



Kraków



**3 days**  
in  
**KRAKOW**

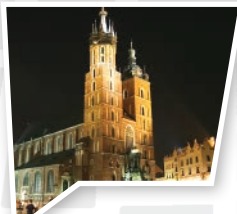


The city to love, too good to leave!

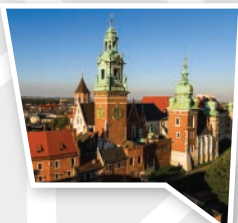




**Cloth Hall**



**St Mary's Church**



**Wawel Castle**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organizacja Narodów  
Zjednoczonych  
dla Wychowania,  
Nauki i Kultury



**Historic Centre of Kraków**  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 1978

**Historyczne Centrum Krakowa**  
wpisane na Listę Światowego  
Dziedzictwa w roku 1978



*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Welcome to Kraków, a place of centuries of history, numerous traditions, and an impressive heritage of the past. All the same, it is also a city looking to the future, leading the way and constantly evolving. Not only can you admire the historic monuments and stroll along the picturesque streets which paved the way for Kraków to enter the UNESCO World Heritage List forty-five years ago. You will also find that there are numerous examples of modern infrastructure or beautiful nature.*

*This brochure only provides suggestions for those who wish to discover our city – its most important attractions, including those off the beaten tourist track. I encourage you to visit Kraków, and to enjoy the rich and varied culinary treats on offer. For more details, please go to [www.krakow.travel](http://www.krakow.travel). Have an unforgettable time in magical Kraków!*

**Jacek Majchrowski**  
Mayor of the City of Kraków

## Three days in Kraków

Often, tourists only have a few hours to get to see a place worth spending a week on, and often they have no more than three days to visit a city that takes months to get to know well. For this reason, they will follow random advice or rush through a guidebook, because even those entitled "A weekend in..." rarely run to less than a hundred pages in fine print. Travellers therefore try to "freeze time" by taking photographs or making videos, and they hurry **to see the highlights, if only from a distance**. Such a visit leaves hazy memories dimmed by fatigue and a sense of being unfulfilled.

In light of this, why have we produced this brochure for visitors to our city? We do not promise that this brochure will enable tourists to explore **Kraków, a UNESCO World Heritage city**, thoroughly in just three days. After all, there is a great deal for the tourist to discover here as there is a multitude of monuments forming the historical fabric of the city, and a rich artistic and cultural life. It is a magical atmosphere which gives the busy residents and visitors

countless opportunities to slow down, and stop and look... Kraków is also perhaps the only well-known historic city that can provide a wealth of impressions and utter and genuine satisfaction, even if visited briefly.

This is what we have to offer, a look at Kraków that will make you feel the atmosphere of the city, at times lazy, at with lots happening, yet always unique. So, let's try to take a closer look at Kraków together and discover the most interesting ways to spend these three days, and see why it is always worth coming back.



## Travelling to Kraków and weather

Getting to Kraków is not difficult. It has always lain at a point where the major trade routes, and cultures and political influences intersect. Today, it is considered Poland's most important tourist destination. The city has rail, road and air links, and Kraków-Balice International Airport, which is the country's second largest in terms of size and passenger numbers. All of this makes Kraków one of the most accessible cities in this part of Europe. Further amenities include access via the **A4 motorway** and convenient global air connections. On landing, a special train service is available that goes from the airport **to the city centre in just over ten minutes**. Kraków also has a well-developed **urban transport network**, which, according to Eurostat, **is among the best-rated in Europe and the best in Poland**. This opens up a range of possibilities for tourists arriving here from near and far. A stay in Kraków may take on a variety of forms, and this is not only determined by the purpose of the visit or place of accommodation. It also depends on the weather, the day of the week, and the season. It is useful to know that in winter the temperature in Poland sometimes falls below  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , while in summer temperatures often exceed  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

This is due to geographical location. **Kraków is the capital of Małopolska**, an upland, partly mountainous region with numerous spas, recreation, and agrotourism resorts. These conditions make it worthwhile to combine a visit to the city with a stay in the mountains, both in summer and winter time.

Kraków-Balice International Airport



## A convenient place to stay

Kraków **has the best tourist facilities in Poland**, and meets the needs of tourists whatever the size of their pockets. In the city centre and its immediate vicinity, there are **dozens of upscale hotels**, including those of the world's largest chains. On the other hand, there are many cosy buildings neighbouring the Main Market Square from which sightseeing can commence immediately after breakfast. The vast array of hostels and holiday rentals is popular, especially in Kraków's district of Kazimierz. Thanks to the wide selection of facilities a good deal can be had at any time of the year. **Free wi-fi** is available in almost all of these places, as well as in the numerous cafés and restaurants of Kraków. Wireless connectivity is available for free in certain areas of the city. **Free mobile phone applications**, such as the official city app Kraków.pl, provide extra assistance in exploring the city. You can also plan your stay in the city using [www.krakow.travel](http://www.krakow.travel) which offers a number of ideas for visiting the city and a summary of the main information, which every tourist will find useful. **With special needs persons in mind, there is the Royal Route for Tourists with Disabilities**. This is a route for visually impaired and mobility-impaired visitors, comprising twelve miniature models of Kraków's highlights. The cast bronze models of the Barbican and St Mary's Basilica come with descriptions of the places in Polish and English, and in Braille (in Polish and English).

The array of tourist attractions located in and around Kraków's Old Town and Kazimierz is unmatched, and these attractions are all within walking distance of each other. The extensive tram network can be used to get around where necessary. At peak times, this will usually be more efficient than a taxi. Ticket machines are located at the key stops, where cash or card are accepted. Ticket machines also provide up-to-date basic tourist information.



Miniature model for persons with disabilities

[www.krakow.pl](http://www.krakow.pl)  
[www.krakow.travel](http://www.krakow.travel)

## Main Market Square

Kraków's majestic Main Market Square is undoubtedly **a unique place in global terms**. Recognisable around the world, it attracts crowds every day. It is also viewed as one of the "World's Best Squares" under the Project for Public Spaces, which has been operating for thirty years to regenerate urban public spaces.

The Main Market Square and the network of streets that make up the Old Town were laid out in 1257, when the city was founded under Magdeburg Law. The **Cloth Hall**, situated in the middle of the square, has survived to this day. For centuries, it has been a place of commerce, and today you can buy local souvenirs here. The Cloth Hall has housed the National Museum in Kraków for over a century, first as the main seat, and later as a local arm of the museum. The small and highly characteristic **Church of St. Adalbert** (the site of important archaeological findings), a solitary tower of the City Hall demolished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, of course, one of the symbols of Kraków, i.e., **St. Mary's Church**, with its towers looming over the city, complement the landscape. It was here that Wit Stwosz, a master of Nuremberg, created his life's work. **The monumental altar attracts thousands of tourists daily**. Some of Kraków's legends and traditions, as well as numerous historical events, are associated with the Main Market Square.

