



Tour Information



Krakow – The Jewel of Central Europe





Travel

Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. **Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left on it) and has at least 6 months validity remaining from the date of travel.**

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#)

Visas

If you're a tourist, you do not need a visa for short trips to Poland.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

Polish Embassy: 47 Portland Place, Marylebone, London W1B 1JH.

Visa section: Tel: 020 78228 900 Mon-Fri – 08.00 - 1600. Email: london.visa@msz.gov.pl

Regarding visas matters, it is required to make appointments online at the following address: <http://www.e-konsulat.gov.pl>

Tickets

You will be sent an e-ticket, which shows your flight reference number, with your final departure documents. EasyJet have now replaced all of their airport check-in desks with EasyJet Baggage Drop desks. **Therefore, you must check-in online and print out your boarding passes before travelling.** Checking in online also provides the opportunity for you to pre-book seats, if you wish, at an additional cost.

Online check-in is available any time prior to travel using the reference number provided.

For more information, please visit:

www.easyjet.com

Please check that the details on your documentation are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your passport. Your flight ticket is non-transferable and

non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



Baggage Allowance

We advise you to check the baggage allowances carefully as you are likely to be charged the excess if you exceed the weight limit. Maximum weights for single bags apply.

Your EasyJet ticket includes one hold bag of up to 23kg plus **one cabin bag that can fit under the seat in front of you**, (maximum size 45 x 36 x 20cm, including any handles or wheels). If you book an upfront or extra legroom seat you can also take an additional large cabin bag on board.

<http://www.easyjet.com/en/planning/baggage>

Transfers

On arrival in Krakow, transfer by coach to the Grand Ascot Hotel for a four-night stay (approx. 30 minutes' drive).

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements. Please note that some airlines may charge for use of wheelchairs.

Border Control

At border control, you may need to show a return or onward ticket, show you have enough money for your stay, use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queuing.



Accommodation

Grand Ascot Hotel

Modern four-star “boutique” hotel located in the heart of Kraków, on a quiet street within walking distance of the main sights. The hotel houses a lobby bar, stylish restaurant, fitness room, sauna and stylish rooms with all modern facilities including TV, safe, free wifi and hairdryer.

For more information visit their website:

<https://grandascot.pl/?lang=en>



Food

Polish cuisine is a style of cooking and food preparation originating in or widely popular in Poland. Polish cuisine has evolved over the centuries to become very eclectic due to Poland's history. The Polish national dishes are *bigos* (meat and sauerkraut stew), *pierogi* (a kind of dumpling that can be sweet or savoury), *kielbasa* (a type of sausage), *kotlet schabowy* (pork loin breaded cutlet), *gołąbki* (type of cabbage roll), *zrazy* (type of roulade), *pieczeń* (polish roast), sour cucumber soup, mushroom soup (quite different from the North American cream of mushroom); tomato soup, *rosół* (variety of meat broth), *żurek* (sour rye soup), *flaki* (variety of tripe soup); and *barszcz* (a sour beetroot soup) among others.

If you're looking for something on the sweeter side there is a huge variety. Here are just some: *Babka* (a sweet yeast cake), *Ciepłe lody* (waffle cone filled with mousse), *faworki* (angel wings), *kisiel* (a viscous fruit dish), *toruń gingerbread* (a traditional polish gingerbread), *Krakow gingerbread*, *Drożdżówka* (sweet roll) and *kremówka* (a polish cream pie made with two layers of puff pastry).



Drink

Polish vodka remains the traditional booze, yet beer has recently become even more popular. Beer has been brewed in Krakow for the last thousand years and now it is the most popular alcoholic beverage again. Present-day Polish beers mostly resemble German lager.

