

Photographers
Arūnas Baltėnas, Raimondas Paknys

Text author
Audra Kairienė

Translator
Vida Urbonavičius-Watkins

Designer
Isaak Zibuts

© R. Paknio leidykla, 2007
M.K. Čiurlionio g. 18
LT-03104 Vilnius
www.paknioleidykla.lt

ISBN 978-9955-736-10-3



Although Lithuania has an abundance of beautiful places, its most important, and aesthetically, historically and symbolically most valued treasures remain the Old Town in Vilnius, the mediaeval historical capitals of Kernavė and Trakai, and ultimately – the Curonian Spit. The natural beauty of this ribbon of sand separated from the mainland by the Curonian Lagoon is so absolute, the sense of the power of the water, wind and sand so strong, the cultural and historical specificity of this territory so unique, that it's unlikely that any visitor to this area would simply revel in the sun, the water, and the local cafe cuisine. The breadth of the lagoon as seen from Uošvės Hill near the Thomas Mann house, the magic of the landscape extending from Avikalnis or Parnidžio Dune, the beauty of the sun setting on the Grey Dunes cannot but clear the vision, reveal far-distant perspectives, awaken the long subdued quivering of the soul.

German linguist, philosopher and statesman Wilhelm von Humboldt, who travelled the Curonian Spit in 1809, left behind words which to this day are a fitting recommendation for this site: "The Curonian Spit is so distinctive that one must see it, as one must see Italy or Spain – so as not to deprive the soul of images of such extraordinary beauty." The German writer Thomas Mann, who spent the summers of 1929–1933 in Nida, contributed no less to the popularity of the spit. This is what he said to fellow members at the Munich Rotary Club in 1931: "We spent several weeks holidaying in Rauschen, a fairly flat and bourgeois Baltic resort, not unlike a number of others. We began to yearn for something different. And then it was suggested that we visit the Curonian Spit. Fine! We set out for Nida for several days, and were so overwhelmed by the views, that, as the Holy Scriptures say, we decided to build ourselves a cabin there." The influence of this famous writer's creativity and his choice of resort remain a great incentive for thousands of his fellow countrymen, and other travellers, to visit Neringa annually.









1 Vinkio Dune

2 Parnidžio Dune, in the distance – Death Valley

3 Curonian Lagoon regatta