

Poland: Beautiful and Fascinating

Poland, comparable in size to Italy or Germany, is an enthralling mosaic of landscapes and attractions, of which thirteen are listed on the UNESCO World Heritage.



In Northern Poland, you stumble upon ambers on the pristine sandy beaches by the Baltic Sea. The port city of Gdansk, previously the granary of Europe, has a vibrant old town rich in history. It is here where the World War II started, and in 1980s, as the birthplace of the Solidarity Movement, it engineered the collapse of communism. Nearby, Malbork is home to the largest Gothic fortress in Europe, while the well-preserved historical Torun is the city of Copernicus and the traditional gingerbread.

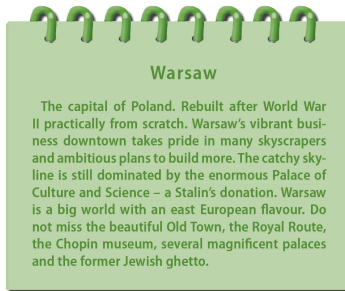
Central Poland, with stretches of meadows, is dominated by major tourism–business centers such as Lodz or Warsaw. Lodz retains the remnants of the cotton industry boom of the 19th and 20th centuries. Warsaw is a captivating city of contrasts, resulting from World War II demolitions, post–war communist architecture, and post–communism skyscraper boom.



Heading south, the plains give way to hills and mountains. Krakow is rated as the most beautiful and fascinating Polish city, and also one of the biggest tourist–magnet in Europe. Visitors are drawn by its magical atmosphere, the splendid architecture, and the Jewish heritage in the Kazimierz district. Though an old and regal city, it's teeming with cosmopolitan pubs, restaurants and clubs. Two nearby cities, Wieliczka and Auschwitz, are, like Krakow, UNESCO World Heritage items. The salt mine in Wieliczka is an unforgettable underground journey into chambers with unique microclimate and salt crystal sculptures. Copernicus and Goethe were among the visitors. Auschwitz will forever be known as the place where German Nazi decimated the Jewish population.



To the south are the majestic mountain ranges of the Tatras. Their rocky peaks are covered in snow most of the year, and the scenic trails are sought after by hikers.



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