



CYCLING

Welcome to Kēmeri!



AROUND THE

KĒMERI NATIONAL PARK



The Kēmeri National Park, apart from its nature reserve zone is open to hikers, plant, animal and landscape watchers, berry and mushroom hunters, swimmers, sunbathers, bicyclists and boaters. Mechanized motor vehicles are allowed only on general use roads. Please let's make sure to nurture the values which led us to visit the park in the first place!



ROUTE

This is a route for active and athletic people. It encircles the perimeter of the Kēmeri National Park, offering a very good idea of the natural, cultural and historical treasures that are found in the park. This is a diverse route in terms of what can be seen, but also in terms of biking conditions. The first half runs through the forests of Kēmeri. There are the seashore fishing villages of Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems and Klapaknciems, which are charming and offer a chance to buy some smoked fish and spend some time at one of the small local saloons. The second half of the route is meant for more durable bikers, because most of the roads in the Dunduri meadows and the area of the Kauguri canal are gravelly or earthen (often of very, very poor quality indeed). Watch for markings between Kūdra and Kēmeri. These will be off-road pathways with some segments where you will have to get off the bike and push it by hand when conditions are damp (peat moss, roots, potholes).

Season: April-October, recommended during the summer

Type of bike: Mountain bike, particularly for the latter half of the route from the Smārde saloon to Krāčkalni and from Kūdra to Kēmeri

Beginning: Kēmeri railway station, where there is a free car parking

End: Kēmeri railway station

Length: ~ 80 km; Excellent athletes will cover it in one day, most people will take two

Duration: ~ 8 h (without stopping anywhere)

Difficulty: Medium in two days, comparatively hard in one

Road cover: Gravel and earthen roads for about half the distance

Route: Kēmeri – Jaunkēmeri – Bigauņciems – Lapmežciems – Ragaciems – Klapaknciems (via the forest route between the P 128 road and Lake Kanieris) – part of the Lustužkalns Circle bike route – “Valguma Pasaule” – Smārde – Dunduri meadows – Krāči hills – Kūdra – Kēmeri

Distance from Rīga: 45 km

Markings: The Lustužkalns Circle bike route is marked with orange markings, and part of it coincides with this route

Logistics: Circular route, returning where it started

Alternatives: You can travel the route in the opposite direction. In Kēmeri you can return by train from Smārde or Kūdra to avoid the most difficult part of the route, between Kūdra and Kēmeri

Note! The A 10 highway between Rīga and Ventspils is inappropriate for biking, because it is narrow, of poor quality and with intensive traffic, particularly in the area between Sloka, Kūdra and Smārde. Some parts of this route are difficult. There is a peat cement factory nearby, and that means that there can be glass and other sharp objects on some parts of the route – watch out! During the tourism season, travel along the Jūrmala-Tukums highway is not recommended, because there will be kilometres of parked cars along the way. This is the so-called Slow Mile, and you are advised to take the forest par thereof. Watch your bike and equipment always. You must be responsible for your own safety and that of your children when you travel the route!

Emergency services: 112



The Kēmeri National Park was established in 1997, primarily for the purpose of protecting wetlands – the shallow western shore of the Bay of Rīga, overgrown seaside lakes, extensive swamps, damp forests, and lowland meadows as important locations for plants and animals (particularly nesting and migrating birds). The park territory also includes one of the largest swamps in Latvia – the Great Kēmeri Heath, as well as other fairly large swamps such as Raganu Swamp, Zāļais Swamp, Čaukiems Swamp and Sloka Swamp. Some of these were once used for peat extraction. The area around Kēmeri has long since been known as a source of sulphurous streams, and it remains an important location for obtaining sulphurous water and medicinal mud which at one time served as the foundation of the widely known Kēmeri Spa. Interesting historical objects in the park are completely linked to the seashore as a place where people could relax and recover their health. Today the territory of the national park includes educational nature trails (the Melnalkšņi Marsh trail, the Lake Sloka trail, the trail in Great Kēmeri Bog (from 2013), the Kanieris Castlemound trail (from 2013)), bike routes, three bird-watching towers, etc. The administrative and informational centre for the park is found in the “Forest House” (Meža māja) in Kēmeri.

