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### Tērvete Hillfort

Tērvete is renowned as a mighty political and economic center of Semigalia. Tērvete Hillfort is one of the most impressive and magnificent hillforts not only in the Western Semigallia, but also in all the lands of the ancient Balts. The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle tells a lot about Tērvete mentioning not only the wooden castle and its surroundings, but also its rulers, namely Viestards and Nameisis. Tērvete hillfort is a part of a great archeological site comprised of four hillforts: Monastery hill (*Klosterkalns*), Holly hill (*Svētais kalns*), Birds' hill (*Putnu kalns*) and Tērvete hill with medieval castle ruins, ancient settlement and burial ground.



2

### Ruins of the Tērvete Medieval Castle

Ruins of the masonry castle stand near the main hillfort of Tērvete. These are the remains of the hunting castle of the dukes of Courland and Semigallia, which is assumed to be built in the late 16th century on the foundation of the older castle of the Teutonic Order.



3

### The 12th century wooden castle of Tērvete (reconstruction)

The exposition of the wooden castle of Tērvete tells the old history of Tērvete and the Semigallians. It shows many artefacts of the Semigallian culture: jewellery, weaponry, clothing. You can see the largest exhibition of swords in Latvia.



4

### Holy Hill

The name of Holy Hill could point to the location of a shrine of the ancient Semigallians. The Livonian Order built here a Heiligenberg castle with a force of 300 men in 1286. Semigallians failed to fight the castle, so they burned down their own Tērvete castle and retreated to Raktē.



5

### High (Forest) Hill

The hillfort in the forest near the Latvian and Lithuanian border called the High Hill or the Forest Hill could have been the centre of the Semigallian land Silene mentioned in the 13th century sources. Archaeological excavations imply that the hillfort used to be inhabited before Christ and in the 9th to 13th centuries.



6

### Žagarē Hillfort (Hill of Žvelgaitis)

The hillfort was arranged on Žagarē Esker, on the left bank of the Svētē River. Most likely, the castle was built by the Germans seeking to get hold on their new lands. This is implied by the finds that are not of Balts' origin. The shape of the hillfort has a rectangular trapezoid with ditches and terraces, while the Balts preferred the oval shape. Throughout 16th to 18th centuries, the hillfort hosted a manor, which was built at the location of the 13th century unfortified settlement. The Manor of Žagarē (later the Old Žagarē or Aukštadvaris) has been mentioned since 1495. The Hillfort was named after the Lithuanian duke Žvelgaitis only in the first half of the 20th century.



7

### Raktē Hillfort (Raktuvē Hill)

Raktē castle stood on the bank of the Svētē River. Constant Order attacks caused Semigallians to retreat from Tērvete and Dobele to Raktē castle. However, in 1289, Semigallians were forced to abandon the castle and flee to their last stronghold Sidabrē.



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### Sidabrē Hillfort (the Hill)

The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle mentions Sidabrē as the last stronghold of Semigallians destroyed by the Order in 1290. Some of its defenders moved to Mitau (Jelgava) together with the Teutonic Knights, while others retreated to Lithuania. Now the hillfort hosts a cemetery.



9

### Joniškis Museum of History and Culture

The museum represents archaeology, history, ethnography and art of the Joniškis region. One of its expositions is dedicated to the culture of the Semigallian tribe. The museum carries out educational and cultural activities, organises excursions.



10

### The Memorial of the Battle of Saulė

The Battle of Saulė (Šiauliai) was fought between the Lithuanian forces and the army of the Order of the Sword Brothers in 1236. The Order's defeat was so devastating that it was annexed by the stronger Teutonic Order in 1237. The exact location of the battle is still under debate.



11

**The Hillfort of Jurgaičiai (The Hill of Crosses)**

The Hillfort of Jurgaičiai located on the left bank of Kulpė River is identified with the Kuliai Castle burned by the Teutonic Knights in 1348. For many years, the hillfort had stood bare. In the mid-19th century, the first crosses were erected there and by the early 20th century, the Hill of Crosses turned into a popular venue of pilgrimage. Around 200 thousand crosses were counted over here. In 1993, the site was visited by Pope John Paul II. The hillfort is viewed as a Lithuanian Catholic shrine and is visited by thousands of pilgrims and tourists every year.



