

GREATEST HITS

DOABLE IN A SINGLE WEEKEND

1. ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CHURCH

Some people cannot imagine the Kaunas skyline without the church, colloquially called Soboras, while others grumble and call for other symbols of Kaunas. The debate has been going on for a hundred years! The Catholic church initially built for Tsar's army needs is at the heart of Nepriklausomybės (Independence) square, and around Soboras are numerous cafés and music and art spots. Sit down and have a bite before you walk further along Laisvės Avenue!



2. LAISVĖS AVENUE

Only Cupid can reveal the number of love affairs that began with a date at the fountain in the centre of Laisvės alėja. The long and wide pedestrian boulevard that divides the New Town into two parts is an avenue that marks Kaunas' transformation into the centre of the gubernia, then Lithuania's temporary capital, and finally, its contemporary revival. The street is home to the most significant theatres, cafés, cultural institutions, architectural gems and their courtyards full of curiosities. In the morning, it's delightful to watch the people of Kaunas rushing to work and in the evening, to observe the crowds slowing down for the day.

3. M.K. ČIURLIONIS NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART AND VYTAUTAS THE GREAT WAR MUSEUM

V. Putvinskio g. 55, K. Donelaičio g. 64

One building, sometimes called the crown of Kaunas modernism, houses two centuries-old museums vital for Lithuania's statehood. At the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, you'll see the legacy of folk art masters, collections of modern art, and ever-changing exhibitions. The Vytautas the Great War Museum has hundreds of exciting exhibits, ranging from the authentic remains of the Lituanica aircraft to a miniature partisan bunker. After a visit to both, have a coffee in the lively Vienybės Square. Maybe you'll even catch a carillon concert?

4. SCIENCE ISLAND

More than just a museum, Science Island is a gateway to discovery, where science isn't just observed - it's touched, tested, and brought to life before your eyes! With a state-of-the-art planetarium and interactive exhibits, it's a perfect adventure for the whole family. Plan for at least half a day to explore it all!



There are not dozens, but hundreds, maybe even thousands of places, objects, things and phenomena worth discovering in Kaunas. Of course, you can't fit everything on one map or itinerary - that's why we keep going with the It's Kaunastic series, revealing new angles and sections! This map is the most kaunastic of all, based on advice from locals, impressions from returning visitors and surveys of Kaunas residents. Get ready for a little bit of history, a pinch of modernity, a splash of art and culture, a handful of delicacies, a sip of entertainment and a pocketful of surprises.

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5. OLD TOWN: TOWN HALL AND VILNIAUS STREET

... and here's the Town Hall Square, which turns into one big outdoor café in summer! The Town Hall nicknamed "The White Swan" has long been the most important in the city. Freshly renovated, the White Swan is back on the charts again, featuring an extensive exhibition of the Kaunas City Museum. There's a tourist information desk here, too. Vilnius Street offers everything from museums to vibrant restaurants and bars, history to hidden galleries - perfect for a day-to-day adventure!

6. KAUNAS CASTLE AND SANTAKA PARK

Legend says that the Mythical Beast of Kaunas sleeps (and sometimes even snores) under this 14th-century tower... You can even see the beast's tooth near the castle, which houses a branch of the Kaunas City Museum. There is also an amphitheatre to listen to operettas or sing along. All around you is Santaka Park, open to humans with various interests. Be sure to walk all the way to the confluence of the Nemunas and Neris rivers - another beautiful legend says that it was here, out of a great love of rivers, that Kaunas was born.

7. ALEKSOTAS FUNICULAR AND OBSERVATION DECK

It is a miracle that two funiculars, which became the symbols of Kaunas between the wars, have survived and are still in daily use today. This one opened in 1935, brings you straight to an observation deck. Here, you will see the smiling sundial on the wall of the Faculty of Kaunas at Vilnius University and many other kaunastic highlights, both old and new. Even the Nobel Prize-winning poet Joseph Brodsky was indifferent to the views.