They are referred to, for example, in **the bugle call played every hour** from one of the towers of St. Mary's Church, **the**

**The Main Market Square is Europe's largest medieval square. It measures 200 x 200 metres. Its size and the preserved authentic architectural and urban layout make it a unique place in global terms.**



**Beneath the Main Market Square, five metres below ground, there is a museum with a tourist trail. It covers an area of nearly 3 500 000 square metres, and has the state-of-the-art multimedia exhibition „Following Kraków's European Identity". The exhibition has had record-breaking numbers of visitors, now standing at almost four million.**

**Lajkonik parade** in June, **the enthronement of the Marksmen King** or the **Nativity crib competition**. Almost all of the buildings around the Main Market Square are centuries-old monuments, housing attractions such as the Museum of Kraków and the International Cultural Centre, as well as bookshops, shops, restaurants and cafés.

While strolling around the Main Market Square, it is a good idea to take a look at the frontages, portals, windows and roofs of the tenement houses. Inside the tenement houses, perfectly preserved or meticulously reconstructed architectural details are to be found. The cafés and outdoor restaurants surrounding the Market Square look too good for visitors to pass by. Some operate almost all year round, with a short break during the most severe cold weather, from early morning until late evening. In winter, standing customers move to the **cellars characteristic of the centre of Kraków**. There are also concerts here, mostly jazz, as the music community, which has been active here for years, has made Kraków the **capital of Polish jazz**. Clubbing life also bustles here in the evenings and at night. After all, we have over 130 000 students in the city.

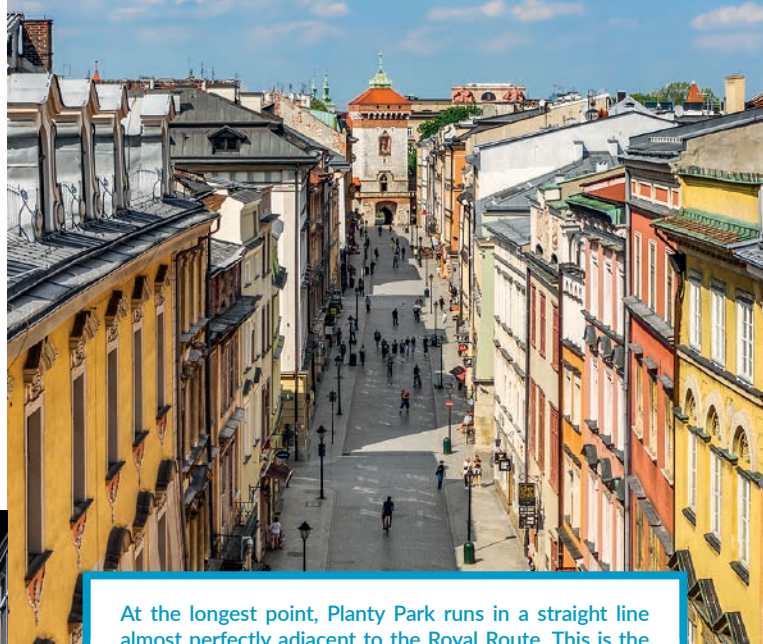
**The Market serves as a meeting place due to the summer festivals, concerts, fairs, presentations and parties held here. One popular place for inhabitants of Kraków to meet is "at Adaś", meaning the Adam Mickiewicz monument.**



## ROUTE 2

### Old Town

It is the city layout that largely determines the unique atmosphere of Kraków. The area surrounded by **Planty Park** is considered to be the very centre of the city. It is a lush green belt and also a city park which stretches from the Barbican in both directions up to the Wawel Hill. Planty Park forms an oval which is irregular and slightly elongated towards the Vistula River. It was created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the site of the demolished city walls surrounding the old Kraków. Over an area of 1 500 by 800 metres, where almost every



At the longest point, Planty Park runs in a straight line almost perfectly adjacent to the Royal Route. This is the oldest and probably the most famous tourist route.

building is of historical value, there are dozens of museums and galleries, a dozen or so churches, theatres, cinemas, bookshops, antique shops and shopping malls. Tourists are free to explore streets lined with shops, hundreds of cafés, restaurants and pubs. All this has a strong small city vibe. This is why tourists are often surprised by the size of the Kraków agglomeration, with a population of almost 1.5 million. The city itself has a population of around 800 000.

This layout of the **city centre is conducive to sightseeing**. At the longest point, Planty Park runs in a straight line almost perfectly adjacent to the Royal Route, which is the oldest and probably the best known tourist route. It leads from St. Florian's Church at Jan Matejko Square, through St. Florian's Gate.

The only well-preserved piece of the mighty defensive walls houses the Arsenal. Today, it is part of the Princes Czartoryski Museum, the Kraków arm of the National Museum. The route continues along ul. Floriańska to the Main Market Square, and then along ul. Grodzka and Kanonicza to the Wawel Royal Castle.

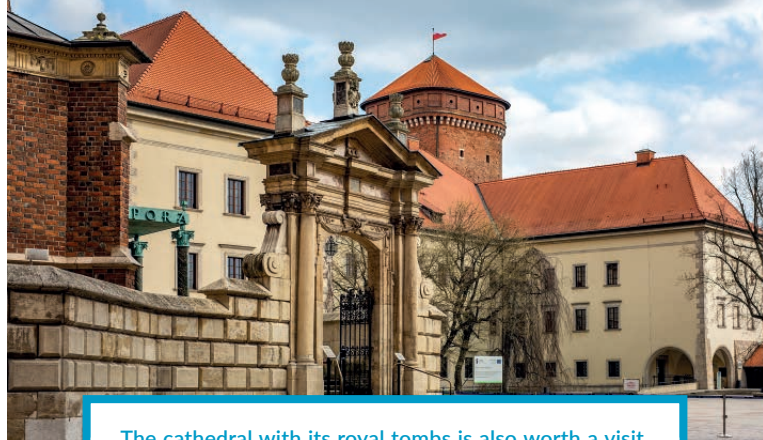
The Royal Route is a historical, legendary route associated with the period of the greatest splendour of the one-time Polish capital.

## Wawel Hill and Wawel Castle

The historic Wawel Hill is usually reached via the short and narrow ul. Kanonicza, which is one of the most important, oldest and most beautiful streets in the city, and has remained unchanged for centuries. It is still authentic, and at the same time vibrant. Kanonicza is an example of how Kraków changed for the better in the 21st century. Complete renovation, and also preservation projects, have uncovered the layers of true beauty of the old tenement houses.

In the castle interiors, there are still more **exhibitions which are a must**: the royal chambers, a collection of eastern art and war trophies, and a unique collection of Flemish tapestries. There are also archaeological findings that testify to the more than a thousand-year presence of Christianity on Polish lands.

