

Latvian Alpaca Adventure #2



June 3 – 10, 2018

Come and sample Latvian culture and crafts alongside felting workshops

Tour Details



Riga Old Town

Introduction

The Latvian nation will be celebrating its 100 years anniversary, so look out for lots of anniversary events and preparations for that. Especially recommended is the annual festival at the Open-Air Museum over the weekend 2nd-3rd June.

During the week we will have two felting tutors, Ieva Prane, a Latvian textile artist and Heather Potten, a felting tutor from Edinburgh. Joanna and Ian Storie are the hosts of the Latvian Alpaca Adventure. Ian is the hands on, day to day manager of the alpaca farm where our workshops are held, and willingly shares his love and enthusiasm for all things alpaca. Joanna dabbles in a myriad of activities from mixed media art, specialising in embroidery and art quilts, growing vegetables and herbs (your salads and teas will all be freshly picked and prepared from the garden), to trying to complete a PhD in rural development.

General Details

Latvia has come a long way from its Soviet past and you will find many facilities up to European standards, especially nearer to Riga. Ergli itself is a rural village with basic facilities and not yet geared up for tourists but our hotel is pleasant with friendly staff and plenty of choice for breakfasts. There are two lovely bakeries in the village and supermarkets, but no souvenir shops. We will, however, ensure that you get to see local crafts and culture and taste local foods along the way. Latvians can still be shy of sharing their knowledge and culture with outsiders and so this is an evolving programme where we work with Latvians to develop the presentation of their skills. This means our programme takes time to develop over the year and final details will be available on arrival. However, we assure you of a holiday with a difference, in a warm and inviting atmosphere for those who are prepared to be adaptable. Whether you are an experienced traveller or wanting to branch out for the first time, Joanna, Ian and Heather will be there to look after you. All transport within Latvia, food and accommodation are included in the price of £1 250 (initial deposit of £500 to secure your place). However, if you wish to experience more of Riga and its wealth of activities, shops and museums we suggest arriving a few days earlier or staying on after the trip.



Memorial to the barricades of 1991 erected to deter the Soviet army from regaining control

Itinerary

In Brief

Day 1: Sunday 3rd June

Arrive in Riga

Explore the Art Nouveau area

Day 2: Monday 4th June

Hobby Wool visit

Explore Sigulda: Castles and the Gauja river

Day 3: Tuesday 5th June

Workshop with the mixed media artist Ieva Prane

Travel to Ērgļi in the heart of rural Latvia

Day 4: Wednesday 6th June

Tour of Griezītes Alpakas

Workshop with Heather Potten

Day 5: Thursday 7th June

Workshop with Heather Potten or

a chance to develop your own work with alpaca fibre

Day 6: Friday 8th June

Embellishing and Embroidery workshop with Joanna Storie

Tour dinner at Marciena Manor Hotel

Day 7: Saturday 9th June

Visit the local market in Ērgļi

Guided tour of Meņģeli Museum the home of the

Jurjani musical brothers

Day 8: Sunday 10th June

Return to Riga or airport drop off

(Details are subject to change as excursions are added)



Our Tutors



Leva Prane

Leva is a Latvian Textile Artist who has exhibited in juried exhibitions around the world, including Russia, Italy, Netherlands and Mexico. She will welcome us into her studio adorned with her inspiring artworks. Whether a student is a beginner or an experienced felter, she inspires everyone to experiment, encouraging them to go further in their artistic journey. We will be using a range of fibres in this workshop, from fragile lace, merino, silks, cottons to, of course, a little alpaca.

"I have always loved to play, for as far back as I can remember. It means that I know the rules, but I try to move beyond them, to experiment and see where it leads."

I love working with textiles more than any other artistic style – because textiles are everywhere around us. Nuno felting for me represents this fascination with textiles all in one – it has texture and colour, it can be gossamer thin – or thick, it is dry, it is wet, it is also soft - and much softer than other artistic mediums. What I love most of all – is the element of surprise – a touch of the accidental because you never know until the end how it will turn out. You must be very open minded to see it in the finished art work - before it's even finished."



