

415 km

RÄPINA-VÄRSKA

touring route

This touring route takes you from the Estonian town Tartu to Räpina-Värska Recreation Area and to the sights nearby and back to Tartu. On the way you can visit several small towns in South Estonia, make short hikes and have a picnic on campfire sites of Räpina-Värska Recreation Area, Haanja-Karula Recreation Area, Haanja Nature Park and Karula National Park. Depending on how many sites you visit and how much time you decide to spend on each one, the tour can last from 3-7 days or even longer, if you wish to explore the area more thoroughly.



1. Tartu – You can hit the road towards Räpina-Värska Recreation Area right away or first explore Tartu – the university town of Estonia. Since the route brings you back to Tartu, the city sightseeing can also be left at the end of the trip. Read more about Tartu www.visitestonia.com/en/why-estonia/tartu-highlights-six-hours-in-the-spiritual-capital-of-estonia.

2. Kiidjärve Visitor Centre and Kiidjärve-Kooraste Recreation Area

Before exploring the Kiidjärve-Kooraste Recreation Area and Räpina-Värska Recreation Area, visit Kiidjärve Visitor Centre, where you can get the most up to date information about the sites in the areas. Read more about the visitor centre wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/kiidjarve-kooraste-recreation-area/kiidjarve-visitor-centre.

At first you arrive to Kiidjärve-Kooraste Recreation Area, which is located less than hour drive away from Tartu. The area offers great possibilities for nature vacation: trails for shorter and longer hikes, campfire sites for picnic, beautiful rivers and lakes, berry- and mushroom-rich forests, marsh patches, extraordinary sandstone outcrops and campsites for spending the night in tent. Read more about the area wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/kiidjarve-kooraste-recreation-area.



3. Mooste – a small borough with the Mooste Manor complex owned by local municipality, read more www.moostemois.ee/en/history-past-to-present.

4. Räpina – a beautiful town in South Estonia where you can find beautiful Räpina Park with Võhandu River flowing through it, Räpina Paper Factory, School of Horticulture, local church and museums. Read more www.visitestonia.com/en/rapina-city-tour.

RÄPINNA-VÄRSKA RECREATION AREA

is characterized by small campfire sites and camping areas, many of which are located in peaceful forests and by rivers or lakes. You can find here:

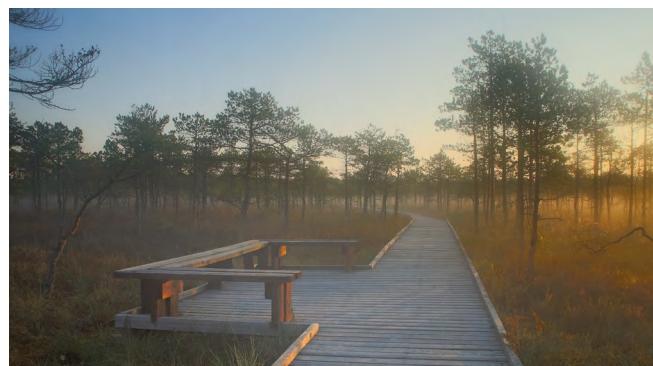
HIKING ROUTE

RMK hiking route is a network of three long trails going from state border to border. These trails go through all of Estonia, through different national parks and nature reserves. You can hike the full route or pick a section you like. One of the hiking route branches – Peraküla-Aegviidu-Ähijärve – goes through Räpina-Värska Recreation Area. Read more about hiking route wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/hiking-route.

TRAILS

If you prefer shorter hikes, the area offers various opportunities. Some examples:

Meenikunno hiking trail – 5.8 km long circular trail through Meenikunno bog and forest, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/meenikunno-hiking-trail-5-dot-8-km.



Lõunalaagri hiking trail – 1.8 km long circular trail with 14 points of information introducing the history of the Petseri military camp, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/lounalaagri-hiking-trail-1-dot-8-km.

Nohipalo study trail – 3 km long trail introducing hunting and forestry, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/nohipalo-study-trail-3-km.

CAMPFIRE SITES

RMK campfire sites are suitable stops for hikers to prepare a meal, take a rest and spend the night in tent. Campsites are equipped with fireplaces, tables, benches, woodsheds and dry toilets. There are several choices:

On the banks of the Võhandu River you can find **Kaljupealse campfire site** (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/kaljupealse-campfire-site),

Leevaku campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/leevaku-campfire-site),

Tuurapera campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/tuurapera-campfire-site),

Leevi campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/leevi-campfire-site);

Many campfire sites are situated at small lakes:

Paidra campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/paidra-campfire-site),

Koolmajärve campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/koolmajarve-campfire-site),

Valgjärve campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/valgjarve-campfire-site),

Mustjärve campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/mustjarve-campfire-site) and

Värska campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/varska-campfire-site).