The **cathedral with its royal tombs**, where the history of Poland looks back at us, is also worth a visit. The huge Sigismund Bell tolls at Wawel only for the events of the greatest significance for the country and the city. Half a day is the minimum time required to take a cursory look at this remarkable place. Still, even if you have to postpone seeing the Wawel Castle until another, longer visit to Kraków, it is a good idea to at least pay an evening visit to see the castle walls. The gates are open much longer



The cathedral with its royal tombs is also worth a visit. Looking at the burial places of the rulers, we behold the thousand-year history of the whole country.

than the exhibitions. This will enable you to visit the exceptionally beautiful **arcaded courtyard** and the cathedral, and view the Vistula and the extraordinary buildings across the river: the modern ICE Kraków Congress Centre and the Manggha Museum, which features Japanese art from the collection of Feliks „Manggha” Jasieński, a famous art collector. As you make your way down to the river bank, you will see the statue of the Wawel Dragon and the entrance to the dragon's cave. It is the favourite destination during family walks. In June, **St John's Fair**, a large open-air event that alludes to the life of the Slavs, takes place here.

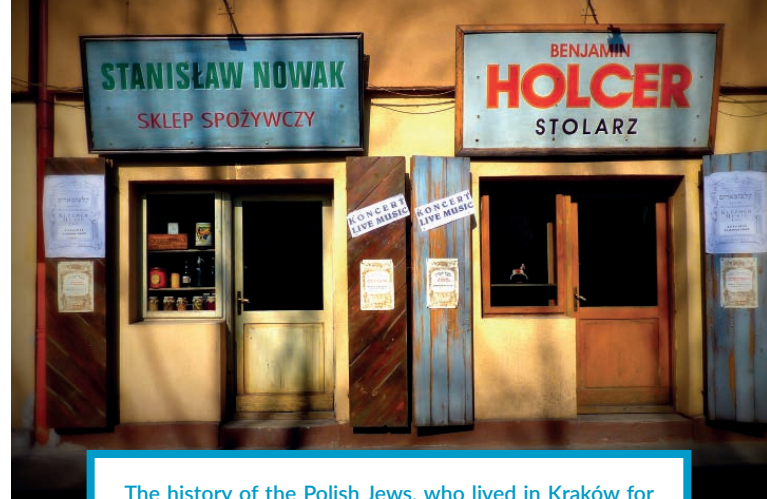
A look at the map of the city centre shows that the area within the castle walls is comparable in size to the Main Market Square.



The Old Town district also encompasses Kazimierz, which was once the Jewish quarter. You can get there by descending the Wawel Hill and following ul. Stradomska to the intersection with ul. Dietla. Following the tragedy of the Second World War and the extermination of Jews by the Nazi invaders, Kazimierz was deserted and it fell into disrepair for decades.

The current rapid development of this part of the city was brought about by political changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s. **Kazimierz found its way onto cinema screens thanks to Steven Spielberg**, who shot the multiple Oscar-winning "Schindler's List" here. The world-famous **Jewish Culture Festival**, which has been organised since the early 1990s, focuses, by definition, on the history and traditions of the people who once lived here. It features concerts, workshops, lectures and exhibitions which attract people from Poland and around the world. Nowadays we can say that the district has been revived and undergone a facelift.

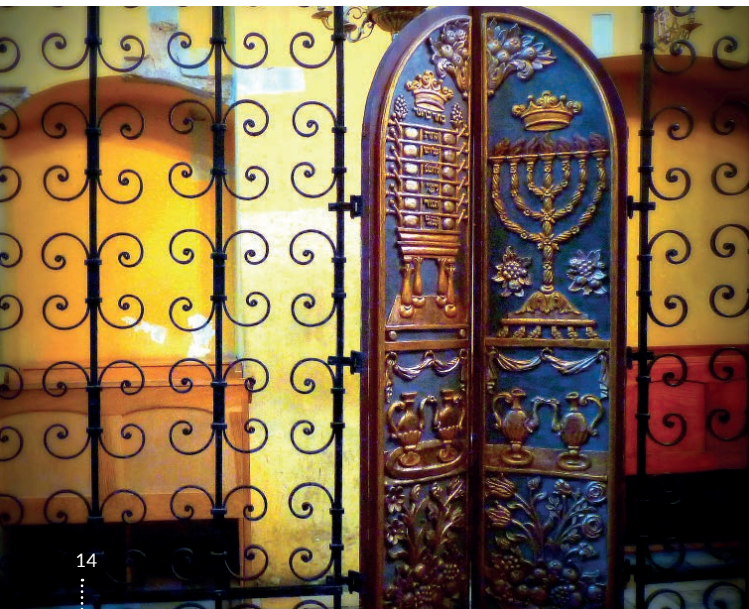
Kazimierz is living testimony to the centuries-old tradition of coexistence of various nationalities and denominations. Two nations and two great religions have lived side by side in harmony here for centuries. It is here, not far from the synagogues, that the churches of St. Catherine and Corpus Christi emerge, while on St. Stanislaus's day a procession makes its way to the church of the Pauline Fathers, "Na Skałce" ["On the Rock"].



The history of the Polish Jews, who lived in Kraków for centuries, is told to us from every corner of Kazimierz. You can sense it in the layout of the narrow streets and market squares, in the small tenement houses, synagogues and Jewish cemeteries.

The cafés, clubs and galleries gather all those for whom the Main Market Square and its surroundings have become too "touristy". Everyone discovers the unique character of Kazimierz for themselves. Next door to the exclusive hotels and restaurants there are still artisan workshops and shops full of original souvenirs and art galleries. To experience this, it is a good idea to take a walk around Wolnica Square, along ul. Józefa, and to visit ul. Szeroka. Each year, Szeroka Street is the venue for the final concert of the Jewish Culture Festival, when the street becomes tightly packed with a dancing crowd of people from many nations. Kazimierz is also a place particularly valued by all those who love antiques and various bric a brac. On Plac Nowy [the New Square], as well as beneath the nearby Market Hall in Grzegórzki, antique fairs are held every Sunday.

Kazimierz and Podgórze are connected by the picturesque **Father Laetus Bernatek Footbridge**. It is located on the site of the former Podgórski bridge. The footbridge is used by pedestrians and cyclists to cross quickly from one bank of the Vistula to the other. It also became a symbol of the closer ties forged between the districts.





Situated in a picturesque area, at the foot of Krzemionki (white limestone rocks), Podgórze was once the right-bank part of the town of Kazimierz. In 1784, the Austrian Emperor Joseph II issued a proclamation declaring Podgórze a Free Royal City.

The multinational, tolerant community of Podgórze attracted entrepreneurs, factory owners and craftsmen. With their skills and knowledge, they fostered the development of the city and built its reputation as „the pearl in the ring of communes surrounding Kraków.” This is what Juliusz Leo, the then prominent mayor of Kraków, called Podgórze in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was thanks to his efforts that the merger of Kraków and Podgórze became a reality on 4 July 1915. The Second World War took a tragic toll on the history of Podgórze and its inhabitants. Only the recent decades has been fostering its slow rebirth and awakening.