The most common spirit is, without a doubt, vodka. Polish vodkas come in great variety such as juniper,

nut, pepper, plum, cherry, caraway seed and more. Like wines, they can be dry, half-dry, half-sweet and sweet. Most should be served straight, chilled but no ice, and swallowed at one gulp.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast – daily

Two dinners – Two dinners with wine at either a local restaurant or the hotel

Taking food and drink into EU countries

You are not able to take meat, milk or products containing them into EU countries.

Grading

This tour has been graded as **Demanding**: On your feet all day, uneven terrain (e.g. cobbles).



Destination

Kraków is the second largest and one of the oldest cities in Poland. Situated on the Vistula River in the Lesser Poland region, the city dates to the 7th century. Kraków has traditionally been one of the leading centres of Polish academic, cultural and artistic life and is one of Poland's most important economic hubs. It was the capital of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland from 1038 to 1569. The city has grown from a Stone Age settlement to Poland's second most important city. It began as a hamlet on Wawel Hill and was already being reported as a busy trading centre of Slavonic Europe in 965. With the establishment of new universities and cultural venues at the emergence of the Second Polish Republic in 1918 and throughout the 20th century, Kraków reaffirmed its role as a major national academic and artistic centre.

Details of places of interest included in your tour:

The National Museum

The main branch of Poland's National Museum was established in 1879 and has several independent branches with permanent collections around the country. The Museum consists of 21 departments which are divided by art period; 11 galleries, 2 libraries, and 12 conservation workshops. It holds some 780,000 art objects, spanning from classical archaeology to modern art, with special focus on Polish painting.

For more information please visit:

<http://museu.ms/museum/details/9475/national-museum-in-krakow>

Church of St. Francis of Assisi

Dating back to the 13th century, this church is the residence of Pope John Paul II during his stays in the city. Historians are not entirely sure of the founder, but it was most likely Duke Henry II the Pious (1196–1241), son of Prince Henry the Bearded (1165–1238).

For more information please visit:

<https://www.spottinghistory.com/view/4721/church-of-st-francis-of-assisi/>

Church of St. Anne

A leading example of Baroque ecclesiastical architecture in Poland, St. Anne's is the collegiate church attached to Jagiellonian University, as it has been since the early 15th century; masses held here officially open and close the university's academic year. Originally dating back to the late 14th century, the church was demolished and rebuilt in grand Baroque style in the late 17th century when the former Gothic edifice proved too small for the growing cult of St. John Cantius - patron saint of the university, who is buried in a tomb to the right of the transept. The largest Baroque church in Kraków, airy dome frescoes and soft angels everywhere offer a sense of light and redemption, and the fine stucco decoration by the Italian artist Baldassare Fontana is especially noteworthy.

For more information please visit:

https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/st-annes-church_17092v

Basilica of the Holy Trinity

Basilica of Holy Trinity is a large gothic church and monastery of the Dominican order with its history dating back to the year 1223. In 1850 the church suffered badly in the great fire that destroyed ten percent of the historic city of Krakow. And, unfortunately, the subsequent reconstruction hasn't been quite accurate though it's certainly unnoticeable to the untrained eye.

For more information please visit:

https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/holy-trinity-basilica_17086v

St Mary's Basilica

After Tartar raids in the 13th century left the original church in a heap of ruins, St. Mary's was rebuilt in Gothic style on the existing foundations and consecrated in 1320. In the early 15th century, the towers took the iconic form they have today, when the northern tower was raised to 80m high and made into a watchtower for the city. It is from here that the hejnał mariacki - the city's famous

bugle call - is played every hour on the hour. One of the city's most enduring traditions, the tune ironically breaks off mid-melody in honour of the mythical trumpeter who was shot in the neck while belatedly warning the city of Mongol invaders; don't miss it.

