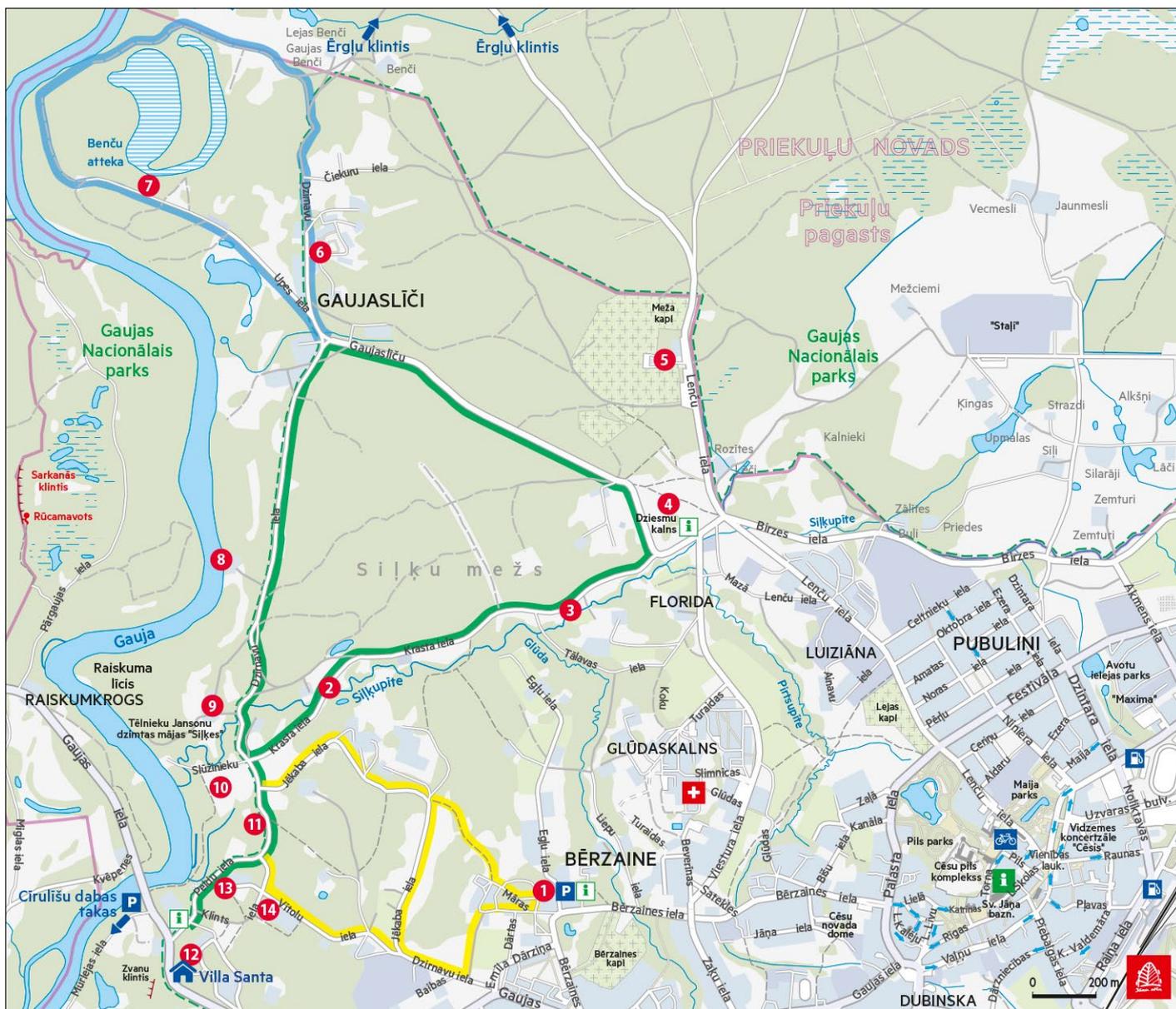


Walking Route:

The Gaujaslīči Section of the Cīrulīši Nature Trails



☼ all year through

— 2.8 km
— 3 km
— 5 km

🚶 easy

📍 asphalt and gravel roads, nature trails

P recommended parking at Meža (Forest) School, 34 Bērzaines Street

📍 marked and supplemented with information stands. The route can be taken in any direction

The route winds through Gauja National Park and Cēsis Nature and Heritage Park. Please treat the nature objects and cultural heritage with respect!

Service

📍 **Cēsis Tourism Information Centre**
1 Baznīcas Square, Cēsis. Tel. +371 28318318,
info@cesis.lv, www.visit.cesis.lv

📍 **"Villa Santa", hotel, restaurant**
88 Gaujas Street, Cēsis. Tel. +371 64177177,
www.villasanta.lv

📍 **Bike rental "Eži"**
1 Pils Square, Cēsis. Tel. +371 26573132,
http://veikals.ezi.lv

This route, winding through the small streets and paths along the River Gauja, will allow you to get acquainted with the natural heritage, habitats, plant species included in the Red Book of Latvia (endangered species), wooden architecture and cultural landscape. Enjoy the splendour of all four seasons on the banks of the River Gauja! The route can be easily combined with the Cīrulīši nature trails (south) or stretch as far as the Ērgļi Cliffs (north).

1 Meža (Forest) School

57.3122, 25.2486

The oldest building in the school territory was built in 1813 and is located approximately 100 m from the current school building. In 1826, the Bērzaine Manor was obtained by the prominent educator Albert Hollander (1796–1868), a student of the famous Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi; he moved his private school here. With the exception of WW I, when it was the headquarters of the Russian 12th army, and WW II, when a hospital was located there, the building has always functioned as a school. The building once was home to the Cēsis Teachers' Institute.