TOURISM SERVICES

Nearby accommodations:

- „Stērštes”, 29283162
- „Monikas”, 26161247
- „Jūras mols”, 27099099
- „Līdakas”, 29448118
- „Valguma pasaule”, 29414022
- „Pilsētnieki”, 29497272
- „Smaidas”, 29265552
- „Lapmežciems”, 67298303
- „Melnais stārķis”, 26751543
- „AAK Service”, 29118209
- „Veldres”, 25916974
- „Ronīši”, 26305551
- „Upesloki”, 29141840

“Milzkane”, 26545521

“Kalna Žagari”, 29414584

“Ezermalas”, 29446828

“Ezermalji”, 28336456

Picnic places:

Mostly at coastal villages (dining services) and around Lake Valgums

Shops: In Kēmeri,

Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems, Smārde.

Dining: In Bigauņciems, Lapmežciems, Ragaciems, around Lake Valgums.

Bike rentals:

Kēmeru velonoma

www.velonoma.lv,

“Valguma pasaule”

www.valgumapasaule.lv

Train time schedule:

www.pv.lv

Information:

www.celotajs.lv,

+371 67617600;

www.daba.gov.lv/kemeri/eng

+371 67730078;

www.turisms.tukums.lv,

+371 63124451;

www.jurmala.lv,

+371 67147900




The Dunduri meadows

More information on tourism products and services in Kēmeri National Park www.countryholidays.lv and www.daba.gov.lv/kemeri/eng


POINTS OF INTEREST

1  **The Ķemeri railway station** dates back to 1877. A bike rental facility is found inside.

2  **The Ķemeri school** (1934) have preserved an historically valuable interior and exterior.


3 **The Veteran Oak** on Tukums Street.


4 **Robežu Street** passes along what used to be the historical border between the Latvian regions of Vidzeme and Kurzeme.


5  **The Roman Catholic Church of St John the Baptist** (Sēravotu Str.10) built in wood (1899) in the style of Historicism.

6 **Ponds for mud regeneration** are used by the spa and the rehabilitation centre.

7 **The former Ķemeri Bathing Centre** used to have a wooden building in the 19th century that burned down during the World War I. It was rebuilt in stone and the Ķemeri resort clinic was opened here after World War II.


8  **The Ķemeri water tower** (1929) used to have a separate reservoir for mineral water.

9  **The Ķemeri hotel** – built in 1933-1936 in the style of Neo-Classicism, known as the “white castle” or “white ship” and it was a symbol of the independent state. The Ķemeri park and its various historical monuments are nearby.

10  **The sulphur spring pavilion** was built at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. It holds one of the most popular sulphurous springs in Latvia – “Ķīrzaciņa” (The Little Lizard).

11 **“Folk Dancing”** – a 1950 monument near the former iron spring (Tūristu str.) which is dry today.

12 **The former Līva sanatorium** recalls the might of the all-Soviet spa town at one time. The buildings were supposedly erected on large gas pillows so as to keep them from sinking into the unstable soil.

13  **The Forest House** (1933) used to house an enormously popular restaurant “Merry Mosquito”, a children’s sanatorium was installed here after World War II, when the Ķemeri National Park was established the building became its headquarters with a modern visitors’ centre.

14 **The Dumbrāji trail** is a wooden pathway to take a look at wetland forests.

15 **Lake Melnezers** – swamp lake on the side of the Ķemeri-Jaunķemeri road.

16 **The Veteran Pine** of Bigauņciems outside the Dižpriede café.

17 **The Kupskaļns Nature Trail** – a wooden pathway leading from the P128 road to the sea.