16

**Rekčiai Hillfort**

The hillfort stands in a picturesque location on the right bank of Venta River. A large foot settlement was found nearby. The hillfort was inhabited until the 14th century. Various legends tell stories about the hill. Today, the site is the venue of celebrations and festivities of the local folk.



22

**Babote Hillfort (The Hill of Gallows)**

The hillfort is located near the Bikstupe Brook. Presumably, the Babote Castle belonged to the Land of Dobe. In 1279, a battle took place near Babote between the Semigallian troops, led by Nameisis, and the retreating forces of the Teutonic Knights of Livonia and the Curonians.



17

**Papilė Hillfort I**

The hillfort stands on the left bank of Venta River. It used to host the Papilė Castle attacked by the Teutonic Knights of Livonia in 1339 and 1359. An ancient settlement was situated on the hillfoot. The 7th–14th century burial ground has been found nearby. In the 19th century, the cemetery was opened on the hill.



23

**Dobele Hillfort with the Teutonic Castle Remains**

The hillfort rising on the right bank of the Bērze River once was the center of the Semigallian Dobele land and one of the strongest Semigallian castles with a large foot settlement. In 1279-1289, the Dobele Castle withstood six attacks of the Livonian Order. Nonetheless, the constant attacks forced Semigallians to burn their castle and retreat to Raktė. In 1335-1347, the Livonian Order built here a masonry castle and a church which also served as a castle chapel. After 1730, the castle was abandoned and gradually turned into ruins. Recently, the ruins of the castle have been adapted for tourism and the chapel was turned into a museum.



12

**The Salduvė Hillfort**

The Salduvė (Žuvininkai) Hillfort stands in the eastern outskirts of the Šiauliai city. It used to host a mighty wooden castle to protect Lithuania from the attacks of Teutonic Knights in the 13th and 14th centuries. Nowadays, the hillfort is often visited by the residents and guests of the Šiauliai city.



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**Luokava Hillfort (Lokava Hill)**

The mysterious hillfort of Luokava located in a remote area surrounded by swampy forests dates back to the 1st and early 2nd millennium AD. A large foot settlement was found eastward from the hillfort. In the 19th–20th centuries, part of the hill was destroyed by gravel excavation.



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**Dobele Local History Museum**

The museum invites to learn the history of the Dobele castle and the town. Part of exposition is dedicated to the Semigallians. Here, you will see the reconstructed Semigallian costumes, authentic household utensils, jewels and weapons.



13

**Baltic Culture Education Centre „The Balts’ Road“**

The interactive centre „The Balts’ Road“ promotes travelling and learning the cultural and natural heritage of the Baltic tribes. Here, the history, culture and way of life of the Balts’ are presented by means of modern technologies, artefact copies and educational activities.



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**Dobe (Incēni) and Mežakalns Hillforts**

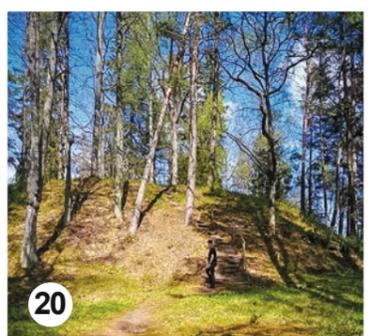
It is believed that the hillfort was the old centre of the Semigallian land Dobe (Dobene) with a well-fortified castle and a large foot settlement. Mežakalns (the Forest Hill) stands across the road. It is believed the hillfort hosted a wooden castle of the Livonian Order built in the winter of 1259-1260.



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**The Šiauliai History Museum**

Modern expositions of the museum introduce history, archaeology and ethnography of the Šiauliai region. Tourist groups can order various educational programmes; the museum also hosts exhibitions and events.



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**Spārņi Hillfort (Sparnene)**

Historians believe that the well-fortified hillfort near the Spārņi Lake was the centre of the Semigallian land Sparnene. The hill rises 30 m high with very steep slopes. An ancient settlement and a burial ground has been found nearby. The hillfort was inhabited until the early 14th century.



