**

**Estonian History Museum- Maarjam e Palace (Maarjam e Loss)** Pirta tee 56, tel. 601 45 35, fax 644 34 46, maarjamagi@eam.ee, www.eam.ee. The branch of the Estonian History Museum that covers the 19th and 20th centuries makes its home in this landmark house on the road to Pirta. Originally a summer house, this pseudo-Gothic 'palace' housed the Dutch consulate, a posh hotel, future pilots and the Soviet army, before being given to the History Museum in 1975. Excellent exhibitions on the War for Independence and the first Estonian Republic. **Open 10:00 - 17:00, closed Mon-Tue Admission 10k.**

**Estonian Maritime Museum (Meremuseum)** Fat Margaret Tower, Pikk 70, tel. 641 14 08, fax 641 14 14, info@meremuseum.ee, www.tallinn.ee/meremuseum. Centuries of seafaring history, including models, charts and other artifacts, are displayed in this multi-storied museum housed in the 18th-century Fat Margaret cannon tower. Don't miss the antique diving equipment or the view from the roof. **Open 10:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 25k.**

**Tallinn City Museum (Linnamuseum)** Vene 17, tel. 644 65 53, fax 644 15 74, lmuuseum@online.ee, www.linnamuseum.ee. Far and away the most modern and complete introduction to Tallinn. Appropriately built into a 14th-century merchant house, the City Museum houses elaborate displays, with English captions, demonstrating various aspects of Tallinn life through the ages. The 20th-Century exhibit on the top floor has fascinating WWII photos and propaganda posters, as well as artifacts from the Soviet era. **Open 10:30 - 18:00. Closed Tue. Admission 25k.**

### Soviet Tallinn

**KGB headquarters** Pagari 1, at the corner of Pikk 59. The only thing that sets this Old Town building apart from its neighbours are the bricked-up basement windows and a somber-looking plaque in Estonian which reads, 'This building housed the headquarters of the organ of repression of the Soviet occupational power. Here began the road to suffering for thousands of Estonians.' Originally the Estonian War Department during the 1920s and 30s, it was taken over by the NKVD when the Soviets invaded the first time in 1940. It was here that perceived enemies of the regime were interrogated and either shot or sent to Siberian work camps. After Stalin's death people were still hauled in and questioned about possible subversive activities. Interestingly, the KGB used the tall spire of the nearby 13th-century St. Olaf's Church to send radio transmissions.

**TV Tower Kloostrimetsa 58a, www.teletorn.ee.** Officially opened on November 7th (Soviet Revolution Day) in 1980, the 314m tower was, and is, an imposing example of Soviet engineering. From its observation deck at the 170m level, you can see Finland on a clear day. Once you pay your 40k entrance fee and ride up the lift, you're entering a world that hasn't changed much in the last 22 years. The furnishings are the same, and last time we were here we saw some folks that look like they came for the grand opening and never left - or at least they hadn't updated their wardrobes. While you're here, be sure to try the Galaxy restaurant, which in its own way is also a trip back in time.

**Maajam e War Memorial** On the highway to Pirta. It's hard to miss the pointed obelisk alongside the highway to Pirta Beach - it's part of the Maarjam e War Memorial complex, a cement-filled park similar in its imposing style to other large complexes created in the USSR in the 1960s and 70s. The spire was put up in 1960 in memory of Russians who died in 1918, while the surrounding inspirational concrete and iron figures were added in 1975 to honour Soviet soldiers killed trying to fend off the Nazis in 1941. Ironically, this was also the site of an earlier German cemetery, as the solemn groups of crosses behind the complex remind us.

