

First a brief geographical overview! The only town is Kuressaare which is the capital of the island of Saaremaa, situated approximately 200 kilometers south-west of Tallinn (the capital of Estonia). Saaremaa which is around 2700 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of around 35,000 inhabitants is the largest of Estonia's islands. Although there are various alternative routes the 'easiest' way to get to the island of Saaremaa is via Tallinn, if not coming from Latvia or Estonia itself.

The other possibilities are for example, sail by yacht directly to Kuressaare yacht harbor (in fact there are many others yacht harbors too) or come by motorbike at Saaremaa .

```
{mosmap lat='58.2531'|lon='22.4887'|zoom='14'|text='Saaremaal is wonderful'|tooltip='Nature, SPA's'|marker='3'|traffic='1'}
```

### **STEP 1 Getting to Tallinn by plane ( if relevant).**

There is several different aviation companies flying to Tallinn and from.

Thanks in particular to the budget airlines there are now more daily flights from a large number of airports including the following:

- With Nordic Aviation Group AS [www.nordica.ee](http://www.nordica.ee) from several different regular destinations and with some extra summer flights ( Paris, Nica, Split, Berlin etc.).
- Using [Easyjet](http://Easyjet) from London Gatwick airport.
- Using [Ryanair](http://Ryanair) from different destinations ( varies from summer to winter schedules)
- With Lufthansa [www.lufthansa.de](http://www.lufthansa.de)
- With British Airways [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com) (usually operated by Finnair)

For the more adventurous among you there are a number of other possible routes (sure there are many other)

- Helsinki [www.finnair.com](http://www.finnair.com) followed by a flight to Tallinn (or a two hour ferry crossing to Tallinn by [Tallink](#) or [Viking Line](#))
- Riga (Latvia) with [Ryanair](#) (followed by Lux Express bus Riga – Tallinn ( <http://www.luxexpress.eu> ) or hire car journey)
- St Petersburg – [British Airways](#) – if you do choose this route though be careful to sort out the visa early! There is a ferry line Helsinki-Tallinn-St Petersburg too.
- Stockholm [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com) followed by an Nordica or SAS flight to Tallinn ( or a long ferry journey this time!)

### **STEP 2 Getting to Saaremaa (Kuressaare) (from Tallinn airport).**

The bad news is that this is actually the most tricky part! The transfer time by road from Tallinn to the island of Saaremaa is around 4 hours. Although there is a flight from Tallinn airport directly to [Kuressaare airport](#) , this cannot be booked long in advance and as they operate with very small planes (7 -18 seaters) the service is sometimes suspended due to weather. Operator for Kuressaare line is "Transaviabaltika" [www.saartelennuliinid.ee](http://www.saartelennuliinid.ee)

and the airport is situated only 3 kilometers from down center.

The other options we would recommend are therefore:

**By car** – If you are interested in hiring a car you can let know about that one of travel agencies ,

as they may be able to get preferential rates. Car hire can be arranged through the following companies at Tallinn airport ( [Budget](#) , [Hertz](#) , [Avis](#) , [Europcar](#) , etc.).

However, it is much more economical to take the bus from Tallinn to Kuressaare and to pre-book car hire on Saaremaa as prices there are much lower than on the mainland. About car hire at Saaremaa you can find out [here](#) .

The trip from the mainland of Estonia passes through some of the country's most beautiful scenery. In particular the stretch from Muhu onto Saaremaa makes the journey more than worthwhile!

By normal bus service – there is a regular bus service (departures every 2 hours) Tallinn –Kuressaare to and from Tallinn bus station which is ten minutes by taxi from the Tallinn airport . The price of the bus ticket to Kuressaare is around 15-17 €.

Information about bus routes and schedules in Estonia: [www.tpilet.ee](http://www.tpilet.ee) and for Saaremaa internal routes: [www.buSSIPilet.ee](http://www.buSSIPilet.ee)

Once negotiating your way out of Tallinn the journey is quite simple. You travel south-west towards Virtsu and take the short (30 min) ferry ride to the island of Muhu, which is linked by a bridge to Saaremaa.

The car and passenger ferry from the mainland port of Virtsu operates from every 1h10 minutes or 35 minutes to Kuivastu in the summer and from every hour up to two hours during the rest of the year.

Exact schedules for the ferry's can be checked on the **TS Laevad OÜ** web-site and ferry tickets are available directly from

[www.praamid.ee](http://www.praamid.ee)

□  
too.

Tickets are available as printable with barcode and as e-service too ( then you can initiate entry for boarding with your phone at port) . And of course there are ticket offices at ports.

Phone numbers: Virtsu port + 372 47 75020; Kuivastu port +372 45 45432.

***It is useful to pre-book car spaces at peak times such as Friday afternoons to the island and Sunday evenings back to the mainland. This can be done □ at web or by travel agent.***

Estonian roads, once outside Tallinn, are very quiet and a joy to drive along – you should look out for the mooses (who are not known for their intelligence and tend to wander onto roads) and the other abundant wildlife in Estonia.

Once on the island of Saaremaa you follow the signposts for Kuressaare or for your destination.

### **Coming from Hiiumaa island ( or leaving to).**

There is a regular ferry line between islands Saaremaa and Hiiumaa from port Triigi to Sõru. Schedules for the ferry's can be checked on the Saaremaa Laevakompanii web-site and ferry tickets are available directly from

[www.veeteed.com](http://www.veeteed.com)