



2023 TOP 100

GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: An inviting journey through time: you can look back 150 years on Rakvere's Pikk street

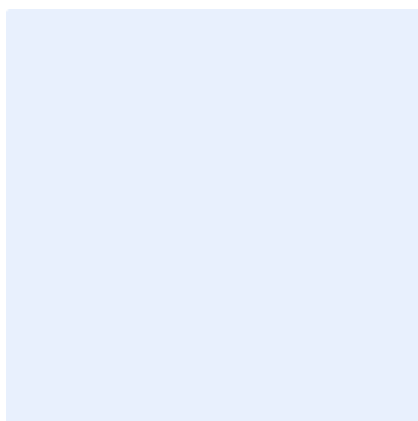
Destination, Country: Rakvere, Estonia

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In the category: ☐ Destination Management ☐ Environment & Climate ☐ Thriving Communities
☐ Nature & Scenery ☒ Culture & Tradition ☐ Business & Marketing

The Story in a picture:

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Summary:

Rakvere is a fast-developing, modern city with a long history, with lots of greenery and diverse culture.

We are very proud that GreenDestinations recognized the city of Rakvere with the international green destination silver level. It is important for us to continuously develop the city of Rakvere as a sustainable destination and increase the attractiveness of the region.

The long street is the main street of the historic old town of Rakvere, the purpose of the reconstruction was to design a modern urban space, where the traffic load has been reduced and attention has been paid to the comfort of pedestrians.

In the accompanying story, you will learn how an attractive and modern pedestrian-friendly link between Rakvere's central square and the rampart was created as part of the renewal of Pika Street, valuing the main street of the historic old town and creating the conditions for bringing investments to the area.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

RAKVERE - it is a combination of culture, history and greenery!

Rakvere is located in Northern Estonia, Lääne-Viru county and is also the center of the county.

Rakvere is only an hour's drive from Tallinn, the capital of Estonia.

Rakvere is a town with a long history, rapidly developing on the coast of Northern Estonia. There is a lot of greenery and diverse culture in Rakvere. The main attractions of the city include the medieval fortress, Estonia's largest open-air concert area on the rampart, the tarva statue, the renovated historic representative street of the city (Pikk tänav), the Rakvere theater, the manor park, several museums and hotels.

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In terms of cultural events, Rakvere is given a face by the Rakvere City Days celebrating the city's birthday at the beginning of June, and the Rakvere City Composer Arvo Pärt Music Days in autumn.

The theater festival Baltoscandal, the Punk Song Festival and the intergenerational dance show Meeste Dance Party are also well-known. NIGHT RUN has started from Rakvere.

Environment and energy saving are important for the city of Rakvere. Green thinking is necessary for introducing a healthy living environment and a healthy lifestyle. The goal is an environmentally conscious community! Decisions work are important environmental considerations.

According to the vision of the Rakvere city development plan, Rakvere events are a healthy, clean and safe living environment with forest and green areas.

The city of Rakvere makes efforts to develop climate-friendly attitudes and choices and raise community awareness of how to regulate and adapt to climate change. Rakvere creates an attractive environment for the development and implementation of innovative technologies, services that primarily reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The city of Rakvere has prepared a climate plan. Rakvere has joined: European Covenant of Mayors, Energy Cities, .C.L.E.I.

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

Pikk street is the main street of the historic old town of Rakvere. Due to the developments that took place over the decades, the area was not of interest to entrepreneurs, as it had a rather bad reputation and did not attract the casual customer. The Pikk street was relatively rarely used for walking. The street has a diverse architectural appearance and is located in the city center, but it lacked a clear identity and attractions. Both the sidewalk and the roadway were technically in poor condition. The Pikk street was dominated by cars, the movement space for pedestrians was rather modest. Tourists traveled from the city center to the rampart rather by car and making a big tour than by walking the shorter and more logical way, because the shortcuts were not inviting. In this way, small businesses and catering establishments, which could offer tourists interest and necessary services, were deprived of the flow of visitors..

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

The purpose of the reconstruction of Rakvere Pikk Street was to design a modern urban space, where the traffic load has been reduced and attention has been paid to the comfort of pedestrians.

An attractive and modern pedestrian-friendly link was created between Rakvere's central square and the rampart, valuing the main street of the historic old town and creating conditions for bringing investments to the area. Increasing the attractiveness of the region among both entrepreneurs and visitors will in turn help increase employment and increase the city's revenue base.

During the reconstruction works of Pikk Street, which began in the spring of 2019, the historical main street of the old town was transformed into a modern promenade for approximately 700 meters. As a result of the renovation, the street remained one-way for car traffic up to Kooli Street. A speed limit of up to 30 km/h was established in the street area. Pedestrians and light motorists got a larger area of use. A pedestrian area with special street furniture, flower boxes and benches was built on one side of the street. The entire street section to be reconstructed received modern street lighting. The entire street was paved with stone: the driveway was made of granite stones and the pedestrian area was covered with concrete slabs. In terms of urban planning, a small square (with the address Pikk 22) was created at the intersection of Pikk and Parkal streets, which connects the pedestrian promenade of Parkal street with Vallimäe.