**The footbridge for pedestrians and cyclists** over the Vistula is the best way to get to the heart of the district. From the perspective of the footbridge, dominant on the right is the tenement house with two bay windows, called „Alexandrowicz” or „Parisian” (1906).” On the left, the building of the one-time Podgórze power station (1900), the oldest such building in the area of present-day Kraków is integrated into the modern body of the **new seat of Cricoteka**.

Podgórze remains cosy, green and imbued with mystery. The neo-Gothic silhouette of St. Joseph’s Church in Rynek Podgórski is an example. While the building seems monumental, this is just an optical illusion owing to the unusual triangular shape of the square. One of the greatest achievements of Podgórze is the famous **Wojciech Bednarski Park**. It was established at the bottom of a former quarry by a local school principal and community worker after whom this beautiful park is now named. **It is one of the first examples in Europe of the reclamation of brownfield sites.** In 2023, it was opened to the public following extensive regeneration. There are magnificent villas and green areas in the vicinity of the park, such as a part of Podgórze designed as a “garden city.” To get to know and understand Podgórze better, it is a good idea to visit the Museum of Podgórze, which is part of the Museum of Kraków.

From here it is only a short distance to the symbol of the history of Podgórze - the Lasota Hill. At the foot of the hill is the historic Old Podgórze Cemetery, founded around 1790. On the hill, in turn, stands the **mysterious St. Benedict Church, which dates back to the 11th century.** The small church is said to be haunted by the ghost of a princess who has not yet been laid to rest for her sins and cruel rule.

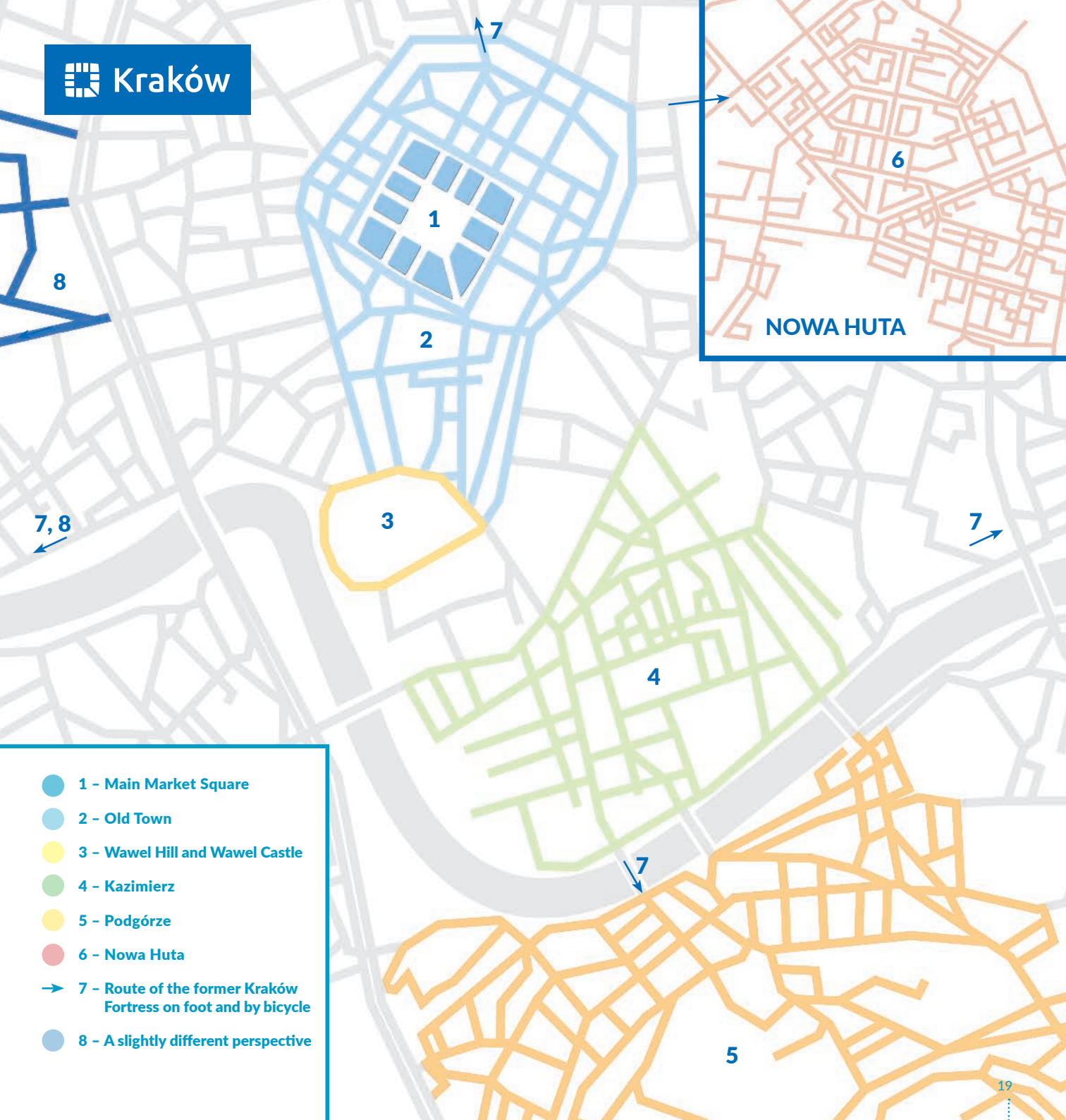
The church is adjacent to the unique building of Austrian St. Benedict’s Fort no. 31, which is artillery tower-shaped. From here, the **Krakus Mound** can also be seen. Dating back to around the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, the burial mound was long thought to be the grave of the legendary founder of Kraków. From the top of the mound, you can admire the city panorama, and on a clear day you can even see the Tatra Mountains. In turn, at the foot of the mound, there is the now disused Liban Quarry. During the Second World War, it housed a Nazi forced labour camp for Poles (*Baudienst*). The camp scenes in Steven Spielberg’s “Schindler’s List” were filmed here, the traces of which remain. At the bottom of the quarry, you can still find remnants of the film set, including the camp road lined with replicas of matzevas.

There are more monuments to the tragic history in Podgórze. **The Ghetto Heroes Square witnessed the rising and successive stages of the liquidation of the ghetto** established by the German Nazis (1941-1943). This is the location of the Pharmacy under the Eagle (today a museum) where Tadeusz Pankiewicz worked. This Polish holder of the „Righteous Among the Nations” medal voluntarily lived and worked in the ghetto, helping the persecuted Jewish population. The author described his memories of those gloomy days in his book entitled “The Kraków Ghetto Pharmacy.” The ghetto’s history continued in the form of the Nazi concentration camp of „Płaszów” (KL Płaszow), which operated from 1942 to 1945. In ul. Kamieński there is a poignant monument to the „Torn Hearts,” commemorating the camp victims. In turn, **the former administration building of Oskar Schindler’s factory**, at 4 ul. Lipowa, now houses a part of the Museum of Kraków presenting the city life under the Nazi occupation. The interactive exhibition “Kraków – a Time of Occupation 1939-1945” attracts huge crowds of visitors every year.

