



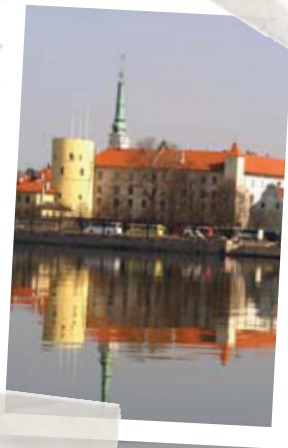
CultureNotes: Latvia

One thing you may notice about your Latvian student is a desire for privacy, at least until he or she feel comfortable in your family. Latvians are typically more reserved and formal with new acquaintances and sometimes do not even discuss personal matters with friends.

Self-control is a valued behavior in Latvia. You may notice that your student will not readily display emotional extremes. Your student may also seem a bit quiet, as small talk is not common in the Latvian culture. What Americans might consider to be awkward silence won't necessarily bother a Latvian.

The Latvian culture is centered on the family. Even in the cities, it is common for extended families to live in close proximity to one another. The nuclear family is rarely large, usually only including one or two children.

Age and position generally earn respect in Latvia, but with that respect comes responsibility. The "head" of a family or group - usually the most senior person - is expected to make decisions in the best interest of the group.



Riga Castle →

- * Capital: Riga
- * Population: 2,248,000
- * Area: About 24,938 sq.mi.
- * Nationality: Latvian(s)
- * Language: Latvian; most also speak Russian
- * Climate: Temperate, maritime
- * Fun Fact: The president of Latvia lives in Riga Castle, which was built in 1330.



Latvia holds a national song festival every 5 years.