

The total area of Saulkrasti Municipality is 46.8km². The administrative territory of Saulkrasti Municipality is located on the coast of the Gulf of Riga, in the western part of the Vidzeme region. The territory of Saulkrasti Municipality comprises a seaside belt of forests, stretching from the Lilaste river and lake in the South to Zvejniekiems in the North. The administrative territory is 17kilometres long. There are more than 6thousand declared residents living in the municipality. As the summer season arrives, the number of residents grows significantly due to the beginning of the tourism season and the increasing flow of the inhabitants of horticultural cooperatives located within the municipality. The centre of Saulkrasti is situated 45km from Riga, 47km from Limbaži, 40km from Sigulda and 58km from Salacgrīva. The territory of the municipality is crossed by the international road VIA Baltica. Saulkrasti Municipality includes the following populated areas- Bātdciems, Pabaži, Saulkrasti, Zvejniekiems, as well as several horticultural cooperatives. There are also four rivers that flow through the municipality- Inčupe, Pēterupe, Kīšupe and Aģe- and they are symbolically portrayed on the coat of arms of Saulkrasti Municipality.

Education

There are several educational establishments operating in Saulkrasti: Saulkrasti Secondary School, Zvejniekiems Secondary School, Pre-Primary School "Rūķītis" and the Vidzeme Seaside School of Music and Arts.

Saulkrasti Secondary School originates from Pēterupe Parish School, which opened in1776. In1912, local cultural worker Olga Čirule opened a 2-grade elementary school in the house of captain Reisons. In1950, the school became a secondary school. In1956, the school moved to new premises, where it is still located nowadays. In2012, Saulkrasti Secondary School marked its 100thanniversary.

Saulkrasti Secondary School has a head office that takes care of the school's social life by organising various cultural and sports events.

There are also several well-known people that attended Saulkrasti Secondary School: film director Alvis Lapiņš, singer Ingus Pētersons, pole vaulter Aleksandrs Obižajevs, as well as Olympic hobsledder Zintis Ekmanis.

The beginnings of Zvejniekiems Secondary School may be found 200years ago in Skulte Parish, where a school was built in1741. The name of the school was changed several times. In1963, the fishing artel "Zvejnieks" built a school in Zvejniekiems according to the individual project of architect Marta Staņa, and it was renamed Zvejniekiems Secondary School by order of the Ministry of Education.

The students of the school have had great results in regional and national olympiads. They actively take part in the students' co-administration, which publishes the school newspaper "Pipari un medus" (Peppers and Honey), as well as organises school events.

The Saulkrasti Pre-Primary School "Rūķītis" began operating in1951, and it has been located in its current premises since1983.

In 1968, the dream of many locals came into being, as the children's music school of Zvejniekiems- the first one on the seaside of Vidzeme- opened its doors in September. All of the teachers have been outstanding personalities- composer Pēteris Vasks, the greatest violinist of Latvia Zigurds Elsbergs and many others. The 90s turned a new page in the history book of the school. A possibility was found for children of Ādaži and Carnikava to also study music. The work of the school was expanded by opening an arts department.

It also has a music department and a visual-plastic arts department. The students of the school take part in national and international contests under the guidance of professional teachers, and achieve outstanding results.

Culture

The cultural life of Saulkrasti Municipality is formed by the active work of local arts collectives, as well as traditional and reintroduced cultural events. They are organised and managed by the municipal agency "Culture and Sports Centre of Saulkrasti".

It comprises 21collectives, making it possible for all residents of the municipality to find the most suitable way to spend their spare time, thus promoting cultural education. Everyone- from children to adults- takes part in the cultural events.

The youngest locals dance in the pre-school children's dance group of Zvejniekiems and in the children's dance group "Rūķītis", while their artistic skills are improved in the visual arts group and their singing skills- in the vocal studio.

The younger generation has the possibility to experience the joy of folk dancing in the dance group "Krustu šķērsu", whereas the middle generation dances in the dance group "Jūrdancis" and seniors dance in the dance group "Saulgrieži".

If one wants to try out something non-traditional, it may be done in the dance groups "Fractus" and "Fractus seniores". Moreover, seniors of the municipality learn modern dances in the European dance senior collective "Draiskais solis". Lovers of country-style dances are welcomed at the line dancing group "Sunbeach".