<https://muzeumkrakowa.pl/en/branches/podgorze-museum>

CRICOTEKA The Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor





- 1 - Main Market Square
- 2 - Old Town
- 3 - Wawel Hill and Wawel Castle
- 4 - Kazimierz
- 5 - Podgórze
- 6 - Nowa Huta
- ➔ 7 - Route of the former Kraków Fortress on foot and by bicycle
- 8 - A slightly different perspective

NOWA HUTA

## Nowa Huta

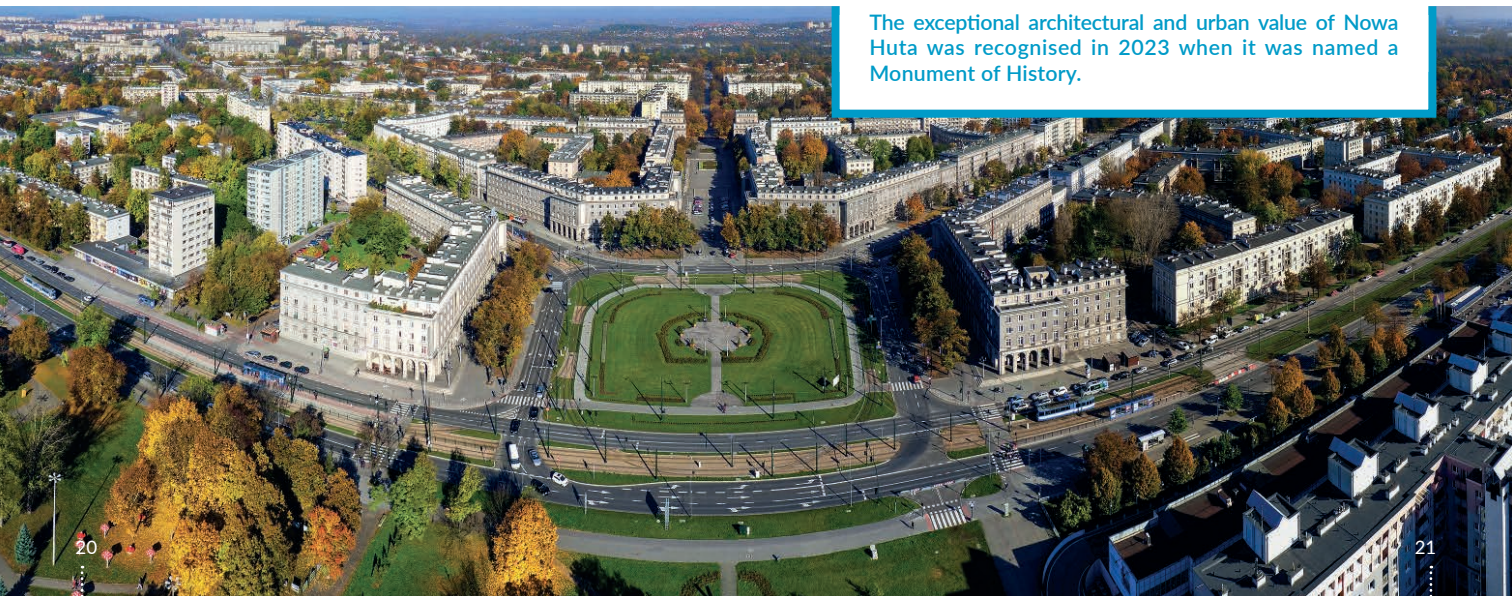
In 1949, the postwar authorities of the People's Republic of Poland decided to build a steelworks and a new town on the fertile grounds of villages near Kraków, Pleszów and Mogiła. Nowa Huta was to be Poland's showpiece in the world. Its clear urban plan and socialist realist architecture followed the models of native Renaissance and Baroque architecture, but also the American concept of the "neighbourhood unit." Nowa Huta's routes span ancient and modern history, areas of protected nature (the Nowa Huta Meadows by the Central Square itself) and the memory of a once powerful industry.

Nowa Huta was built on the site of more than thirty formerly existing villages. Their cultural heritage has largely been preserved, with manor houses, rural buildings, religious buildings and necropolises. These include the Calvinist congregation of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Łuczanowice, as well as the Branicki manor (17<sup>th</sup> century) with its Renaissance granary (designed by S. Gucci), and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Badenis mansion in Branice, which today houses part of Kraków's Archaeological Museum documenting a wealth of local excavations. On the way back from Branice to the centre of Nowa Huta, **it is a good idea to see the prehistoric, mysterious Wanda Mound (7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century)** which offers an amazing panorama of the steelworks. Not far away is also the **most valuable object of historical importance in Nowa Huta, the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Cistercian Abbey**. When looking for a place to relax, consider a visit to the Nowa Huta Lagoon or Przystałek Rusiecki.

The most interesting and complete **manifestation of socialist realist architecture in Nowa Huta is the administrative centre of the steelworks**, also known as the „Doge's Palace.” The Central Square, on the other hand, is a kind of history of the architecture of the last seventy years. In the square and in its immediate surroundings, we see classic examples of socialist realist construction. One example of this is the building that was once the „Światowid” cinema, now home to the Nowa Huta Museum. In the representative Avenue of the Roses, a large monument to Lenin was erected in 1973 and demolished in 1989. In the meantime, the inhabitants made attempts to blow the monument up. However, Nowa Huta is not only about social realism. The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus commemorates the dramatic events of April 1960, when there were clashes between the inhabitants of Nowa Huta and the militia in defence of the cross. Nowa Huta's churches are part of the life of Karol Wojtyła, who showed particular concern for the local residents when he became a bishop in 1958. Two decades later, the local churches played an important role in the formation and activities of the Solidarity trade union and the demonstrations against the regime in the 1980s. Here, in Nowa Huta, aid was given to those suffering repression at the hands of the authorities. In addition to the remains of the Austrian forts to which we refer elsewhere, on the way back to the centre of Kraków it is a good idea to stop and explore the unique collections of the **Polish Aviation Museum**. The museum is located on the site of the former Rakowice – Czyżyny airport, and is distinguished by its original shape. **More than 250 historic aircraft and engines can be found here, and the area on which the museum was built is listed as a monument.**

<https://muzeumlotnictwa.pl/>

The exceptional architectural and urban value of Nowa Huta was recognised in 2023 when it was named a Monument of History.