For more information please visit:

https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/st-marys-basilica_17091v

Jagiellonian University

Founded in 1364 by Casimir III the Great, the Jagiellonian University is the oldest university in Poland, the second oldest university in Central Europe, and one of the oldest surviving universities in the world. Notable alumni include, among others, mathematician and astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, poet Jan Kochanowski, Polish king John III Sobieski, constitutional reformer Hugo Kołłątaj, chemist Karol Olszewski, anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski, writer Stanisław Lem and the President of Poland Andrzej Duda. Among its students who did not earn a diploma were also Karol Wojtyła, future Pope John Paul II (studying Polish philology for one year), and Nobel laureates Ivo Andrić and Wisława Szymborska.

For more information please visit:

https://en.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/start

Collegium Maius

Dating back to the 14th century, this is the Jagiellonian University's oldest building. The then 36-year-old first university in Poland, known at the time as Akademia krakowska (the Krakow Academy), moved into the building in the 14th century after King Władysław II Jagiełło had purchased it as an educational grant with funds bequeathed by his late wife, Queen Jadwiga. The Collegium Maius Museum features lecture rooms, communal halls, professors' quarters, a library and a treasury containing rectors' Gothic maces and the Jagiellonian globe. Exhibits also include medieval scientific instruments, globes, paintings, collectibles, furniture, coins and medals.

For more information please visit:

https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/collegium-maius_17110v

Wawel Royal Castle

Built at the behest of King Casimir III the Great, it consists of a number of structures situated around the Italian-styled main courtyard. The castle, being

one of the largest in Poland, represents nearly all European architectural styles of medieval, renaissance and baroque periods. The Wawel Royal Castle and the Wawel Hill constitute the most historically and culturally significant site in the country. In 1978 it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site as part of the Historic Centre of Kraków.

For more information please visit:

<https://wawel.krakow.pl/en>

Wawel Cathedral

Wawel Cathedral holds a special place in the history of the Polish State due to the fact it was the church of Polish kings for four hundred years. Beginning from Władysław the Short, all but two Polish kings have had their coronations at the cathedral. The city's most important state ceremonies, coronations, weddings, baptisms and funerals ceremonies of Polish royalty are celebrated at the cathedral's High Altar. The Royal Throne once stood at the altar, but when Poland lost its independence in the 18th century, it was replaced by a 17th century throne of the bishops of Krakow.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.katedra-wawelska.pl/en/>

The Princes Czartoryski Museum

Founded in 1796 by Princess Izabela Czartoryska, the museum was created to conserve the heritage of Poland and to keep the city's history alive. The museum displays various antiques, porcelain, crystal and tapestries and has an excellent collection of weaponry. The museum's main treasure is one of Leonardo Da Vinci's best-known paintings, *the Lady with an Ermine*.

For more information please visit:

<https://mnk.pl/branch/the-princes-czartoryski-museum>

Jozef Mehoffer House

One of the turn of the 20th century's artistic elite, Jozef Mehoffer was a skilled stained glass artist who worked on the interiors of numerous churches in Krakow and many installations across Galicia. The Jozef Mehoffer House was his home and where the artists of the Młoda Polska (Young Poland) Movement met. The house is filled with elegant furnishings, Art Deco to Impressionist-era art along with many sketches, designs and finished stained

glass pieces that show his important artistic legacy. Do not miss the delightful hidden garden behind the house.

For more information please visit:

<https://mnk.pl/branch/the-mehoffer-house>

Kazimierz – The Old Jewish Quarter

Kazimierz – the district south of the Old Town between the Wisła River and ul. Dietla (where a tributary of the Wisła once flowed) was the centre of Jewish life in Kraków for over 500 years, before it was systematically destroyed during World War II. Well-known for its associations with Schindler and Spielberg, traces of Kazimierz's Jewish history have not only survived, but literally abound in the form of the district's numerous synagogues and Jewish cemeteries. In fact, no other place in Europe conveys a sense of pre-war Jewish culture on the continent better than Kazimierz. As a result, the district has become a major tourist draw and pilgrimage site for Jews, which has led to the return of contemporary Jewish culture in the area.