### Cats' Well

Before you complain about the taste of Tallinn's tap water, you might want to stop to consider what the town's Medieval residents had to put up with. This wheel well on the corner of Rataskaevu and Dunkri in the Old Town was once one of the main sources of water for the Tallinn. According to legend, some of the locals decided that an evil water spirit lived in the well and threatened to make all the town's wells run dry if it wasn't given regular animal sacrifices. To keep the spirit happy, some cattle and sheep carcasses were thrown down the well, but the main victims were stray cats, who were rounded up and tossed, sometimes live, down the shaft. This practice was so common that the locals started calling this watering hole 'Cat's Well.' In a sense, the sacrifices worked - the town's wells never ran dry. But the practice of throwing animals down the well didn't do much for the water quality, and the Cat's Well had fallen into disuse by the mid 19th century. Rest assured that nowadays Tallinn's water is much safer to drink, and the cats of Old Town no longer live in fear.



## Culture

While Tallinn may not be a cultural metropolis like London, Paris or New York, people here do still like to feed their souls. The town is home to a number of theatres, an opera house, several interesting museums and galleries, and even an art-house cinema.



## Art galleries

**Kadriorg Palace - Art Museum** Weizenbergi 37, tel. 606 64 00, [museum@kadriorg.ekm.ee](mailto:museum@kadriorg.ekm.ee), [www.ekm.ee](http://www.ekm.ee). You could easily say that Peter the Great's spectacular Northern Baroque palace is a work of art in and of itself, but the palace is also home to Estonia's museum of foreign art. Paintings by 16th-18th-century Dutch, German, Italian and masters, as well as 18th-19th-century Russian works make up most of what's on display. Intriguing examples of sculpture, porcelain and glass can also be found here. **Open 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 45kr.**

**Knighthood House** Kiriku plats 1, tel. 644 93 40, [museum@ekm.ee](mailto:museum@ekm.ee), [www.ekm.ee](http://www.ekm.ee). The best overview of Estonian art can be found up on Toompea hill in this grand, two-storied 19th-century building that serves as the Art Museum of Estonia's main branch. Beginning April 25 the 'Classics of Estonian Art,' meaning the most famous works from the 19th century to 1940, will be on display. Until April 25: *Animal and Man*, an exhibition of animalism in art. **Open 11:00-18:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 20kr.**

**Mikkel Museum** Weizenbergi 28, tel. 601 58 44/601 34 30, [www.ekm.ee](http://www.ekm.ee). Housed in the renovated kitchen building on the grounds of Kadriorg Palace and Park, the Mikkel Museum is one of Estonia's most impressive private art collections. European, Russian and Chinese paintings, prints, porcelain and icons. **Open 11:00-18:00. Closed Mon, Tue. For guided tours call 601 34 30. Admission 15kr.**

**Rotermann Salt Storage** Ahtri 2, tel. 625 70 05/644 93 40, [museum@ekm.ee](mailto:museum@ekm.ee), [www.ekm.ee](http://www.ekm.ee). Once it stored salt, but now this beautifully renovated limestone warehouse near the port is best known as the home of both the Estonian Museum of Architecture and, separately, a branch of the Art Museum of Estonia. Both host temporary exhibitions. **Open 12:00-20:00, Sat, Sun 11:00-18:00. Closed Mon, Tue. Admission 20kr.**

**Tallinn Art Hall & Gallery (Tallinna Kunstihoone)** Vabaduse väljak 8, tel. 644 28 18, [info@kunstihoone.ee](mailto:info@kunstihoone.ee), [www.kunstihoone.ee](http://www.kunstihoone.ee). Drop into this imposing 1930's-era building on Freedom square to find some of the most daring and avant-garde temporary exhibitions from Estonia and abroad. The Art Hall's separate, smaller gallery (where admission is free) next door at Vabaduse väljak 6 hosts separate exhibitions. **Open 12:00-18:00. Closed Tue. Admission 25kr.**

## Cinemas

Tallinn's cinemas are all fairly central, and films are shown in their original language with Estonian subtitles. You can always find out what's playing by calling the 1182 infoline. Operators speak English.

**Coca-Cola Plaza Hobujaama 5, tel. 1182, www.superkinod.ee.** Opened in 2001, this high-tech, 11-screen super cinema mainly shows Hollywood blockbusters. Tickets for evening shows cost 110kr.