2 River Siļķupīte

57.3185, 25.2370

It is one of the many picturesque tributaries of the Gauja, located in the National Park area. The river and its banks is a wonderful habitat for various plant and animal species. In total, there are nearly 900 plant species, 149 bird species and 48 mammal species found in Gauja National Park.

3 Sandstone Outcrops

57.3205, 25.2503

Further along the route by Siļķupīte, there are picturesque sandstone outcrops along its banks. Rushing from the highlands to the sea, the river streams have continuously deepened their bed, shaping a wide valley with outcrops, where both the lighter and the darker layers, created during the formation of the sediments, as well as the traces left by the stream, are visible. Outcrops are an important habitat for algae, lichens and moss, as well as a home to insects and several bird species.

4 Song Hill

57.3234, 25.2558

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Song Festival, oak trees were planted on this hill, and commemorative stones with engraved names of the choirs who participated in the 1973 Song Festival in Riga (the 100th anniversary Festival) were placed there. In 2018 (Latvia's centenary year), entrepreneurs and donors of Cēsis gifted the large-scale flag of Latvia, now flying on the top of the hill, to the city. There is a beautiful view of the Cēsis landscape – Glūda Hill, which looks particularly spectacular in the evenings after sunset when the city lights have been lit.

5 Meža (Forest) Cemetery

57.3276, 25.2540

The largest cemetery of the city and the final resting place of many well-known people: artist K. Baltgailis, sculptor F. Ešmits, painter Arturs Dronis and others. The entrance to the cemetery is adorned with a large granite gate figure "Zemes māte" ("Earth Mother"), crafted by the famous Latvian sculptor K. Jansons in 1966; he lies in this cemetery as well.

6 "Pipariņi"

57.33012, 25.2367

The name ("Peppers") suggests that during the Middle Ages Gauja pier, where the ships were reloaded, was located somewhere around here. The complex consists of several buildings, including wooden villas built around 1903. Ernests Felsbergs (1866–1928), Rector of the University of Latvia, used to spend the summer here. During the Soviet period, the pioneer camp "Gauja", very well known throughout the USSR, was located in this area. Currently it is a sports and recreational base of the National Armed Forces.

7 Benču Oxbow Lake

57.3328, 25.2282

An oxbow lake is part of the old river bed, separated from the stream when the river changed its course. While some oxbow lakes are still connected to the river, others, like this one, have completely separated and turned into crescent-shaped lakes. The soil of the river valley is fertile, and the banks of the oxbow lake are covered with a rich layer of plants (including some rare species!). Oxbow lakes quickly become overgrown, turning into swamps.

8 Rescue Station

57.3222, 25.2317

Despite the strong stream, eddies and the quicksand, at one time the Gauja was a very popular swimming place among the inhabitants of Cēsis, and there were designated safe swimming spots along its banks, along with rescue stations. The river is still full of surprises; therefore only specifically designated places for swimming should be used. The nearest place for swimming is located in the Žagarkalns camping area.

9 The Family House "Siļķes" of Sculptors Jansons

57.3179, 25.2305

During Hanseatic times, a berth and a place for reloading goods was located here. Nowadays the works of K. Jansons, A. Jansons and M. Baltiņa – highly renowned sculptors in Latvia belonging to three different generations – are on display in the family house, which includes a studio and a sculpture garden, and it is also possible to see the artist Matiass Jansons (1973) in action. Apply in advance (tel. +371 29124876).

10 Floodplain Grassland

57.31569, 25.2307

Floodplain meadows are natural, unimproved (unfertilised, non-ameliorated) meadows on river banks. This makes the plant life extremely diverse – the splendid flowers attract butterflies and other insects, which, in turn, become food for the meadow birds. In Latvia, natural floodplain meadows are rare: they only take up about 1% of its territory.

11 Mill Ponds

57.3147, 25.2331

Gaujas or Siļķu (Herring) Mill is one of the oldest mills in Latvia. The mill dam also acted as a road: it had the reservoir on one side and the mill buildings on the other. There was a recreational spot on the island in the middle of the mill lake. Only the foundations of the mill buildings have survived. The mill area is included in the list of state-protected cultural monuments.

12 Villa "Baltica" and its Adjacent Buildings

57.3111, 25.2300

The former Cēsis Sanatorium complex is a remarkable example of early 20th century Russian aristocracy summer house architecture. The villas on the picturesque bank of the Gauja were built from 1890 to 1910. At first, they were leased to the owners of the Sanatorium, but, starting from 1925, they bought the villas with the enticing names – Baltica, Dagmāra, Corolla, Silva, Miranda, Viktorija – from the city and their owners. Nowadays, the design hotel "Villa Santa" and a restaurant is located in the building complex.

13 Villa "Olgino"

57.3126, 25.2315

One of the most remarkable summer houses on the banks of the Gauja. Located on a high cliff, it was built in 1904 by Pēteris Ruckis, a member of a noble family well known to the inhabitants of Cēsis. During WW II, it was used by high ranking military officials of both Communists and Germans. After the war, the Tuberculosis Sanatorium Club and a cinema was located on the ground floor. The gymnastic therapy room was located on the first floor, and the staff lived in extremely small and cramped premises.

14 Villa "Henriette"

57.3121, 25.2335

One of the largest and most lavish summer houses in Cēsis. It was built in 1900, and some of its prominent features include woodcarvings and a beautiful entrance staircase, as well as an open veranda that has now been rebuilt. In addition, it was the first of the nearby villas that had electricity even before WW I and an elevator as well (possibly the first in Cēsis). Its owner Henriette Liwska, a noblewoman of Polish origin, lived in her house until 1943.

