

# The Mysterious City of Kłodzko

Those who like secrets will also like Kłodzko. A thousand-year-old city, mentioned for the first time already in 981, has an aura of the various mysteries of the past. You can see here influences of the interweaving of cultures brought by the settlers of Polish, German, Czech and Flemish nationality.

At first I visit the town “from underneath”. I walk along the Underground Tourist Trail, which was established in 1970s, when the dungeons under the Old Town were in the danger of collapsing. Today, renovated and secure, they are a unique tourist attraction. A walk through the interconnected medieval cellars takes approximately 30 minutes. What a thrill! Ghastly red lights illuminate real torture machines and a human skeleton (!).

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I exit under the fortress on the Castle Mountain – an impressive medieval construction towering over the city. Already in the 10th century there was a fortified castle here, and later, on its ruins, the Prussians built a fortress being a part of the Silesia defence system.

Again, I find myself walking through an underground labyrinth, along poorly illuminated, cold corridors, sometimes so low that you have to bow your head. And the guide plays on the emotions. He tells frightening stories about the fortress being haunted with ghosts, part and parcel of every visit to a castle.

That is why I finish the visit willingly and from the high defence walls I admire the picturesque panorama of the city. I am delighted by the colourful tenements, narrow streets and the towers of the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary constructed at the turn of the 14th and 15th century. It should be watched from close up, just like the city itself which I saw, a bit for fun, first from underneath and then from the top.



I walk the narrow streets straight to the Renaissance Market Square. In Grottger Street, on a low relief on one of the tenements, at the height of the second floor, you can see a wolf with a tongue hanging out. A legend said that there would be a time when the wolf will drink water from the Nysa river. And so it happened in 1997!

That year an unimaginable flood struck Kłodzko. The water level rose up to 8 metres! Today, on many buildings you can still see traces of the disaster. Outside the Polish Tourist-Sightseeing Society (PTTK)

branch you can see photos documenting the huge destruction that the city suffered.

– Luckily, the flood didn't destroy our bridge – says an elderly lady when she sees me watching the disaster photographs.

A Gothic stone bridge from 1390, decorated with Baroque figures, is a miniature of Charles Bridge in Prague. It is one of the most beautiful places in Kłodzko.

After exhausting sightseeing, I rest by a historical fountain near the Town Hall. Tourists usually only “drop in” to Kłodzko and stay in one of the charming health resorts located nearby: Polanica Zdrój, Kudowa, Duszniki. But the city is really worth visiting!

[www.poland.gov.pl](http://www.poland.gov.pl)

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

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