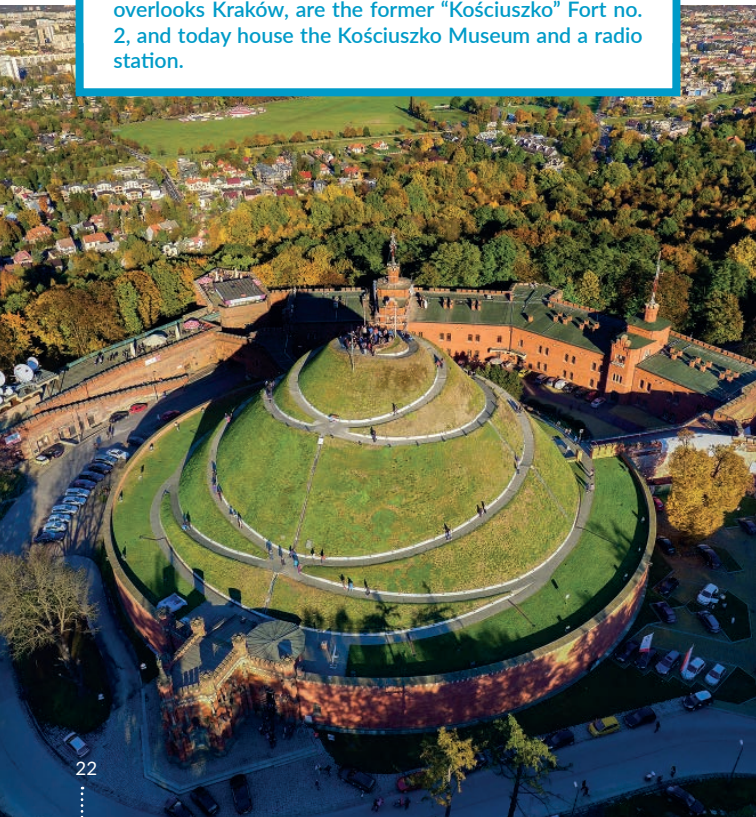


## Kraków Fortress Route

Adventure seekers are welcome to explore the numerous fortifications that once defended Kraków. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Kraków was only seven kilometres away from the border with Russia. The Austrians decided to secure the city with a system of fortifications which were continually expanded for almost seventy years, from 1850 to 1916. The defence line initially ran along today's Aleje Trzech Wieszczów [Avenues of Three Bards]. The "Kleparz" Bastion and the ruins of the "Lubicz" Bastion are what remains of the former heart of the fortress today. Advances in technology rendered the fortifications defunct even before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Construction of a ring of more modern forts around the city, and of buildings with support facilities in the city, began.

When the First World War broke out, the protective ring surrounding the city comprised 32 forts of various types and purposes, protected by concrete walls and ceilings, with

The buildings surrounding the Kościuszko Mound, which overlooks Kraków, are the former "Kościuszko" Fort no. 2, and today house the Kościuszko Museum and a radio station.



armoured towers. Including the buildings with support facilities, the Kraków Fortress had around 180 structures. In 1918, the fortress was taken over by the Polish Army. Following the Second World War, its buildings gradually ceased being used by the military or fell into disrepair.

Today, about one hundred buildings remain from what was once the Kraków Fortress. Construction of the fortress continued over a span of almost seventy years. Together with the Wawel, the defensive walls with the Florian Gate and the Barbican, they form the modern Fortress of Kraków, which is a new tourist route that introduces the unique heritage of the city's former defensive architecture.



## TWIERDZA KRAKÓW

Forts have also been preserved in the area of today's Nowa Huta. These are the "Batowice" forts at the Złotego Wieku estate, "Mistrzejowice" near the Piastów estate, and the forts "Krzyszawice" (a place of martyrdom from the Second World War), and the aforementioned "Grębałów."

Few people are also aware that the buildings surrounding **Kościuszko Mound** are also the one-time fort number II, which houses the Kościuszko Museum. The already referred to **St. Benedict artillery fort** on the Lasoty (Krzemionki) hill is surely worth a mention, too. It is a **unique example of a fortification from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century**.

Regenerated forts are given new functions. The "Borek" fort houses part of the Podgórze Cultural Centre, while the Museum of Kraków and the Scout Movement Centre are situated in the nearby Jugowice fort. The "Krzyszawice" and "Olszanica" forts house Youth Cultural Centres. There is a Museum of Photography in the buildings of the former Armoury and Shooting Range, and a Home Army Museum in the Provisioning Complex.

In 2023, Kraków Fortress was named the Best Tourism Product for its distinctive features making it one of the most interesting places to visit in Poland.



## A slightly different perspective ...

The centre of Kraków is a very picturesque place. There are many vantage points from which the city's panorama can be admired. The most important and best-known vantage point has long been Kościuszko Mound. From here, you can behold all of historic and present-day Kraków. When on top of the mound, it is a good idea to try to spot the those characteristic features of Kraków with which you are familiar, this time seen from a distance and from an unusual angle. **Mounds are among the biggest tourist attractions of Kraków.** Two of them, the Krakus Mound in Podgórze and the Wanda Mound in Nowa Huta, are **mysterious burial mounds from pre-Christian times**, formed by the local tribes. With an enormous effort. Perhaps these are simply the



The road on the other side of the Vistula will take you to Tyniec, a settlement with a mighty Benedictine abbey, where many cultural events take place, including the famous summer organ recitals. The concerts attract huge crowds of music lovers every year.

tombs of rulers. They were undoubtedly used strategically as observation posts.

In modern times, more buildings of this type were erected as a tribute to national heroes. These are the earlier mentioned Kościuszko Mound and the Józef Piłsudski Mound in Sowiniec. The former, which was built during the period of three-way partition of Polish territory, was a symbol for Poles of their aspirations for independence. If we leave the very centre of the city and walk along ul. Piłsudski towards the main building of the National Museum and the nearby Jagiellonian Library, we will reach **Błonia, another attraction of Kraków.** Strolling on along Dębniki, we come to Zakrzówek. **It is today the most fashionable bathing site and beach in Kraków, although it has a worthy competitor, and that is "Mała Chorwacja" ["Little Croatia"] at the Bagry Lake.**

One kilometre away from the Main Market Square, is a huge meadow which serves as a recreational area and a place of assembly. More than a million worshippers gathered at each papal mass organised here attended by John Paul II. All kinds of fetes take place here. Błonia is adjacent to Henryk Jordan Park and the Wisła and Cracovia sports club complexes. At this point it is important to note the KS Cracovia 1906 Centennial Hall and Sports Centre for the Disabled. From Błonia there is an excellent view of the Kościuszko Mound, and from here, in turn, it is not far to Wolski Forest. This is a recreational area of great scenic value. It is also home to a zoo, Piłsudski Mound and nearby, the **Renaissance Villa Decius with its beautiful cosy park.** The road on the other side of the Vistula leads to Tyniec, **a settlement with a mighty Benedictine abbey**, where many cultural events take place. Suburban walking trails and tourist routes are a proposition for warmer days. From May to September, you can also see all of this from the deck of the tourist ships cruising the Vistula.