8. KAUNAS CHRIST'S RESURRECTION CHURCH

Žemaičių g. 31A

After declaring an independent state, the future monument to the statehood of Lithuania was essential to both locals and emigree Lithuanians, who donated generously to the church's construction. The cornerstone of the building, designed by Latvian Karolis Reisons, was brought from Jerusalem's Mount of Olives in 1934, and it took another 70 years for the church's consecration. During the Soviet occupation, the unfinished modernist building housed a radio factory. Today, the terrace of the basilica offers a 360-degree panorama of Kaunas, and the best way to reach this part of Žaliakalnis from the centre is by the historical funicular railway - it takes just a minute.

9. KAUNAS MODERNISM

Take the chance to experience the modernist architecture that transformed Kaunas into a vibrant European capital a hundred years ago. We sincerely wish you a guided tour of the Art Deco Museum or the Amsterdam School Museum. You can also take in the energy of interwar optimism in the many other buildings in the city centre and on Žaliakalnis. Schools, banks, various other institutions, and residential villas - take advantage of plenty of routes and themed walks to learn more about Kaunas modernism, included into the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2023.

10. PAŽAISLIS MONASTERY

T. Masiulio g. 31

Designed and decorated by Italian masters, the Pažaislis church and monastery ensemble is one of the region's most striking masterpieces of Baroque architecture. Its breathtaking history spans more than three centuries. Today, the monastery is home to the Sacred Museum and the Monte Pacis hospitality complex and hosts the grand concerts of the Pažaislis Music Festival.

TOP BITES FOR TRAVELLING FOODIES

We have marked the restaurants, included into the "Michelin" guide in 2024

13. "MOMO GRILL"

Karaliaus Mindaugo pr. 18A

Housed in a historic yeast and distillery building, the restaurant is known for notoriously great meat dishes and a sophisticated yet authentic atmosphere. Perfect for those having a reason to celebrate yet not demanding a white tablecloth for that.

14. "DIA"

Maironio g. 9

Few places keep raising the bar for quality over the years, and that's why they deserve to be on every gastronomic chart. In DIA, the sun shines, and streams of contentment run through your heart and stomach, no matter the weather outside. Oh, Žalgiris players seem to love this spot. Maybe the chefs know some secret ingredients for success?..

15. "NŪMAN"

Nemuno g. 43

The restaurant located on Nemunas Street leaves no one indifferent, offering a perfect combination that includes the interior, atmosphere, aromas, service, attitude, and, of course, the food. In 2024, it was included in the Michelin Guide and received the 'Bib Gourmand' title, confirming an excellent quality-to-price ratio.

16. "VIŠTA PUODE"

5, Daukanto g. 23

Imagine your grandma travelled the world and then opened a restaurant downtown... Or you can come here and stuff your face with genuine, hearty dishes served with a twist. Quite possibly the best place to get introduced to Lithuanian cuisine - and there's a pub next door for meeting the traditional drinks.

17. "PELĖDINĖ"

Šv. Gertrūdos g. 22

The joint in a former convenience store quickly captured the hearts of burger fans and experts. The burgers here are charcoal-grilled, from top-quality ingredients only, and every day begins with announcing the special.

18. "BERNELIŲ UŽEIGA"

K. Donelaičio g. 11

Buckwheat pancakes and boletus soup are more interesting than cepelinai and įalibaričiai, but you'll get the latter here too. But the traditional tavern's signature black bread ice cream is the most exciting thing.

11. NINTH FORT OF THE KAUNAS FORTRESS

Žemaičių pl. 75

The gigantic monument by Alfonsas Vincentas Ambraziūnas, Gediminas Baravykas and Vytautas Vielius, erected in 1984, is one of the most awe-inspiring landmarks of Kaunas - and a reminder of all the blood that was spilt here. Before WW2, the Ninth Fort of the Kaunas Fortress was used as a jail. Later, thousands of Jews were killed here, coming from local vicinities and transported in from other countries occupied by Nazi Germany. A museum in the fort presents the painful chapters of this period of history.

12. NEMUNAS ISLAND AND ŽALGIRIS ARENA

Seeing Žalgiris play at home is one of the most kaunastic experiences. But that's not all - concerts, fairs, and the other biggest events in Lithuania occur here at the Žalgiris Arena. Next door is an Olympic-size swimming pool that meets Olympic standards. The flowering sakura trees symbolise the awakening of nature in spring, making Nemunas Island a popular meeting place.

