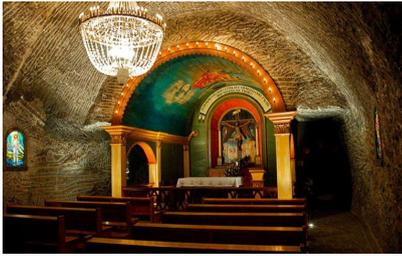


Poland: Salt Cathedral Invites for Fascinating Tour

Located in the town of Wieliczka in southern Poland, the Salt Cathedral is in a 13th century mine that produced table salt continuously until 1996 when it ceased in operation. It is also known as the Wieliczka Salt Mine and is among the oldest salt mines in the world. For safety reasons, only about one percent of the mine is open to visitors, that is actually more than four kilometers in length.



The Salt Cathedral, carved by the miners, has been under the management of the Zupy Krakowskie Salt Mines throughout its existence. It reaches a depth of 327 m (1,073 ft) and is more than 287 km (178 mi) long. The rock salt is naturally gray in several shades, resembling unpolished granite, instead of the crystalline look that many visitors to the mine may expect.



In 1978, the Salt Cathedral was inscribed in the original UNESCO list of world heritage sites. The chandeliers are also made from rock salt that has been dissolved then reconstituted to remove impurities and get glass-like appearance. Many visitors to the mine often think the chandeliers look like the rest of the mine.



At the site there's a chapel and a reception room that is used for weddings, celebrations and other private functions. There is also a chamber whose walls have been carved by miners to resemble wood, just like the wooden churches of the earlier centuries were built.

Going down the mine is made easy by a wooden staircase with 378 steps. It provides access to about 64 m (210 ft) level of the salt mine. There is also a 3 km tour of Salt cathedral's corridors, statues, chapels and a lake located 135 m (443 ft) underground. An elevator that holds 26 people at a time or 9 people per car provide access to the surface. It usually takes about 30 seconds to reach the surface.

Date: 2013-05-27

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-salt-cathedral-in-poland-attracts-adventurers-article2140>