## Cultural Kraków

Kraków is a capital of culture, a world showcase of Polish historic heritage. It has also become famous as an example of successful development projects. These include new museums, new stadiums, and a congress centre. This momentum is matched by the development of cultural life. **Kraków's festivals have made a worldwide name for themselves.** Misteria Paschalia, Opera Rara, the Polish Music Festival, Sacrum Profanum, the Summer Jazz Festival and Unsound - these offer a musical journey from baroque to contemporary music, attracting an audience of thousands.

Sacrum Profanum Festival. Photo: Wojciech Wandzel for Kraków Festival Office



[www.karnet.krakow.pl](http://www.karnet.krakow.pl)

In the 21st century, Kraków's festivals have made a worldwide name for themselves.

**Kraków holds the title of a UNESCO City of Literature.** It is Kraków that hosts one of the largest Book Fairs in the country, as well as literary festivals under the patronage of the prominent Polish writers Czesław Miłosz and Joseph Conrad. In the capital of Małopolska, the best Polish theatres compete in the Divine Comedy Festival. The city is also home to the Off Camera Festival, the Kraków Film Festival, and the Film Music Festival. The city attracts cinematographers who return to Kraków to make more films.



ICE Kraków interior

The Festival of Jewish Culture, which is part of the tradition of Kazimierz and multicultural Galicia (the name of the region in which Kraków was located under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy), or the joyful festival of Wianki in Kraków, prove that the capital of Małopolska provides unique experiences all year round.

## With a view of Wawel

You can spend three days in Kraków industriously, without giving up on exploring the city. A wealth of historical monuments, a picturesque region full of attractions, a variety of restaurants and hotels, universities and the intellectual base are those attributes of Kraków that attract the world of business. This is why numerous conferences or congresses are held in Kraków. Situated on **Vistula's right bank, the unusually shaped ICE Kraków Congress Centre**, with its glass foyer offering an unforgettable view of Wawel and Kazimierz, has become another **symbol of a modern Kraków that is open to visitors.** ICE Kraków can host a closed event for up to three thousand guests. The **Auditorium, able to seat 1 800** and one of the best of its kind in Poland, has also become a venue for prestigious concerts. The Theatre Hall and other facilities in the building host numerous performances, shows, fairs and festivals. All this in the heart of the city, with convenient access to the airport and motorway. The programme of events is available at:

[www.icekrakow.pl](http://www.icekrakow.pl)

## Culinary and clubbing tourism

Kraków certainly has the status of the most important centre of culinary tourism today, as confirmed by two Michelin stars awarded to one of Kraków's restaurants in 2023. This is the first such a distinction in Poland. In 2023, no less than eighteen Kraków restaurants were named in the prestigious annual red guide published. Two Polish cities, Kraków and Warsaw, play a significant role, but it is to Kraków that people come specifically to visit an iconic or a brand-new restaurant. The reasons are simple. Kraków offers a **host of restaurants, eateries, cafés, pubs and clubs in attractive tourist districts that is unparalleled in other Polish cities. It is a magnet that attracts culinary sensation seekers to the city.**

This Mediterranean trend means that social and cultural life here bustles throughout the week at a rhythm that is unique Poland-wide. In an egalitarian, multilingual crowd, students, businessmen, locals and visitors party together. Kraków's masters skilfully prepare dishes from many nations and cultures, often deftly combining them with the culinary traditions of Poland. Many restaurants, dispelling the international myth of pierogi as the greatest Polish contribution to world cuisine, recall the legendary Polish soups, sauces or venison.

Marek Michalak during a concert at Piwnica po Baranami [Cellar under the Rams]



The symbol of Kraków's cuisine remains the obwarzanek krakowski. This is a traditional product with an EU certificate. You can easily spot obwarzanek stalls in the centre of Kraków. To learn about the history of this baked product and the secrets of making it, go to Żywe Muzeum Obwarzanka [Live Museum of Obwarzanek]

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

**Pierogi, on the other hand, have their own big summer festival in Kraków.** During this event, chefs demonstrate ingenuity in composing new flavours of this seemingly simple dish.

It is for these reasons that Kraków was declared **European Capital of Gastronomic Culture 2019**. The capital of Małopolska was the first city to receive this prestigious title.



European Capital  
of Gastronomic  
Culture  
Krakow 2019

Visitors looking for culinary flavour in Kraków will not leave the city disappointed. Restaurants, pubs and clubs throughout the city maintain a high standard and attract regulars. The owners strive to give their establishments an individual touch, often thematic, as well as unusual and surprising. Concerts, exhibitions and other accompanying events are held almost everywhere.

## Sporty Kraków

The Cracovia Marathon, the Three Mounds' Run, the final races of the Tour de Pologne, **the Kolna canoe course that is unique in Poland**, and the great traditions and modern stadiums of the Wisła and Cracovia football clubs, create the sports face of the city long known to fans. Coming to Wawel to combine cultural or culinary sightseeing with sports has become a particularly popular form of tourism. This was made possible when Poland's largest **sports and entertainment hall** was opened. TAURON Arena Kraków is **one of the most modern venues of its kind in Europe**.

The Arena is located halfway between the city centre and Nowa Huta. It can be reached by tram from the vicinity of the Main Market Square within around ten minutes. The stands can accommodate more than twenty thousand people. Athletes are happy with the fervent cheering and the unusual atmosphere in the arena filled by a colourful crowd of fans. The hall has become a venue for top-class, international sporting events, like the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Games and the 2023 Men's Handball World Championships or the annual equestrian festival, the Cavaliad. Since its inception, the Arena has also hosted global rock and pop stars who have expressed their infatuation with Kraków on social media. In 2023 alone, Peter Gabriel, Def Leppard, Iron Maiden, Sting, Depeche Mode performed at the Arena. The Arena is also a venue for meetings and congresses. For more, please go to:

[www.tauronarenakrakow.pl](http://www.tauronarenakrakow.pl)