19. "AGAVE"

Rotušės a. 3

The chef Rodrigo Torres Canela would not embarrass his mother if she ever visited him in Kaunas from Veracruz, Mexico. Seafood shines on the menu among fajitas and other specialities.

20. "NUOGAS"

Laisvės al. 21

Housed in a 19th-century hotel building, the bar attracts lovers of quality drinks and those who want to discover Asian flavour combinations. The fusion-style menu goes perfectly with the boldly elegant interior, and the name means 'naked'.

21. "ARRIVEE"

Vilniaus g. 29

One might want to scream "thank God it arrived" when seeing the dinner being served. Located in the heart of the Old Town, the restaurant focuses on local ingredients - of course, the chef has been inspired by numerous gastronomic trips worldwide.

22. "MONTE PACIS"

T. Masiulio g. 31

The perfect scenario would be to extend your Pažaislis visit to an overnight (at least) stay in the boutique hotel. Still, dinner at Monte Pacis hospitality complex will also do the charm. The food here is full of monastic secrets and produce grown on site, and we recommend the tasting menu.

NIGHTS TO REMEMBER

WILL YOU BE THE LAST HUMAN STANDING?

23. "HOGAS"

Kęstučio g. 6

Follow the smoke signal (indicating a good dinner ahead) to find this centrally located yet somehow hidden pub. The place is packed with great food, drinks, and sometimes guitars, drums and other instruments.

24. "BZO"

Gedimino g. 30

An Old Town legend called 'blue orange' raised a few rebellious generations of Kaunas, and the new incarnation of the bar does precisely the same in a new location. The location is perfect for those heading to see a Žalgiris game (or after it); the bar also features a piano and other bohemian symbols.

25. "UOKSAS"

Maironio g. 28

One of the most unique places in the city, where food is the most important aspect. The restaurant's menu changes with the seasons, working with locally sourced (Baltic region) seasonal products. Using modern techniques and a close Nordic aesthetic, the restaurant aims to express traditional flavors in a new form.

26. "GENVS TAPROOM"

Laisvės al. 21

The drinks brewed here in Kaunas flow directly to two spots in the city centre and the Old Town with the same name. Excellent locations are the second good thing about the brand (the name means woodpecker), and the third is the hip interiors. We leave the rest of the list for you to discover.

27. "KULTŪRA"

K. Donelaičio g. 16

This combination of an art gallery and a café has been successful for over a decade. No matter the season or the alignment of the planets, the mix of a spacious stepped terrace, an artsy interior, a staff straight from a movie, a comprehensive yet short menu and a surprisingly generous bar is irresistible. A good exhibition for an aperitif or dessert is always next door.

WALLS THAT SPEAK

JUST A TINY PART OF KAUNAS STREET ART

33. HUMAN

Nepriklausomybės a. 12

The famous nude guy standing at the M. Žilinskas Art Gallery entrance popped up more than three decades ago. Several attempts have been made to dress him up seriously or jokingly, and a smaller version - or rather, a partial copy of it - stands in the adjacent restaurant.

34. LEAH GOLDBERG

Kęstučio g.

The Israeli poet Leah Goldberg, whose face is even seen on banknotes, grew up in Kaunas before moving to Palestine. Our city is where her talent blossomed, and Linas Kaziliūnis decided to put her portrait and her poem on a building not far from where she lived.

35. NEBEPRIŠIKIŠKIA...

Kęstučio g.

Who's in for a Lithuanian lesson? The ghost hotel Britanika has been standing in downtown Kaunas for decades. Street artist Morfai decided to write down the longest Lithuanian word, 'Nebeprišikiškiakopūsteliaujantiesiems', meaning something like 'For those who haven't been picking up enough shamrocks for themselves' while waiting for area development.

36. VICTORY

Kęstučio g. 60

In March 2022, the wall of the house at Kęstučio g. 60 Street was decorated with a blue-and-yellow mural. According to the author of this idea, the cult graffiti artist Tadas Vincatīs-Pūgas, the work symbolises concern, the fight against aggression and respect for Ukrainians who defend not only their own freedom but also the whole of Europe.

