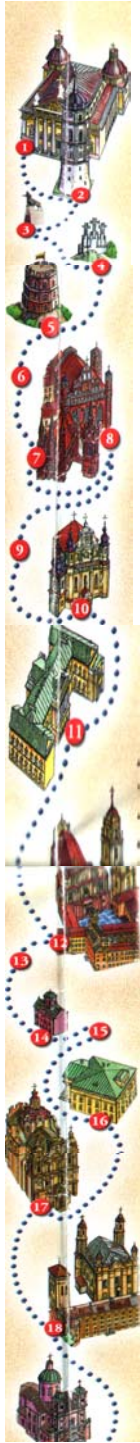




## „The old Vilnius“

Project: I do know the place where I live

Project author Adomas Kapčinskas



Vilnius Žygimantas Augustas Basic School



- (1) *Erected on ancient grounds of the original cathedral that was built in 1251 by King Mindaugas, the first Lithuanian king to convert to Christianity, later it was turned into a pagan temple devoted to perkūnas, the god of Thunder. It served as such until 1387, the year Christianity was finally introduced in Lithuania. Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, all coronations of the rulers of Lithuania were held in the Cathedral. The building underwent many reconstructions, the last in 1801.*
- (2) *The belfry is one of the oldest buildings in Lithuania, a former tower of the defense wall around the Lower Castle, contains the main town clock and 17 bells.*
- (3) *In 1996, a granite monument to Grand Duke Gediminas was erected.*
- (4) *In a distance you can see the Hill of Three Crosses, where the Crooked Castle used to stand in the 13<sup>th</sup> century next to it- the Castle Hill*
- (5) *Gediminas Tower on top of the Castle Hill, one of four original towers of the defense wall that once surrounded the Upper Castle and the ruins of the Castle Palace, is all that remains of the ensemble. The tower has become the symbol of the town. After Žalgiris battle the castle lost its significance. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Castle served as a prison from 1960 the tower is administered by the Castle history Museum. From the top of Gediminas Tower, which has become an unofficial symbol of Vilnius a visitor can admire the magnificent panorama of the town.*
- (6) *In 1822, the outstanding poet Adam Mickiewicz used to live in the house marker.*



- (7) *St. Annas Church is a magnificent jewel, built in 1501 and rebuilt in 1581.*
- (8) *Next to the church there is a neo-Gothic belfry. St. Francis Church was built in the period between 1506-1513 alongside with the defense wall of Vilnius, therefore it contains defense towers and loopholes. After the reconstruction the pediment of the church acquired the forms of the Baroque.*
- (9) *At the river Vilnia a monument to the poet Adam Mickiewicz has been erected.*
- (10) *On the right, you can see St. Michael's Church, the only Renaissance style church in Vilnius. Its commissioners were the eminent noble family of Sapiega. The tombstone of the family of Leo Sapiega, Chancellor of Lithuania, is a valuable historical monument. In 1655 the church was devastated by the Russian Cossacks. The church currently houses the Museum of Architecture.*
- (11) *The current President's Office and square are just next to it. In 1387 this place was the site of the first Gothic place built to the Bishop of Vilnius. After the division of the Polish and Lithuanian state in 1795, the palace became the residence of the Russian Governor-General, visited by Napoleon and the Russian tsar Alexander. In 1824-1832 the palace was rebuilt in late Neo-Classical style.*
- (12) *The University of Vilnius 12 closed courtyards and the surrounding buildings. A former College founded by the Jesuit Order, in 1579 it was chartered by Stephen Bathory King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, as an institution of higher education and received the name of the Academy and University of Vilnius. The excursion round the university*



*should be started with the University Library. It's the oldest library in Lithuania, which started from the collection of books donated to the College by the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Zygmunt August.*

- (13) *You can find an original piece of art in numerous souvenir stores around.*
- (14) *Pilies street gets broader at St. Pianitzkaya Orthodox Church. In the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century there used to be a fish market, therefore it was called "the salty end".*
- (15) *Up the street, on the left, the Chodkiewicz family palace is located, now the exhibition site of the Picture Gallery. From this place the Old Town's central thoroughfare is called Didžioji.*
- (16) *Stiklišiu street will guide us to Rotušės Square. It used to be the main market place until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The square witnessed city's celebrations, executions, a gallows and a pillory used to stand here. In 1387 Vilnius was granted the Magdeburg right and the Town Hall, the headquarters of the town Hall is unknown.*
- (17) *On the left of the Town Hall you will find St. Casimir's Church, founded in 1604 in honour of Prince Casimir Jagiellon, the patron saint of Lithuania. It's the first Baroque church in Vilnius. In 1832 it was turned into an Orthodox Church; in 1919 returned to Catholics. The Soviets turned it into the Museum of Atheism and the History of Religion. Since 1991 it has been an acting Jesuit church.*



- (18) *The Holy Trinity Church and Bazilian monastery. On the way toward the Gates of Dawn you can see a few interesting residential houses built in 15<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.*
- (19) *The Orthodox Church of the Holy Pirit was built in 1632-1638. Quite many valuable icons and paintings have survived in it. Since 1826 the preserved bodies of the Orthodox saints Anthony, John and Eustachius rest in the church. In 1619 the first grammar of the Slavonic language was published in the churchs printing house*
- (20) *St. Theresas Church was built in 1633-1650 and decorated in Scandinavian marble and granite will catch your eye.*
- (21) *St. Theresas Church conjoins the Chapel built in the Gates of Dawn .The Chapel is famous for the portrait of Virgin Mary painted by an unknown artist of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It's a valuable specimen of the Renaissance painting in Lithuania.*

