

## Austra's Tree in Oviši



Foto autors Ventspils Tūrisma informācijas centra foto arhīvs

A metal sculpture **Austra's Tree** was installed in the village of Oviši in Tārgale Parish, near the lighthouse, surrounded by a forest where old pines grow. Its height is 6.5 meters, width – 5 meters. The Austra's Tree was placed in a way so that the Midsummer morning sunrise can be reflected in it.

The authors of the Latvian symbol are the craftsmen Sīmansoni – the son Jurgis and father Māris from Rencēni Parish in Valmiera area.

This symbol was chosen because it is beautiful and aesthetic; it symbolizes several dimensions and shows the development of an individual and society. The Austra's Tree is connected to the knowledge of the world – existing before us, discovered by us today and the one still hidden from us. The Austra's Tree means continuous development of the individual and society, it reminds us that we originated from our ancestors and a new generation – children- is behind us,” says the author of the idea, Physician Rauls Vēliņš.

The Austra's Tree (also the Tree of Sun, the Bush of the World, the Tree of the World, an oak tree, a large bush, a fir) is a mythological image in the Latvian mythology, as well as an ornament. The roots of the Austra' Tree were associated with the underground world. The trunk – the middle world inhabited by humans, animals and other living beings. The foliage of the tree was associated with the heavenly world. The leaves of the Austra' Tree were of silver, the roots of copper, and the branches of gold. Usually, this tree was an oak. The Austra's Tree symbolizes the path of the sun and the world order. The Austra's Tree is mentioned in the Latvian songs, as well as is found in the Latvian folk ornaments. The Austra's Tree is a symbol of the rhythm of the day, it depicts a person's understanding of the world, symbolizes its connection with spirituality.

The environmental object was donated to the village by the representative of the association “Ovišu draugu kopa”, doctor Rauls Vēliņš.

To find the Austra's Tree, you have to drive along the Ventspils – Kolka highway, turn to Oviši, then to the Oviši Lighthouse. After turning to the lighthouse, there is a road on the left after a few meters. It will take you to the Austra's Tree.

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