21

**Jaunpils**

It is the former Neuenburg castle of the Livonian Order's Dobele Commandery, first mentioned in 1411. The castle stands on a small peninsula surrounded by the millpond and defensive moat. In the 17th century, the castle was rearranged into the residence of the local baron.



25

**The Castle of Jelgava (Mitau)**

The old Mitau Castle was built on the Lielupe River island by Livonian Landmaster Conrad Mandern in 1265-1266. Later, rebuilt in stone, it served as a base for attacks against Semigallians. The castle was demolished in 1738 for building a residence for the Dukes of Courland and Semigallia.



15

**Šilėnai Hillfort**

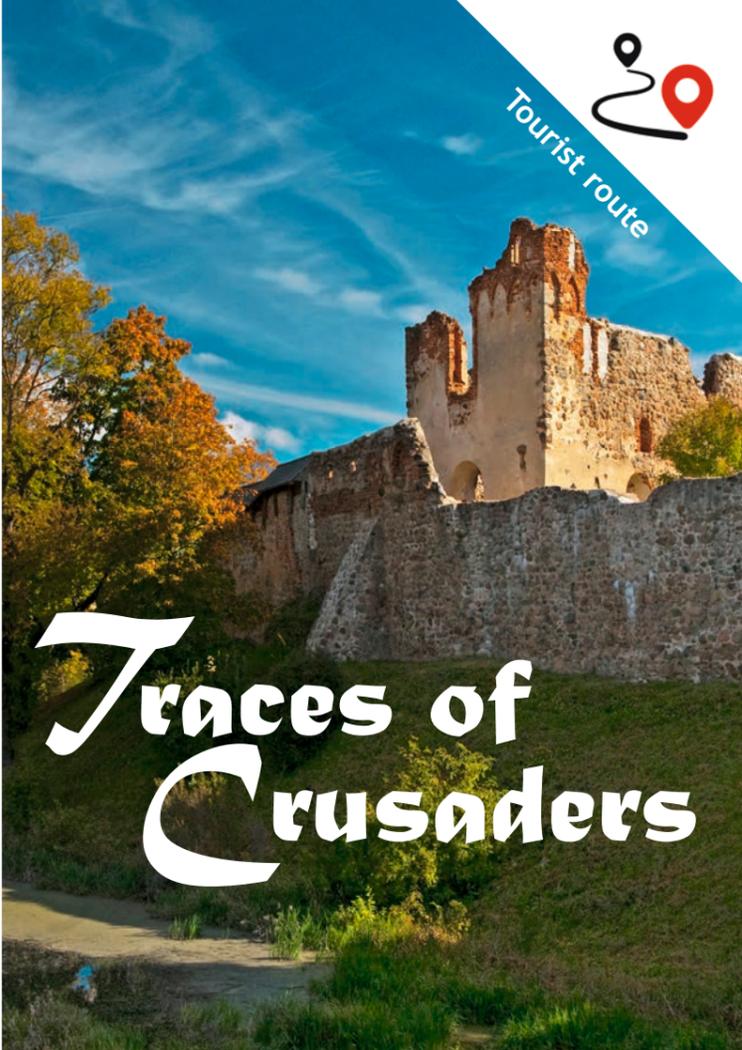
The Šilėnai Hillfort located on the left bank of Venta River. Possibly, it could have been the center of the Semigallian Silene land mentioned in the 13th century sources. An ancient settlement and a burial ground has been found nearby. The hillfort was inhabited until the early 14th century.



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**Jelgava History and the Art Museum of G. Elias**

The museum was founded in 1818 in a historic building known as the Academia Petrina. The famous Mitau gymnasium operated here for a long time, where the first presidents of Latvia and Lithuania studied. The museum hosts the valuable collection of paintings by Ģederts Elias (1887–1975).



**Traces of Crusaders**

**Tourist route „Traces of Crusades“** invites you to get to know the ancient history of Semigallia, to learn about the battles with the Teutonic Knights, to follow in the footsteps of Crusades to Western Semigallia.

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