37. STAR SOWER

K. Donelaičio g. 64

This sculpture in the garden of the Vytautas the Great War Museum is a fantastic example of the harmony between history and modernity. After dark, the idea of the contemporary street artist Morfai is revealed - the classical figure created by Bernardas Bučas seems to be scattering stars.

28. "VINGIU DUBINGIU"

A. Mickevičiaus g. 35

The pub slash bottle shop is a true hop culture classic. It consists of respect for the microbrewery, the authentic spirit of Kaunas city centre, the wonderful neighbours (a bookstore in the same building, with a secret passageway to the pub) and a patio that even southern Europeans would envy.

29. "GODO"

Laisvės al. 69

This cultural oasis is a recipe for success with its DIY interior, art-friendly walls, music you've never heard before, and a terrace right in the city garden. You can come alone, and you won't feel lonely. But be warned, your life can change dramatically - and for the better.

30. "REPUBLIC"

Laisvės al. 57

Fans of Žalgiris and other sports (and life in general) will assure you that you won't find more attentive bartenders anywhere in the city. No one will be left thirsty, hungry or upset, all matters are solved in a moment, but time, the bastard, melts away too quickly here...

31. "HOP DOC"

M. Daukšos g. 23

Habilitated hop scientists have worked out a geographically varied range of drinks, and we recommend you look at the food menu too. The tuna burger alone is worth a visit, but it's just one of many must-try dishes that will add colour to your weekend.

32. "DEBELS"

Laisvės al. 21

There are always reasons to rebel - for example, against working days that are too long or evenings that are too short! This pub can even be open deep into the night for the sports you love. The Dublin-smelling interior is decorated with portraits of some of Lithuania's best athletes, and the Irish pubgoers would be jealous of the snacks menu.

38. PINK ELEPHANT

E. Ožėškienės g.

This mural is a popular backdrop for wedding photos! According to the author Vytenis Jakas, the creation of this cute elephant was inspired by the inscription on the wall, saying 'Deima + Arūnas. Love conquers all, right?'

39. YARD GALLERY

E. Ožėškienės g. 21

When artist Vytenis Jakas moved into a house in this courtyard, he noticed the neighbours were alienated and had forgotten their shared past. Jakas then began to transfer photographs of the Jewish families who lived there onto the walls and received much praise and support. New art objects are being added to the yard one by one, and visiting artists leave their marks. Please remember that this is a residential space; the neighbours insist you come here between 9 am and 7 pm and, as in all respected galleries, do not make noise or litter.

40. OLD WISE MAN

Jonavos g. 3

The large red-brick building was once a shoe factory; later, it was home to a creative hub for several years. Created during the latter period, the mural is the leading contemporary attraction of Kaunas Old Town. The 440 square metre drawing is dedicated to the Kaunas-born father of Fluxus, George Maciunas. Done by Gyva Grafika duo.

41. SMILING SUNDIAL

Muitinės g. 6A

The sundial at the Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty of smiles at travellers night and day. Antanas Balkė and Ričardas Krištapavičius, who designed it during the occupation, made sure that the clock would show the exact time of Kaunas, not the USSR. Could this be the true heart of Kaunas?!

Kaunas

IT'S KAUNASTIC



TOP SECRETS

ONLY IN KAUNAS

42. GEORGE MACIUNAS SQUARE

Impenetrable and invisible when passing by, and therefore the only of its kind in the world, the George Maciunas Square was created by artist Naglis Rytis Baltušnikas at the junction of three streets. It's not far from where the founder of the Fluxus movement lived as a child. His legacy inspires contemporary Kaunas with the annual Fluxus Festival held every September, bringing together communities in the city and the district who are not afraid to play. Climbing Parodos Hill has become a national sport!

43. KAUKAS STAIRS

Dozens of stairs lead from the centre of Kaunas to Žaliakalnis. Let's agree that Kauko is the broadest and most culture-friendly! The stairs were designed by Stasys Kudokas, a celebrity in interwar architecture. At the top, a nostalgic café set up by the locals awaits you, and further along is a playground watered by fountains. You can catch a choir or a dance performance there if you're lucky.

