



48 HOURS IN

Tallinn

COLD LIGHT · WARM WELCOME

EUROPEAN SERIES

Welcome to Tallinn.

Tallinn plays a trick on first-time visitors: the Old Town is so completely, cinematically medieval — turrets, city walls, cobblestones, spires — that it's easy to assume the whole city is a museum piece. It isn't. Ten minutes outside the walls, Tallinn runs on some of the fastest, most confident tech infrastructure in Europe; Skype, Wise, Bolt, and Pipedrive all trace back to this city, and the converted industrial blocks of Telliskivi run on standing desks and third-wave coffee, not souvenir stalls.

What Tallinn has that no other Baltic capital has: one of the best-preserved medieval old towns in Europe, a genuine UNESCO World Heritage Site rather than a reconstruction; a food scene split between 800-year-old guild-hall restaurants and some of the Baltic's most inventive contemporary kitchens; layered, complicated 20th-century history — Soviet occupation, KGB cells, a startup-nation reinvention — sitting a few blocks from 13th-century merchant houses; and a scale small enough that two focused days genuinely cover the city's core character.

Tallinn rewards solo travelers who split their time between the fairy tale and the present day. Wander Raekoja Plats before the tour groups arrive. Climb to a viewing platform for the terracotta-and-spires skyline. Spend an afternoon in Telliskivi's converted factory blocks. Close the night with a local beer in a 13th-century tavern. This is the itinerary.

DAY ONE

Day One — Old Town — Upper Town (Toompea) and Lower Town

Day One covers the medieval core on foot — the market square, the hilltop fortress district, the best viewing platforms, and the guild-hall streets.

MORNING · 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

Raekoja Plats (Town Hall Square)

The heart of the Lower Town, a marketplace since the 13th century. Start here — cafés around the square are ideal for a coffee before the crowds build. Stop at Raeapteek, one of Europe's oldest continuously operating pharmacies, first recorded in 1422 — free to peek inside.

10:30 AM

Toompea (Upper Town)

Walk up via Pikk jalg (Long Leg street) and the Pika jala Gate Tower. Toompea holds the castle, city walls, and government/embassy buildings. See Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (free entry, striking onion-domed exterior) and the Danish King's Garden.

11:30 AM

Kohtuotsa & Patkuli Viewing Platforms

The two best skyline views in the city — spires and terracotta rooftops from above, with the Baltic Sea visible on a clear day. Free, always open. Kohtuotsa is famous for “The Times We Had” wall/mural nearby.

INSIDER TIP

Patkuli, just a short walk from Kohtuotsa, is quieter and less crowded with a comparable view — worth the extra five minutes if Kohtuotsa is packed.

1:00 PM

Lunch: Old Town

Old Hansa (Vana turg 1, in the heart of Old Town) for a full medieval-themed sit-down experience — period costume service, historically-inspired recipes. Alternatively, Ill Draakon on Raekoja Plats is the cheaper, faster, standing-room-only medieval-tavern option.

AFTERNOON · 2:30 PM – 6:30 PM

2:30 PM

St. Olaf's Church & Pikk Street

St. Olaf's Church (Oleviste kirik) — once considered the tallest building in the world (14th–16th centuries). Free to enter the ground floor; small fee to climb the tower for views. Pikk Street, running from here back toward the square, is lined with historic guild houses.

4:00 PM

Kiek in de K  k & Bastion Tunnels (optional)

Komandandi tee 2. Full ticket 16  adult / 8  student / 32  family (covers all four towers + underground bastion passages); hours 11am–6pm (May–Sep daily, Oct–Apr Tue–Sun). A 500m museum complex — medieval artillery tower, connecting towers, and 17th/18th-century underground passages used historically as shelters.

INSIDER TIP

Free on the first Sunday of each month (register in advance — high demand), though only partial areas are open on those days.

5:30 PM

Free Wander: Katariina K  ik

St. Catherine's Passage — a narrow medieval lane lined with working artisan studios (glass, ceramics, textiles). One of the most atmospheric, least crowded corners of the Old Town.

EVENING · 7:00 PM – LATE

7:00 PM

Dinner: Kompressor

A beloved local pancake house — expect a wait (worth it). Savory Estonian-style pancakes, hearty portions, communal seating common.  8–15 per person.

9:00 PM

Hell Hunt

Tallinn's original craft beer pub, in the Old Town — a relaxed, unpretentious way to close the night. A local beer here runs  4–6.

DAY TWO

Day Two — Telliskivi · Kalamaja · Kadriorg

Day Two leaves the medieval core for Tallinn's converted-industrial creative district, its hip fishing-village-turned-residential neighborhood, and the palace park on the eastern edge of downtown.