**Kosmos Pärnu mnt. 45, tel. 1182, www.superkinod.ee.** Run by the same company as Coca-Cola Plaza, this two-screen cinema also has a strong Hollywood bent, but ticket prices are a tiny bit cheaper. Closed Mon.

**Sõprus Vana-Posti 8, tel. 644 19 19, info@kino.ee, www.kino.ee.** Tallinn's art-house cinema has a full schedule of independent films, Estonian productions, shorts and kids' films. Tickets 40-80kr.

## Concert halls

**City Concert Hall (Linnahall) Mere pst. 20, tel. 641 15 00/641 16 00, info@linnahall.ee, www.linnahall.ee.** That massive grey monolith at the harbour hosts pop concerts and occasional big names. **Box office open 11:00-19:00. Closed Sun.**

**Estonia Concert Hall Estonia pst. 4, tel. 614 77 60, info@concert.ee, www.concert.ee.** The premier classical music venue and the home of national concert organiser Eesti Kontsert. **Open 12:00-19:00, Sat 12:00-17:00. Closed Sun.**

**Niguliste Museum-Concert Hall Niguliste 3, tel. 644 99 11/644 99 03, niguliste@ekm.ee, www.ekm.ee.** Organ music concerts are held every Saturday and Sunday at 16:00. **Open 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon, Tue.**

**Saku Suurhall Paldiski mnt. 104b, tel. 660 02 00, sakusuurhall@sakusuurhall.ee, www.sakusuurhall.ee.** Famous as the venue for the 47th Eurovision Song Contest in 2002, this 7000-seat sports and concert arena hosts large concerts and major sporting events.

## Theatres

**City Theatre (Linnateater) Lai 23, tel. 665 08 50/Box office 665 08 00, linnateater@linnateater.ee, www.linnateater.ee.** The city's most adored troupe. Call the first of the month for the next month's tickets. **Open 09:00-18:00, Sat 10:00-18:00. Closed Sun.**

**Estonian Drama Theatre Pärnu mnt. 5, tel. 680 55 55, pilet@draamateater.ee, www.draamateater.ee.** Built in 1910, the Drama Theatre is a striking example of Art Nouveau architecture. **Open 11:00-19:00.**

**Estonian National Opera Estonia pst. 4, tel. 683 12 01/683 12 60, fax 683 12 46, info@opera.ee, www.opera.ee.** Tallinn's pride and joy hosts opera, ballet and frequent performances by internationally-renowned guests. Tickets cost up to 300kr. **Open 12:00-19:00.**

**Von Krahl Theatre Rataskaevu 10, tel. 626 90 90, info@vonkrahl.com, www.vonkrahl.ee.** The oldest private theatre in Estonia hosts avant-garde performances in a cabaret-like hall.

## Hotels

Tallinn has accommodation to suit every taste and budget, but for the popular Old Town locations, book as early as you can.

## Upscale

**Barons Suur-Karja 7/Välke-Karja 2, tel. 699 97 00, fax 699 97 10, barons@baronshotel.ee, www.baronshotel.ee.** Housed in a gorgeous Old Town bank building dating back to 1912, this business class beauty has managed to retain much of its architectural grandeur both inside and out. From the classy singles to the luxury suite, all rooms come complete with satellite television and internet access for those who like to stay in touch. 34 rooms (9 singles 1900kr, 18 doubles 2200kr, 7 suites 2800-4200kr). Extra bed 400kr, pets 200kr.

**Domina City Vana-Posti 11/13, tel. 681 39 00, fax 681 39 01, city@domina.ee, www.dominahotels.ee.** In a refurbished 18th-century building next to Sõprus cinema, Domina City offers marblesque stylishness right in the heart of Old Town. Business travellers will appreciate the conference room and mini-offices, and the fact that every room has its own computer with internet connection. 68 rooms (singles 1800-3500kr, 68 doubles 2100-3500kr, triples 2800-3900kr, 6 suites 3200-4300kr). Extra bed 400kr, pets 400kr.