Pikk street was renovated in 2019 as part of the "Good public space" project of the Association of Estonian Architects and "Republic of Estonia 100", which dealt with the improvement of city centers. By tidying up our common part – public space, the city signaled that it also values the contribution of building owners to keeping the historic environment in order. In this way, the historical role of the representative street of Pikk Street was restored. An active entertainment and shopping street emerged in Rakverre, which is attractive to both local residents and visitors to the city and is an important driving force in revitalizing the local business landscape.

The project "Development of Rakvere Pikk Street as an attractive urban space" was co-financed from the funds of the European Union Regional Development Fund in the amount of nearly 2 million euros. Designed by KARISMA arhitektid OÜ, authors Risto Parve and Kai Süda, built by AS YIT Eesti.

On the Pikk street, you can look back in time 150 years

The long wall of the 24 building, next to which the journey of city visitors from Vallimäe to the lower city runs, was covered with a fabric measuring nearly 165 m², on which one of the oldest photographs of Rakvere's Pikk street, taken in 1865, is printed.

The staircase leading to Vallimäe got gorgeous energy-saving lighting

During the renovation of Pikk Street, the staircase leading to Vallimäe from the parking lot next to the Citizen's House Museum was also beautifully illuminated, which offers a beautiful play of light when walking at dusk.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

The renovation of Pikk Street has increased the city's tourism appeal, attracting more visitors who want to discover the area's rich history and cultural heritage.

The creation of new activities and services on the basis of the Old Town supports the increase of tourist flow to the region and the longer stay of visitors in the region, which creates the need for the creation of new tourism companies or the expansion of existing ones. This creates new jobs and motivates people to join the labor market and settle in the region long-term. Entrepreneurship in the field of tourism and additional services as well as additional investments in the private sector are encouraged.

The renewal of Pikk Street has encouraged residents' and visitors' interest in the area, laid the foundation for conducting guided tours, new events (e.g. festivals of Ancient Days, Medieval Days, Pikk täav as a food street, etc.).

The cooperation and cross-marketing of Pikk Street entrepreneurs is a good example of the unity and mutual support of the local business community. It is a vibrant and diverse area where many companies have realized that together they can achieve more than they can alone.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

After the renovation of Pikk street, the world was unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic, then the war in Ukraine, which has undoubtedly affected local developments, investments, building renovation projects and the launch of new businesses.

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

As a result of the reconstruction, the attractiveness of Pikk street increased among tourists visiting the city and local residents. A modern and high-quality urban space was created, which has increased the satisfaction of local residents with the environment and contributes to strengthening the reputation of the city of Rakvere as a high-quality living environment. High-quality and modern street space has created the conditions for organizing attractive street festivals that bring new visitors to the city. The interest of entrepreneurs to invest in the region has increased significantly. The purpose of the reconstruction of Pikk Street is to create a new environment where pedestrians feel safer and have time to calmly observe the surroundings and enjoy the environment.

The feedback from people after the reconstruction was very positive, because the environment changed a lot, the contrast between the old and the new was great. Movement is calmer on the street, there are more pedestrians, open (summer) cafes and new businesses: Starmoto Rakvere, HairPro, Mullistuudio, Lillepood Lill, K&K Magusanurk, Bar&Café Vesper.

The activities of the city of Rakvere for the development of the region have continued:

- In addition to the reconstruction works on Pikk Street, Rakvere also developed Parkali Street as one of the main routes for visitors to the city from Vallimäe to the lower city. Already in autumn 2018, half of the street turned into a street with sidewalk priority, where flowers and rest benches were added in the spring of 2019.
 - Reconstruction of part II of Pikk street with the support of investment support in 2021, as a result of which Pikk
 - Erection of a statue of Edith Kotka-Nyman, an honorary citizen of the city of Rakvere, on Pikk 22 Square;
- the street in its entirety up to J. Kunderi Street will have the same appearance as in the first stage;
- Renovation of the long historical walls along the 22 squares, where outdoor areas will be built to display various exhibitions and organize events.

Tips for other destinations

Your suggestions or recommendations for other destinations facing the same issues or implementing similar solutions

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Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

- In 2019, the renewal of Pikk Street was awarded the title of Lääne-Viru's Deed of the Year in the category of joint actions. The greatest pleasure is that the voters were the local people themselves. After all, the goal was to create an environment that invites you to go and feel good.
- In 2020, Pikk tänav received the annual award of the Heritage Protection Board. The renovation of Pikk Street was declared the best new building in a historic environment out of 45 nominees. In the jury's opinion, the will and willingness of the Rakvere City Government to contribute to the



development of the historic city center deserved recognition. We are pleased that a street was planned that complements and highlights the values of the old town, taking into account the wishes of the local government, heritage protection goals and the needs of the local community.