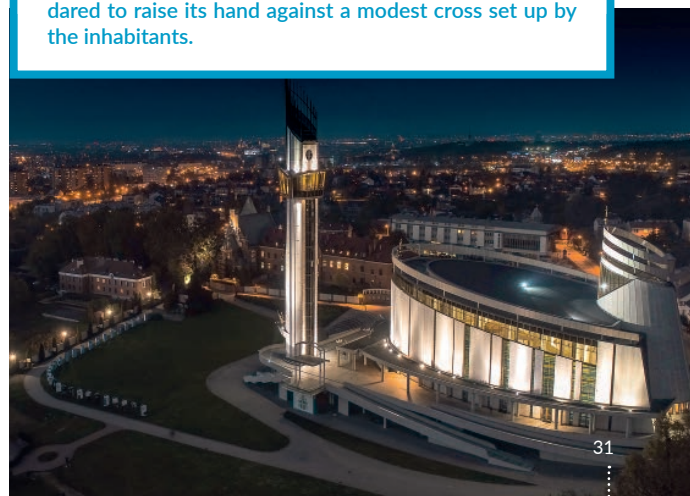


## Religious tourism

For centuries, **Kraków** was the centre of Polish statehood and the **heart of Polish Christianity**. Kraków's historic churches are home to relics and breathtaking paintings. The old traditions of religious congregations and monasteries are cultivated, and processions and open-air masses attract huge crowds of worshippers. The lives of numerous saints and the blessed have been associated with the city. They include St. Stanislaus of Szczepanów and the Queen Saint Jadwiga, who have been immortalised in universal history. Many found their final resting place in Kraków's churches and necropolises. It was in the climate of this city that the personality of Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II, canonised on 27 April 2014, was shaped. The Pope would always return here, welcomed by millions of Poles. In Kraków, a ten-minute tram ride from the centre, is the **Łagiewniki sanctuary**, which is **one of the largest pilgrimage centres in this part of Europe**. It is an important centre of the Divine Mercy devotion and a place of remembrance of St. Sister Faustyna, the precursor of the devotion's revival in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The "Have No Fear!" John Paul II Centre is also located here.

It is therefore hardly surprising that it was to Kraków, in the officially declared Year of Divine Mercy (2016), that innumerable pilgrims were invited to celebrate here the communal prayer and joy of World Youth Day. In 2016, young people from almost 200 countries from all over the world came to Poland to join in this unique celebration. In total, Kraków and Malopolska were visited by several million worshippers during those days.

**Under totalitarian rule, Kraków did not forget its spiritual roots. The concept of atheism, on which the "ideal city," Nowa Huta, was founded, lay in ruins when the regime dared to raise its hand against a modest cross set up by the inhabitants.**

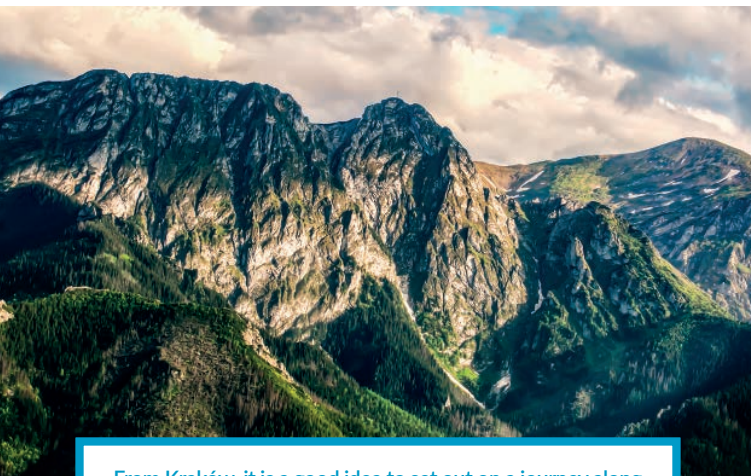




## Out of town

Popular destinations outside of Kraków are not to be overlooked either. They often include the picturesque Jurassic valleys, as well as Ojców and Pieskowa Skała, where the restored castle houses part of the Wawel Royal Castle Museum. Some very popular places are listed as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and the salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia**. Although they need a whole day for a visit, they are often treated as a must-see. The wooden buildings of the region and the **famous landscape layout in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska** with its remarkable Stations of the Cross, are on the same world heritage list. Pilgrims will also certainly reach Wadowice, the hometown of Pope John Paul II.

View of the Tatra Mountains



From Kraków, it is a good idea to set out on a journey along the **Wooden Architecture Route in Małopolska**. This unusual tourist route comprises 255 of the most valuable and interesting historic wooden buildings: churches, orthodox churches, bell towers, villas or for example open-air museums.

The city and the Tatra Mountains (with Zakopane, known as the winter capital of Poland) are only 100 kilometres apart. The more cosy and charming Pieniny, **the well-known resorts of Szczawnica and Krynica**, and the little populated mountain trails of the Beskids are similar distances away from Kraków. Tourists can also choose from no less than four national parks: Tatra, Pieniny, Gorczański and Babia Góra. These are the most valuable natural and landscape areas located in Małopolska.

Local traditions cultivated everywhere and a well-developed tourist facilities make the entire region favour encounters with heritage and relaxation in contact with nature. Małopolska offers diversity making it one of the most interesting regions in Europe.

## City information centres

The city's tourist information centres offer abridged versions of the city guidebooks with practical tips and contact information, as well as maps of the city centre with marked tourist routes.

Recently, new suggested walks around the city have been added to the traditional, long-established routes. They are interesting for their scenic or historical aspects, including those related to events of the last few decades.

[www.infokrakow.pl](http://www.infokrakow.pl)

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### ul. Józefa 7

phone: +48 533 834 969  
jozefa@infokrakow.pl

### Zgody 7

Osiedle Zgody 7  
phone: +48 531 942 297  
zgody7@infokrakow.pl

### Kraków-Balice

**International Airport**  
ul. Kpt. M. Medweckiego 1  
phone: +48 533 825 344  
balice@infokrakow.pl



## Important phone numbers

### Emergency numbers

Emergency (general) number: 112

Municipal police: 986

Ambulance service: 999

Fire service: 998

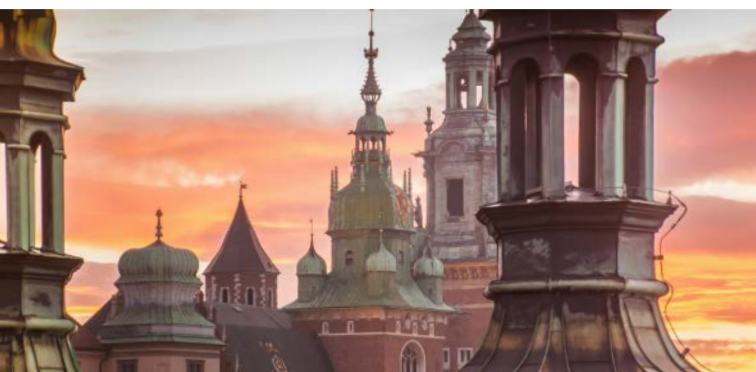
Police: 997

### Medical info:

phone: +48 12 661 22 40 (24 h)

All descriptions of the tourist routes can be accessed at:

[www.krakow.pl](http://www.krakow.pl)



# Kraków UNESCO World Heritage City



Since 1978 on the UNESCO  
World Heritage List

[www.krakowculture.pl](http://www.krakowculture.pl)

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**Historic Centre of Kraków**  
inscribed on the World  
Heritage List in 1978

**Historyczne Centrum Krakowa**  
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