**Radisson SAS Rävåla pst. 3, tel. 682 30 00, fax 682 30 01, info.tallinn@radissonsas.com, www.radissonsas.com.** From the immaculate furnishings to little touches like shoe buffers in the corridor, Radisson never misses a beat, proving there's something to be said for painfully strict international standards of quality. Other perks here include sweeping views of the city and a free morning sauna. Ask for a room with a view of Old Town. 280 rooms (singles 2269-2582kr, doubles 2472-2785kr, 14 suites 5592-15992kr). Extra bed 390kr.

**Sokos Hotel Viru Viru väljak 4, tel. 680 93 00, fax 680 92 36, reservation@viru.ee, www.viru.ee.** Occupying an enviable spot on what's generally considered the very centre of Tallinn, the large, Finnish-managed Sokos Viru Hotel offers an unbeatable combination of amenities and location. Aside from several classes of spiffy rooms, a conference centre, two respectable restaurants and a popular nightclub, the hotel also direct access to the huge, new Viru shopping centre. 513 rooms (77 singles 1752-2035kr, 436 doubles 2065-3600kr, 3 suites 4381kr). Extra bed 422kr, pets 422kr.

**Schlössle Pühavaimu 13/15, tel. 699 77 00, fax 699 77 77, schlossle@schlossle-hotels.com, www.schlossle-hotels.com.** A step up from its elegant local siblings, the first five-star hotel in Estonia has all the regality that status entails, while fortunately retaining the distinct feel of its historic Old Town surroundings. Perhaps it's the medieval coats-of-arms on the wall. Regardless, everything the Schlössle does is steeped in luxury. 24 rooms (4 singles 4150-5000kr, 15 doubles 4800-5500kr, 5 suites 6850-11500kr). Extra bed 600kr, pets 300kr.

**The Three Sisters Pikk 71/Tolli 2, tel. 630 63 00, fax 630 63 01, info@threesistershotel.com, www.threesistershotel.com.** This luxury hotel built into three famous medieval houses provides the quintessential Tallinn experience. The top-notch establishment offers large rooms decorated in a striking blend of modern and antique styles. Flat-screen TVs can be found alongside old-fashioned bathtubs and hidden staircases. 23 rooms (singles 3880kr, doubles 4226kr, 3 suites 6730-9234kr). Extra bed 630kr.

## Rooms in private homes

**Rasastra Bed & Breakfast Mere pst. 4, tel./fax 661 62 91, rasastra@online.ee, www.bedbreakfast.ee.** This agency sets up accommodation in private homes in Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu, Haapsalu, Viljandi, Latvia and Lithuania. Private apartments available for stays of longer than two weeks. Rooms do indeed have television sets. 30 rooms (5 singles 275kr, 21 doubles 500kr, 4 triples 650kr, 7 apartments 800-1200kr). Extra bed 100kr.

## Mid-range

**Imperial Nunne 14, tel. 627 48 00, fax 627 48 01, info@imperial.ee, www.imperial.ee.** Part of the medieval Old Town wall runs right through this small, luxury hotel, and designers have wisely integrated it into the 21st-century interior to preserve the historical feel of the building. The Imperial's management are aiming for a four-star level of quality, with bright rooms, beautiful sauna hall and comfy pub. 32 rooms (12 singles 1900kr, 17 doubles 2400kr, 3 suites 3500-5000kr). Extra bed 350kr.

**Olevi Residents Olevimägi 4, tel. 627 76 50, fax 627 76 51, olevi@olevi.ee, www.olevi.ee.** It's hard to believe that what looks like an ancient, narrow, Old Town dwelling could house a seven-storey hotel complete with restaurant and sauna, but Olevi manages to do just that. Rooms from the top floor even have sea views. Antique furniture and old-style paintings throughout give the hotel a timeless look. 37 rooms (singles 1200kr, 31 doubles 1600kr, 6 suites 1950-2500kr). Extra bed 300kr, pets 300kr.

