



THE FIRST SWATH - THE BEGINNING OF HAYMAKING

EVENT: HAYMAKING ETHNOGRAPHIC FESTIVAL "THE FIRST SWATH FESTIVAL IN BIJŪNAI"
DATE: 6TH OF JULY
LOCATION: BIJŪNAI

"Corn crake is already yelling: Need to go mowing the meadowlands", the Lithuanians used to say, while taking scythes with the greatest joy. Often, meadowlands were mutual, so Lithuanians who had met during the communal work early in the morning were swinging scythes, sang songs and laid freshly cut grass in the swaths.

The ethnographic festival of haymaking day on the 6th of July – the day of coronation of king Mindaugas. This day is loved and wel-

comed by the people of Bijūnai every year. The festival takes place in an open outdoor space, which invites dwellers to have fun and spent leisure time meaningfully. Concert programs are presented by amateur art groups and pop music performers. Every year, residents of local and neighboring villages, communities, adult and youth art amateur groups with their own art programs contribute to organization of the event.

Before the festival, the villagers are invited to make sculptures of hay, straw or grass, which are exhibited in the festival's exhibition later. It's important that those who come to the festival wouldn't become only passive observers, therefore, with the help of various competitions and nominations, the participants of the festival are involved in the activities. This creates even better mood, impressions, experiences and emotions. There is a demonstrative pro-

gram of mowing process i.e. competition. The participant worthy of the recognition for the best results in a particular category is chosen: "The Best Scythe Beater", "The Best Mower", "The Best First Sweeper", "Hay stacker", "Raker".

At 9 p.m., all those who gathered are singing the national anthem in unison together with the whole of Lithuania and Lithuanians around the world. Later, people gather near a bonfire. The artistic program of the festival is continued by amateur art groups. The participants continue to have fun, communicate, dance, enjoy traditional rural fish soup and village housewives' dishes. The First Swath festival is an opportunity not only to communicate with people of different rural generations, spent time together but also to remember the old rural traditions, get to know them and repeat them in response to our environment.





MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS

EVENT: CHRISTMAS ETHNO-WORKSHOPS IN TRAKAI, GET-TOGETHERS OF THE ADVENT PERIOD

DATE: DECEMBER-JANUARY

LOCATION: TRAKAI PALACE OF CULTURE

The arrival of Christmas rarely coincides with their date on a calendar. We feel Christmas and the joy of waiting for it much earlier. All one has to do is want, wait and, of course, get involved in creating joy or take the initiative and create it yourself. The people of Trakai region are well aware that they can always pick up Christmas mood and emotions in Trakai.

Here, in the Capital of Santa Claus, a real Christmas factory is fired up during the annual cy-

cle of Christmas events. The factory has various departments: from toys, crafts to Christmas mood. Here, you can make toys for the Christmas tree, as well as learn the art of casting candles, making clay pieces or floristics and decorating. The focus is on responsible consumption – ecological Advent calendars, decorations and other fun things that are made from secondary raw materials. There is laughter, chatter, and, sometimes, if you listen closely, you will even hear someone concentrating in the Christmas factory. It's a place where ideas, joy born in this place or the process of creative work and fruits that unite everyone are being shared.

Department of Christmas mood often hosts concerts, romance evenings, and various art groups delight eyes and hearts of the audience with their performances. The focus is on fostering family creativity, community spirit and creating a mutual Christmas mood.

Visiting Christmas ethno-workshops is like escaping from the fast-paced, flying and worried everyday world or stopping a little and listening to the moment of the ticking present. The Christmas factory becomes powerful when it's crowded. Only then do the production processes gain momentum, the machines begin to work, the laughter sounds, the smell of paint and wax begins to linger in the air, and the true Christmas spirit spreads throughout the whole region of Trakai.

Make your own Christmas. You can do that from wood, wax or paper. You made it? Preserve it in your heart. Share it later, it will come back to you with wonders.