MORNING · 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

10:00 AM

Telliskivi Creative City

~20-minute walk from Old Town (or a short tram ride). A converted industrial complex — boutique shops, galleries, street art, and Tallinn's startup energy concentrated into a few blocks. No entry fee; wander freely.

12:00 PM

Lunch: F-Hoone

Telliskivi. Trendy, casual, strong vegetarian and vegan options (the pumpkin-and-chickpea falafel with rocket-quinoa salad is a standout). €10–15 per person.

AFTERNOON · 1:30 PM – 5:30 PM

1:30 PM

Kalamaja

A former fishing and working-class district, now Tallinn's hippest residential neighborhood — wooden houses, quiet streets, small cafés. A 20–30 minute wander pairs naturally with Telliskivi, which sits right at its edge.

3:00 PM

KGB Prison Cells / Soviet-era history

A sobering counterpoint to the fairy-tale Old Town — former detention cells used during the Soviet occupation. Check current opening status/hours before visiting, as access has varied by season; the Museum of Occupations (Vabamu, downtown) is a reliable alternative covering the same history if the cells are closed.

4:30 PM

Kadriorg Park & KUMU

Kadriorg Park, ~20 min from Old Town by tram (Lines 1 or 3). KUMU (Kumu Kunstimuuseum), Estonia's flagship art museum: adult admission roughly €12–18 depending on current exhibitions; hours vary, check kumu.ekm.ee. A striking modern building built into the limestone slope of the park, housing Estonian art from the 1700s to today across seven floors. Kadriorg Palace itself (Peter the Great's summer residence) sits in the same park.

EVENING · 7:00 PM – LATE

7:00 PM

Dinner: Rataskaevu 16

Vaike Rataskaevu 16, Old Town. Contemporary Estonian cooking in a well-regarded, less-touristy Old Town setting than the medieval-themed restaurants. €20–30 per person.

9:00 PM

Old Town, Final Night

Close the trip with a slow walk through the lit-up Old Town lanes — Pikk, Vene, and the streets around Raekoja Plats feel genuinely different at night, quieter, with the medieval architecture doing all the work.

WHERE TO EAT

Tallinn's Table

RESTAURANT	NEIGHBOURHOOD	PRICE
Old Hansa (Olde Hansa)	Old Town	€25–40
Kompressor	Old Town	€8–15
III Draakon	Old Town (Raekoja Plats)	€5–10
Rataskaevu 16	Old Town	€20–30
F–Hoone	Telliskivi	€10–15
Sfäär	Rotermann Quarter	€25–40
Hell Hunt	Old Town	€4–6 (beer)

GETTING AROUND

Navigating Tallinn

MODE	COST	NOTES
Walking	Free	Old Town core is entirely walkable; Telliskivi/Kalamaja are a 20–min walk or short tram ride further out.
Trams / Buses / Trolleybuses	Standard ticket via app or card	Runs 6am–11pm daily, with weekend night service. No metro system exists.
Bolt (rideshare)	Metered, shown before confirming	The dominant local rideshare app — reliable, transparent pricing, preferred over unmarked taxis.
Airport connection	Bus	Lennart Meri Tallinn Airport is ~15–20 min from the city center by bus.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Before You Go

TOPIC	DETAILS
Getting There	Lennart Meri Tallinn Airport (TLL), ~4km from downtown. Bus or taxi ~15–20 min to center.
Best Time	June–August: warmest, longest days, liveliest Old Town. May & September: fewer crowds, shoulder pricing. December: Christmas Market in Raekoja Plats. Winter: cold, dark, but atmospheric — and cobblestones get icy.
Solo Dining	Easy. Reserved-but-helpful service culture; counter and communal-table dining (Kompessor, Ill Draakon) is naturally solo-friendly.
Language	Estonian; English widely spoken, especially among younger residents and in the tourism sector.
Useful Apps	Bolt (rideshare + transit), Tallinn public transport app, Google Maps (offline download recommended for Old Town's narrow lanes).

Tallinn awaits.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Final Checklist

- Book Kiek in de Kōk / Bastion Tunnels online if visiting in peak summer
- Check KUMU's current hours and exhibition pricing before Day Two (kumu.ekm.ee)
- Confirm KGB Prison Cells current opening status; Vabamu Museum of Occupations is the reliable backup
- Wear good-grip boots November–March — icy cobblestones are the top physical hazard, not crime
- Use Bolt over unmarked street taxis
- Download offline maps — Old Town's narrow lanes can confuse GPS
- Check menu prices before ordering at Old Town nightlife venues near Suur-Karja Street

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.

goingsolo.life/maps/tallinn

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.



goingsolo.life/maps/tallinn