**Reval Hotel Central Narva mnt. 7c, tel. 633 98 00, fax 633 99 00, sales@revalhotels.com, www.revalhotels.com.** A wide range of rooms, excellent services and friendly informative staff make this a good option for both families and business travellers. The spacious, quiet, tastefully decorated rooms come in various standards priced accordingly. 247 rooms (singles 1095-1408kr, doubles 1252-1565kr, suites 1878-2191kr). Extra bed 350kr.

**Skåne Kopli 2c, tel. 667 83 00, fax 667 83 01, skane@nordichotels.ee, www.nordichotels.ee.** Restoration has brought the stylish, mint-coloured, 1920s look back to the hallways and common areas of this historic hotel that overlooks the busy train station market area. Rooms, by contrast, are 21st century all the way. A colourful, brightly-lit restaurant adds to the ensemble. 38 rooms (10 singles 640kr, 28 doubles 800kr). Extra bed 225kr.

**Ülemiste Lennujaama tee 2, tel. 603 26 00, fax 603 26 01, sales@ylemistehotel.ee, www.ylemistehotel.ee.** Buses stop right in front of this brilliantly modern hotel next to Tallinn's quiet airport, but there are so many services here you might not want to leave. Aside from the fitness centre, two saunas, European-style restaurant and conference rooms, there's a comfortable night bar for guests. 132 rooms (41 singles 1000-1250kr, 81 doubles 1200-1450kr, 10 suites 1800-3900kr). Extra bed 300kr.

**Uniquestay Paldiski mnt. 1, tel. 660 07 00, fax 661 61 76, info@uniquestay.com, www.uniquestay.com.** A trend setter with its too-cool style and creature comforts, Uniquestay offers well-outfitted rooms, or 'chill-out-zones' as they're called here. Standard rooms come with desktop computer terminals, while the larger 'Zen' rooms offer perks like NASA-designed gravity-free chairs and aromatherapy amenities to spoil your inner child. 75 rooms (6 singles 1300kr, 58 doubles 1400kr, 11 suites 1713kr). Extra bed 400kr.

## Hostels

**Academic Hostel Akadeemia tee 11/Raja 8, tel. 620 22 75, fax 620 22 76, info@academichostel.com, www.academichostel.com.** A large hostel 5km from the city centre situated on the Tallinn Technical University campus grounds, offering brand new rooms for one or two persons (kitchen, dining room and bathroom shared between every two) and all surrounded by a quiet and peaceful forest. Perks include free parking, laundry facilities and internet connections in some of the rooms. 108 rooms (108 doubles 486kr). Extra bed 250kr, pets 100kr.

**OldHouse Hostel Uus 26, tel. 641 12 81, fax 641 16 04, info@oldhouse.ee, www.oldhouse.ee.** Bright, fluffy rooms make this newly renovated, Old Town establishment almost too nice to be called a hostel. Common areas like the hallways, TV room and guest kitchen are just as spiffy. 12 rooms (8 singles 550kr, 8 doubles 650kr, 1 triple 975kr, 1 Room for 5 person 1450kr, 1 Room for 6 person 1740kr. Place in dorm 180kr). Extra bed 200kr. Breakfast 45kr.

**Vana Tom Väike-Karja 1, tel. 631 32 52, fax 612 05 11, hostel@ntrade.ee, www.hostel.ee.** Vana Tom is everything a hostel should be - clean, friendly, informative, and smack dab in the middle of Old Town. Singles and doubles are as available as dorm rooms, breakfast is included and there's even a kitchen for guests' use. Don't be wary of the strip club upstairs. 15 rooms (doubles 595kr, Place in a dorm room 235kr). 15kr discount with HI card.