18  **A Stone Age fishing and hunting settlement site at Lapmežciems.**

19 **A memorial stone to A.Muižulis** (recipient of the Lāčplēsis Military Order) – lieutenant (1893-1941) colonel in the No. 4 Valmiera Infantry Brigade.

20 **The Lapmežciems Museum** – history of the local parish, its school and its fishing industry.

21 **The Lapmežciems People’s Centre** (1957) is home to the local culture events, administrative district’s council and library.

22 **Kaņieris** is a shallow seaside lake rich in birds. There can be more than 10 000 birds at the same time at the lake during migration. At the south-eastern shore of the lake is a boating facility. A bird-watching tower was erected on the Riekstu peninsula in 2009.

23 **Starpiņupīte** – an artificial canal between Lake Kaņieris and the Bay of Rīga regulates the water level in the lake with a system of sluices. This is a fine place for bird-watching in the spring and autumn.

24 **The Ragaciems Fish Market** sells smoked fish.

25 **Ragaciems sedums** (fishermen’s wharfs) – a traditional building for common meetings discussing fishing and making fishing tools. Still in use today.

26 **Cape Ragaciems** – ends with a shallow and rocky submarine shallows reaching several hundred metres into the sea. The Ragaciems Lighthouse is at the tip of the cape.

27 **The Slow Mile** – around 6 km long isolated route between Ragaciems and Klapkalnciems. Robbers used to attack travelers in the olden days here.

28 **Lustužkalns Hill** (72 m ASL). A hunting castle owned by Livonian Order master Walther von Plettenberg was located here in the 16 century. During the reign of Russian Empress Catherine the Great, a recreational castle was built here. A legend from the time says that a golden carriage is at the bottom of the local Lake Valgums. The castle has perished.

29 **Lake Valgums** is 3 km long and 27 m deep, and it dates back to the last Ice Age.

30 **A monument to the death toll of World War I** near Smārdē.

31 **The Dunduri meadows** – in these quiet and secluded meadows you can watch wild *Konik* horses and Heck cattle grazing in the floodplain meadows of renaturalized river Slapme. It is a great place for birdwatching.

32 **The Kauguri canal** – dug in 1932-1933 to divert the waters of the Džukste and Slampe rivers to the Lielupe River to avoid broader emergence of swamps.

33 **The Cemetery of the Brethren** of Lāčukrogs offers a final resting place to men who fell during World War I.

34 **Kaļķis** is a populated area where dolomite is still extracted from quarries in the region (Kalnciems-2 is one such quarry). Some of the quarries are flooded.

35 **Krāču hills** (Krāckalni) are a series of wavy hillocks dating back to the Litorine Sea. There is a lovely view of Lake Līlījas from here. There are dolomite stairs which lead to a monument dedicated to 90 Latvian riflemen (1917).

36 **The Kurzeme-Vidzeme border marker** – the border between the Duchy of Courland and the Russian province. Marker dates back more than 200 years.

37 **Naturalised peat pits** in the Great Ķemeri Bog A gravel road (2 km) leads through flooded peat pits and milled fields where bog vegetation is coming back and you can watch birds and beavers.

38 **The reinforced concrete factory.** This is an abandoned but unique industrial landscape. Follow markings when crossing the factory’s territory.

39 **The old peat quarries** is the next place beyond Ķemeri where vast amounts of peat were extracted, primarily during the first period of Latvia’s independence.



A monument to I. Pavlov



The Ķemeri water tower



The sulphur spring pavilion



The Great Pine



Cafe at “Valguma pasaule”



Forest House



The Dumbrāji trail



Lake Kaņieris



The Ragaciema lighthouse



Cycling up the Lustužkalns Hill



Bird-watching tower in Dunduri meadows



Information stand at the edge of the Kalnciems – Kūdras road

Photo: Lauku ceļotājs (Juris Smajlinskis)



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