A view of the wrap we will be making with Leva



Loved the workshop,

Leva was great and I

liked being taken

beyond my comfort

zone. (Josephine)



Heather Potten

Heather Potten has an expert eye for colour, which she incorporates into her design work. She also holds regular workshops in 3D and 2D felt and is a committee member of the IFA. Her work has a depth that has taken years of training and experimentation to achieve and aims to create pieces that challenge the way people perceive felt. Felt has strength, it has beauty, it is tactile, and it can be mouldled. It is unique. Heather will be sharing her knowledge of the challenges and joys of felting with alpaca fibres first in a cuff to gain confidence in using the fibre and then in a mixed fibre cowl.

"The cuffs are a relatively small but detailed project in nuno-felt, which involves creating a mosaic of upcycled silk backed by luxurious alpaca (with the optional inclusion of merino). Cuffs also feature an integrated hand-felted button loop and decorative button closure. The nuno-felting technique derives its name from the Japanese word "nuno", meaning cloth. The technique bonds loose fibre, in this case, alpaca, into a sheer fabric such as silk gauze, creating a lightweight felt. Alpaca fibre has a more slippery feel whilst felting than other more common wools such as merino and needs to be laid out carefully in order to ensure the creation of an even texture and a beautifully soft fluffy edging."



Joanna Storie

Joanna first learnt to embroider from her grandmother as young girl. From this early start, Joanna has been on artistic journey experimenting with textiles. She has a certificate in City and Guilds in Creative Embroidery and spent a week with the artist Solveig Refslund learning techniques to incorporate into her art quilts. Students will be encouraged to incorporate hand embroidery into their felting to add texture and detail to their designs.



Our Alpacas



George



Tellus



Mari



Chanel



Brencis &
Sofie



Herkules



Aggie



Turbjørn



Freddie



Mr. P.



Lady V.

Excursion Details



Tour of Griezītes Alpakas

Ian is the hands-on farm manger and he will share his love of alpacas including interesting facts about these beautiful animals. We will have an introduction to the animals who have kindly donated their fleeces to the workshop.



Meņģeli Museum

We will see the farm house where these famous Latvian musicians grew up, play the musical instruments and have a chance to add our contribution to the runner on the loom. Last year the local choir in full Latvian costume sang and shared traditional Latvian food and drink with us and we hope to meet them again.



Kandžas Laboratorija

Mārcis is our entertaining host at the Moonshine Laboratory. Each drink is made from either an apple cider or birch juice base with local berries, fruit or vegetables added. But which ones? You have to try and guess!



Bonijas Siers

A goat farm with an interesting range of cheeses, plain, smoked, barbecued and in oil and herbs. There will be a chance to sample and buy the products and see the friendly, curious goats.

We are working with various people to add local excursions to the itinerary to see the local crafts and produce. To see last year's Latvian Alpaca Adventure, see Heather Potten's blog.

<http://www.heatherpotten.com/blog>



Websites and Contact Details



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Website: <http://www.griezitesalpakas.lv>

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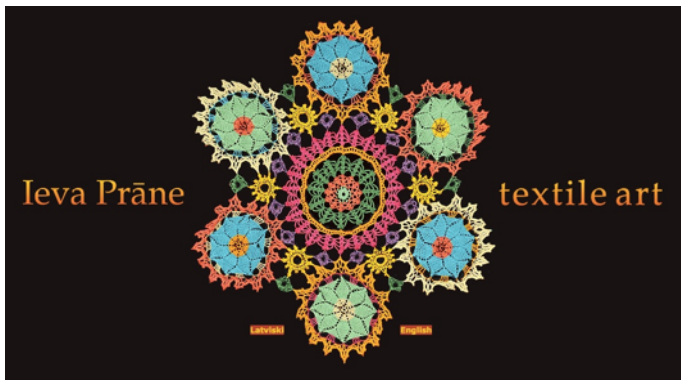


Heather Potten

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Ieva Prāne

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if you have any questions or if you need advice planning your journey to Riga then please feel free to email or contact Heather or Joanna via our Web or Facebook pages.

If you have never used alpaca fibres in felting before or tried and failed, do not worry, we will be there to guide you. We know our animals and we know how the fleeces handle. We will ensure that you get the best out of each one, from those we know that felt well to those that require other fibres to work.

**We are looking forward to welcoming you on our
second Latvian Alpaca Adventure tour.**