## Budget

**Dorell Karu 39, tel. 626 12 00, fax 662 35 78, info@dorell.ee, www.dorell.ee.** A quiet, friendly hotel in a blockhouse not far from the centre or the harbour. The higher priced rooms have their own shower and WC, while others share with a few neighbours. All rooms have TV and phone. 30 rooms (8 singles 550 - 700kr, 22 doubles 600 - 800kr, 1 apartment 1500kr). Extra bed 150kr, pets 150kr.

**Dzingel Männiku tee 89, tel. 610 52 01/610 53 11, fax 610 52 45, hotell@dzingel.ee, www.dzingel.ee.** This biggish hotel in the beautiful Nõmme district is a good budget option for anyone who doesn't mind a bit of a commute to the centre. The hotel comes fully outfitted with restaurant, sauna, and respectable conference facilities. Take bus N°5 or 57 to the PKerese stop. 250 rooms (32 singles 490kr, doubles 690kr, triples 870kr, 10 suites 950kr, family room 1300kr, apartments 1500 - 2500kr). Extra bed 180kr, pets 200kr.

**OldHouse Guesthouse Uus 22, tel. 641 14 64, fax 641 16 04, info@oldhouse.ee, www.oldhouse.ee.** This conveniently located guesthouse features clean hall showers and a nice communal dining room with a fireplace and a TV set. Guests have full use of the kitchen. Reception is open from 08:00 - 23:00. 6 rooms (3 singles 450kr, 1 double 650kr, 1 triple 975kr, 1 Room for six 1740kr). Extra bed 200kr.

**Saku Rock Hotel Sadama 25a, tel. 680 66 00, fax 680 66 01, sales@sakurockhotel.ee, www.sakurockhotel.ee.** Billed as a 'hotel for hard working people', this beer- and rock'n'roll-themed hotel near D-Terminal caters to beer lovers or anyone else looking for good, affordable rooms in the centre. Expect a complimentary welcome beer; a fun interior, free lobby internet terminal, non-smoking rooms and, for that final touch of decadence, a pizza restaurant. 113 rooms (113 doubles 986kr). Extra bed 250kr, pets 250kr.

## Getting around

It's never hard to get from A to B within Tallinn, and connections to nearby cities are frequent and cheap.

### Car rental

**Avis Liivalaia 13/15, tel. 667 15 15, fax 667 15 01, avis@avis.ee, www.avis.ee.** Open 08:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun. Also: Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 82 22, fax 605 82 20. Open 08:45 - 17:45.  
**Budget Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 86 00, fax 605 85 99, airport@budget.ee, www.budget.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00.  
**Evison Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 80 59/50 50 700, fax 605 80 60, www.evison.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00.  
**Hertz Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 89 23, fax 605 89 53, airport@hertz.ee, www.hertz.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00. ☑  
**National Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 80 71, fax 605 80 79, arental@online.ee, www.nationalcar.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00.  
**R-Rent Tallinn Airport, tel./fax 605 89 29, tel. 50 36 446, info@rrent.ee, www.rrent.ee.** Prices starting from 500kr/day. Open 09:00 - 18:00.  
**Sir Autorent Juhkentali 11, tel. 661 43 53/56 51 353, sirrent@online.ee, www.sirrent.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00.  
**Sixt Tallinn Airport, tel. 605 81 48, fax 605 81 42, rent@autollising.ee, www.sixt.ee.** Open 09:00 - 18:00. Also: Rävälä pst. 5, tel. 613 36 60, fax 613 36 61. Open 09:00 - 17:00. ☑  
**Tulikarent Tihas 34, tel. 612 00 12/50 90 717, fax 612 00 13, rent@tulika.ee, www.tulikatakso.ee.** Open 08:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun. ☑

### Taxis

Be warned that local taxi drivers are known for fixing their meters to run at a higher rate than normal when a foreigner is in the car. This is less likely to happen when the taxi is ordered by phone, which also avoids 8 - 25kr the 'waiting fee' they typically charge when you pick them up on the street.  
**Kiisu Takso tel. 655 07 77, www.hot.ee/kiisutakso.** 5.50kr/km.  
**Krooni Takso tel. 638 11 11/56 60 60 00, www.kroonitakso.ee.** 5.50kr/km.  
**Linnatakso tel. 1242/644 24 42, www.linnatakso.ee.** 7kr/km. Also provides taxis for disabled passengers.  
**Silver Takso tel. 15 222/627 88 50, www.silvertakso.ee.** 7kr/km.  
**Tulika Takso tel. 1200, www.tulikatakso.ee.** 7kr/km.