44. OWLS HILL

Back in 1922, the Kaunas Art School was opened in then not very attractive territory of the Kaunas fortress, and the owls that gave the mountain its name were created by a promising student Vincas Grybas. Once on the hill, you can visit art galleries, the house-museum of sculptor Juozas Zikaras, admire the giant tricolour flying high above Kaunas and, of course, the fantastic panorama in all seasons. Always answer 'yes' if someone offers a picnic.

45. DŽEM PUB

Laisvės al. 59

You haven't done your Erasmus in Kaunas right if you haven't slept through at least one exam after a night at Džem Pub. It has room for rock musicians, stand-up comedians, and solid discussions. After all of the above, it's time for some dance moves. A kaunastic tradition is to greet the rising sun and the awakening of Laisvės Alėja on the pub's balcony.

46. FARMERS MARKET

Jonavos g. 1

On weekend mornings, the square in front of the Wise Old Man mural transforms completely. Cars give way to cheesemakers, bakers, butchers, florists, and the aroma of smoked fish... If you sleep in, be ready to properly queue or... stay hungry!

47. "14 STOTELE"

Betygalos g. 14

A weekend brunch followed by a rock concert in a trolley bus tops the 'only in Kaunas' list! With a maturing idea of an exclusive food and music spot in their minds, the hosts bought three of the many street-art-painted trolleybuses that have already finished their service on the streets. The rest was a matter of imagination!

48. BRASTA SQUARE

Brastos g. 19

Vilijampolė is not the most tourist-friendly part of Kaunas, but it is worth a stroll or a bike ride through its old streets, which are full of stories. After a tour, lunch will be served in the food truck-filled Brastos square, where the perfect bites are accompanied by a splendid view of the Neris river and the Old Town.

49. LAMPĖDIS LAKE

In summer, even on weekdays, the lake's shores are packed with locals getting some tan and refreshing in the water. There are plenty of activities, too: an adventure park, one of the longest wakeboarding tracks in Europe, water trampolines and even a sauna are at your disposal. The lake is easily accessible by bicycle from the centre of Kaunas.

50. O KODĖL NE?

A. Juozapavičiaus g. 122A

The crew responsible for an incredible mix of live music, delicious food and rave culture recently moved next to the railway from Vytautas Park. An industrial symphony of rails, carriages and cranes in the new location can undoubtedly lead to kaunastic adventures.

51. PANEMUNĖ PINE GROVE

One of the most enjoyable highlights of this city forest is the river beach. After water activities and a delicious pizza, it's fun to stroll in the pine forest, just like in the interwar period, when the elite of the Temporary Capital gathered in Panemunė. Perfect for lunch breaks, sports workouts and hikes.

52. S. DARIAUS IR S. GIRĖNO AIRPORT

Veiverių g. 132

Built in 1915 and currently one of the oldest in Europe, the airfield received its name after the tragic transatlantic flight of Lituanica, as it was where our national heroes Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas were to land. The aerodrome hosts aviation festivals that lure thousands of fans, while the infrastructure attracts foreign avia tourists. The former passenger terminal is home to the Lithuanian Aviation Museum. Outdoors exposition available during the reconstruction of the museum, check information before your visit.

53. LITHUANIAN HOUSE OF BASKETBALL

Santakos g. 11

A contemporary architectural masterpiece hidden between the lush greenery of Santaka Park is the heart and home of basketball, the most popular sport in Lithuania. It hosts a contemporary exhibition and is open for various cultural collaborations, the first two of which are a decent bar downstairs and a sculpture of James Naismith, the inventor of basketball rules.



Wondering what to do next? Here are some more thematic routes available in English:

- Culture Shock
- A Hanseatic Merchant's Story
- Kaunas in Film
- 100 Years of Theatre
- Kaunas Fortress
- Around Kaunas With a Diplomat
- Wooden Kaunas
- Pilgrim's Guide to Kaunas

USEFUL HASHTAGS

TOURISM INFORMATION

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