Those who like to sing have a possibility to improve their singing skills in the mixed choirs "Anima" and "Bangotne", as well as in the senior vocal ensemble "Dzīle". The Saulkrasti folk group "Dvīga" provides the opportunity to get to know the fundamentals of Latvian folk wisdom and reinvigorate ancient traditions in modern times. Saulkrasti Festival and other large events are unimaginable without the brass ensemble "Neibāde" and the kokle player ensemble "Saule".

Latvian folk wisdom may be found by improving one's skills in handicrafts and other fields in applied arts. Saulkrasti has active weavers who have all united in the weaver group "Kodaļa", as well as needle-workers who make the most beautiful socks and scarves, and there are also very distinctive handicraft opportunities, for example, felting and rake-knitting!

If you wish to master the basics of acting and feel the allure of the stage, then you must join the amateur theatre "Vīri ģērbjas" or the youth theatre studio, as their repertoire includes études, as well as serious stagings.

Employees of the municipal agency "Culture and Sports Centre of Saulkrasti" are always ready for new ideas and events. It is not for nothing that events such as the Organ Music Days of Saulkrasti, Chamber Music Festival "Jaunie Latvijas kameruziķi Saulkrastiem", Museum Night, "Ierīpo Saulkrastu vasarā", Midsummer's Day events at Sun Square, Saulkrasti Festival, as well as Latvian national celebrations and remembrance days have all become annual events and are the most awaited ones in the cultural life of the locals. It has also become traditional for the locals to celebrate annual customs festivities.

Sports

The most popular and traditional sports in Saulkrasti are basketball, volleyball, football and orienteering. Praise has also been earned by judo, karate, darts and floorball. Representatives of these sports take part in national and international competitions.

In order to promote the sports life of Saulkrasti Municipality, various sports events and competitions are organised. The event with the most history is the Saulkrasti Run, which took place for the first time in1994. The same age has been reached by the beach volleyball show "Saulkrastu kokteilis". Athletes and fans also enjoy the basketball and volleyball championships of Saulkrasti, which are taken part in not only by locals, but also teams from Riga and nearby places. The local championships in football, beach volleyball, indoor football, football and hockey also gather quite a large audience.

Certain individual sports- zole, novuss, table tennis and fishing - have local championships that are split into several stages, with the darts championship having as many as 12stages. A lot of participants gather annually for the sports events taking place during Saulkrasti Festival. The Open-Air Fitness Day has become a traditional event and a lot of attention has also been gained by the competition "Vieglatlētika vieno visus", which had more than 500participants in2016.

During the first half of the day, Saulkrasti Sports Centre hosts physical education classes of Saulkrasti Secondary School, whereas in the afternoon the residents of the municipality have the possibility to do various sports. Training in basketball, volleyball, orienteering and judo for children and youths, as well as sports for pre-school age children, is paid for by the municipality. Our team FBKSĀC plays in the first tier of the Latvian Floorball Championship, whereas the Saulkrasti basketball team competes in the third tier of the Latvian Basketball League.

Tourism

Saulkrasti has a unique bicycle museum that offers its visitors the possibility to see the only ancient bicycle collection in Latvia. The exhibition includes various items that are related to the use of bicycles, cycling sports and associations, as well as the production of bicycles. It is possible to view the largest collection of cycling brand logos in Eastern Europe.

The centre of Saulkrasti has a well-equipped bathing place "Centrs", which has been granted the Blue Flag- the most popular tourism eco-certification in the world. This means that all of the requirements of the international eco-programme regarding water quality, environmental management, environmental information and education, including amenities and organisation of services, have been met.

Saulkrasti Municipality offers more than 15different accommodation places- hotels, guest houses, camping grounds, recreational complexes and campsites.

The recreational offer comprises recreation on water, horse riding, rental of bicycles, quad bikes and sports equipment, mini golf, paintball, skating, tennis and bathhouses. There are also cycling and Nordic walking routes, as well skiing routes for the winter, thus ensuring recreation possibilities throughout the whole year. Tourism information: <http://www.visitsaulkrasti.lv>

Zvejniekiems and its rocky beach is the favourite part of the Saulkrasti seashore among artists and photographers. Next to it is the first port of Vidzeme- Skulte Port, which is the largest of the minor ports of Latvia, exporting timber products and handling renewables. It marked its 70th anniversary in2009.

Saulkrasti has cooperation partners in the sister cities of Gnesta (Sweden), Odolanów (Poland), Neringa (Lithuania) and Radashkovichy (Belarus).