### Public transport

Just hop on any door! Tallinn's buses, trolleybuses and trams work on a random ticket inspection scheme, so in most cases (with the notable exception of bus N°2 from the airport), you don't need to show your ticket to the driver. Once on board though, punch your ticket, or risk a 600kr fine. A single type of ticket is good on all three systems. Buy a ticket (*talong*) from nearly any kiosk for 10kr (a book of ten tickets is only 70kr) or from the driver for 15kr. Express bus lines cost 15kr from a kiosk, 20kr from the driver. Tickets bought from the driver don't need to be punched. These are imprinted with a time stamp, and allow you to use any city transport for one hour. Budget travellers take note! Monthly passes are cheap, and might be a better option even for a 5-day stay.

## Useful information

### Hospitals

**Tallinn Central Hospital Ravi 18, tel. 620 70 15/697 30 02, info@itk.ee, www.itk.ee.**  
**Tallinn Children's Hospital Tervise 28, tel. 697 71 13, admin@lastehaigla.ee, www.lastehaigla.ee.**

### Pharmacies

**Aia Apteek C-3/4, Aia 10, tel. 627 36 07.** Open 08:30 - 24:00.  
**Tallinna Linnaapteek D-3, Pärnu mnt. 10, tel. 644 22 62, linnaapt@uninet.ee.** Open 24hrs.  
**Tõnismäe Apteek E-1, Tõnismägi 5, tel. 644 22 82/644 91 17, tonismaeapt@heroica.ee.** Open 08:00 - 21:00, Sat 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 17:00.

### Phoning

Estonia's country code is 372. To make an international call from Estonia, dial 00 + country code + number. If you are roaming with the mobile phone you brought from home, you will have to insert a + 372 before the number you are dialing. Note that Estonian mobile numbers were changed in 2004 to get rid of the initial '0', so just ignore any '0' you see in front of a mobile number on a business card or in a directory. If you have a lot of local calls to make and you want to avoid paying roaming charges, pick up a Sempel or Smart starter kit for 150kr at a kiosk. This will give you a SIM card with a local number and 100kr credit. Add more units of credit later by buying scratch-off cards.

## Shopping

### Department stores & Malls

**Stockmann Liivalaia 53, tel. 633 95 39, fax 633 95 56, www.stockmann.ee.** The local branch of Finland's premiere department store. Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 20:00.  
**Viru Keskus (Viru Centre) Viru väljak 4/6, tel. 610 14 00, fax 610 14 01, info@virukeskus.com, www.virukeskus.com.** A very classy addition to downtown's commercial scene. Open 09:00 - 21:00. Food store open 08:00 - 23:00.

### Gifts & souvenirs

**Kodukäsitöö Müürivahe 17, tel. 631 40 76, www.crafts.ee.** Traditional Estonian handicrafts sold here are made by approved specialists to ensure authenticity. Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.  
**Zlobin Pikk 7, tel. 646 44 13.** A spectacular variety of everything from the sublime to the downright tacky. Open 09:00 - 20:00.

### Markets

**Knit Market corner of Viru and Müürivahe.** Little old ladies sell their knitwear along the Old Town wall. Shopping here is almost a tradition for visitors. Open 09:00 - 17:00.  
**Merekeskus Mere pst. 10, tel. 644 91 38.** Cheap, tacky goods are sold here, mainly to Finnish day-trippers. Pick up some bargain-priced underwear or a questionable CD. Open 08:00 - 19:00.

# advertise here

For more information, contact Külli Johansson  
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