For more information please visit:

https://www.inyourpocket.com/krakow/Kazimierz_70207f

Nowa Huta Suburb

As Soviet occupying forces rolled into Poland toward the end of World War II, they found a country devastated by the ferocious fighting on the Eastern Front. Rebuilding was in order and Moscow, in notably Communist fashion, saw the opportunity not only to remake Poland's cities, but also to dramatically reshape Polish society while they were at it. To achieve this, the Soviets set to work planning and building Nowa Huta, which was to be an ideal city representing a vision of a glorious Communist future. The project was approved in 1947, and construction of the urban experiment in social engineering began in 1949. One of only two fully planned Socialist Realist cities ever built (the other being Magnitogorsk, Russia), Nowa Huta was built near Kraków to create a bustling working-class enclave that would overshadow the older bourgeois city with its rich history, cultural institutions, and distaste for communism.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/nowa-huta>

Your lecturer / guide

Andrew Spira - graduated from the Courtauld Institute of Art before completing a MA degree in Museum and Gallery Management at City University, London. He worked at the Temple Gallery, London (specialist in Byzantine and Russian icons), and as a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum where he specialised in 18th century British Art and Design, and Metalwork. He also specialises in Russian art, publishing 'The Avant-Garde Icon: Russian Avant-Garde Art and the Icon Painting Tradition' in 2008 (Lund Humphries). For 20 years he has been taking tours to cultural sites in western Europe, Russia, Armenia and Georgia. He was Programme Director at Christie's Education for 10 years before going part-time to focus on his current research project - on personal identity and the way it is reflected in the material culture of western Europe from the Middle Ages to the present day.

Enjoy two lectures during your tour:

'Slavs of the West'

'Krakow: Science and Art, Medieval and Modern'

Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions, please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

Recommended reading

Eyewitness Travel Guide, Krakow.

The ideal travel companion, full of insider advice on what to see and do, plus detailed itineraries and comprehensive maps for exploring this historic and unique city.

Thomas Keneally, *Schindler's List*.

In the shadow of Auschwitz, a flamboyant German industrialist grew into a living legend to the Jews of Krakow. He was a womaniser, a heavy drinker and a bon viveur, but to them he became a saviour. This is the extraordinary story of Oskar Schindler, who risked his life to protect Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland and who was transformed by the war into a man with a mission, a compassionate angel of mercy.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Krakow at this time of year is likely to be similar to the UK. It can get chilly and there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.

Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – Polish.

Religion – mostly Roman Catholic.

National holidays – New Year's day (01 Jan); Easter Monday (22 Apr); Labour Day (01 May); Constitution day (03 May); Whit Sunday (09 Jun); Corpus Christi (20 Jun); Assumption Day (15 Aug); All Saints day (01 Nov); Independence day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

Currency – Zloty; symbol zł) = 100 groszy. Notes are in denominations of 200, 100, 50, 20 and 10zł. Coins are in denominations of 5,2 and 1 zł and 50,20,10,5,2 and 1 groszy.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Shops generally open Mon-Sat 0900-1800. Some stores, especially in smaller towns and rural areas, close at 1200 on Saturdays and are closed on Sundays, while others in larger towns and cities will be open 1000-1600 on

Sundays. Supermarkets and food shops in large towns and cities are open from 0700 and stay open until late.

Please note that most museums are closed on Mondays.

Clothes & shoes – You may like to bring medium weight clothing and a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in Poland, depending on your operator and contract. The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges you might get from 1 January 2021. A new law means that you're protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you're abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

Tipping – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you've got a valid UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you're travelling to an EU country.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For further information about the GHIC please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7841 023807 or 00 44 7831 133079

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Embassy

Kawalerii 12,

00-468 Warsaw

Poland

Tel: 0048 22 311 0000

Open Mon-Fri 0900-1500.

Travel Editions
3 Youngs Buildings, London, EC1V 9DB
Tel: 020 7251 0045
Email: tours@traveleditions.co.uk www.traveleditions.co.uk

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