The only campfire site in the recreation area without water nearby is at **Piusa** (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/piusa-campfire-site).



RENTAL HUTS

It is possible to choose among several RMK rental huts in the area:

Meelva rental hut at an isolated place in the middle of forests near Lake Meelva, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/meelva-rental-hut;

On the shore of Lake Ōrsava you can find **Värska rental huts** (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/varska-rental-huts) and **Luige rental hut** (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/luige-rental-hut);

Päikeseloojangu rental hut – The “sunset” rental hut is situated at the edge of the Meenikunno bog, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/paikseloojangu-rental-hut;

Praali rental hut for a larger group of people, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/prали-rental-hut;

Ilumetsa rental hut next to the Nohipalo hiking trail, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/ilumetsa-rental-hut;

Köverajärve rental hut – the “crooked lake” rental hut is situated near Lake Kövera, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/koverajarve-rental-hut;



Giants of Ootsipalu Valley - the tallest pine in Estonia – 46.6 metres tall among other giant trees in the valley, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/giants-of-ootsipalu-valley;

Ilumetsa rest stop situated near meteorite craters, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/rapina-varska-recreation-area/ilumetsa-recreation-site-meteorite-craters.

- 5.** **Värska** – a small borough in Setomaa Parish where you can find museums (read more www.visitestonia.com/en/varska-visitor-centre-reeks-house and www.visitestonia.com/en/cafe-tsaimaja-in-the-varska-farm-museum), Värska Church (read more www.visitestonia.com/en/varska-church) and many services provided by local entrepreneurs.
- 6.** **Piusa Cave Museum** go see the sand-stone caves resulted from hand-mining glass sand, read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/nature-reserves/piusa-caves-nature-reserv/piusa-cave-museum and www.visitestonia.com/en/piusa-caves-visitor-centre.
- 7.** **Võru** – the biggest town in South Estonia and the centre of Võru county, read more about Võru town www.visitestonia.com/en/a-walk-in-voru-city and about Võru county www.visitvoru.ee/discover-voru-county.
- 8.** **Suur Munamägi** – the highest point of the Baltics with 318 meters over sea level. Read more www.visitestonia.com/en/observation-tower-on-suur-munamagi.
- 9.** **Ööbikuorg valley, tower and the lakes**, the “Nightingale Valley” with the lakes, visitor centre and the observation tower, read more www.visitvoru.ee/en/254/oobikuorg-ja--rouge-jarved.
- 10.** **RMK Pähni Visitor Centre, Haanja-Karula Recreation Area and Haanja Nature Park** explore the attractive exhibitions of butterflies and the unique cross-trees tradition in South Estonia in the visitor centre (read more about the visitor centre wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/haanja-karula-recreation-area/pahni-visitor-centre).



You can also get the most up to date information about the surrounding Haanja-Karula Recreation Area (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/haanja-karula-recreation-area) and Haanja Nature Park (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/nature-reserves/haanja-nature-park).



- 11.** **Paganamaa** – visit the observation tower (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/haanja-karula-recreation-area/paganamaa-observation-tower), study trails (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/haanja-karula-recreation-area/paganamaa-study-trails-3-dot-8-4-dot-7-km) and campfire site (read more wwwloodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/recreation-areas/haanja-karula-recreation-area/paganamaa-campfire-site).



- 12. Ape** – make a quick nearby stop in small Latvian town and see the European biggest white willow.
- 13. Karula National Park and Visitor Centre** – surrounded by scenic hills and mysterious forests and opening up breathtaking views of Lake Ähijärv. Enjoy the surroundings and get the most up to date information about the local sites. Read more about the visitor centre [www.loodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/national-parks/karula-national-park](http://www.loodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/national-parks/karula-national-park/visitor-centre-of-karula-national-park) and about the Karula Natural park www.loodusegakoos.ee/where-to-go/national-parks/karula-national-park.



- 14. Valga** – the southernmost town of Estonia next to Latvian border, read more www.visitestonia.com/en/valga-tourist-information-centre.
- 15. Tõrva** – a small town on banks of Ōhne river, read more www.torva.kovtp.ee/general-information-about-torva.
- 16. Rõngu** – a small borough where you can find the ruins of Rõngu Vassal Stronghold (read more www.visitestonia.com/en/ruins-of-rongu-vassal-stronghold) and Rõngu St Michael's Church (read more www.visitestonia.com/en/rongu-st-michaels-church-of-the-estonian-evangelical-lutheran-church).
- 17. Elva** – the town of pines, read more www.visitelva.com/?lang=en.

- 18. Estonian Space Research Centre** for popularization of space science and technology, visits have to be booked on-line, read more www.kylastuskeskus.to.ee/eng/.