



**KRAKOW**

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A night view of the Royal Castle over the Franciscan Church and Wielopolski Palace

**WAWEL**

*Wawel Hill was the centre of the Wiślanie state before the state of Poland was established. The Piast dynasty settled here no earlier than the late 10<sup>th</sup> c. The first king to have his coronation at Wawel was Ladislaus the Elbow-High in 1320. According to archaeologists, in the Middle Ages there were as many as seven Gothic churches on the hill and numerous other buildings, which were later destroyed. The Rotunda of SS Felix and Adactus and Romanesque elements of cathedral vaults are believed to be the oldest landmark on the hill (ca. 950). Elements of old structures are displayed at the exhibition "Wawel which is no more", along with a computer presentation.*

**17 ROYAL CASTLE**

Wawel Castle, several times redesigned throughout the centuries, is a combination of the Gothic and the Renaissance styles. The royal residence was designed by such masters as Franciszek of Florence and Bartolomeo Berrecci, who, when his work was completed, placed the following inscription upon the entrance gate *Si Deus nobiscum quis contra nos* (If God is with us, who will be against us?) Four exhibitions are open for visitors – The Royal Chambers, the Royal Apartments, The Treasury and the Armoury, and Orient in Wawel collections. One can also visit the towers.

An Arras tapestry from the Wawel collection



One of the finest rooms in the castle is the Room of the Envoys, also known as "Under the Heads", as its ceiling contains cassetons with sculpted heads (16<sup>th</sup> c.). The largest is the Senator's Room (240 m<sup>2</sup>) in which Senate meetings, court ceremonies and balls were held. Also worth a visit are the Royal Treasury (with the royal coronation sword Szczerbiec) and the Armoury with its rich collection of weapons. The jewels of Wawel are its Arras tapestries woven from wool, silk and metallic thread in Brussels workshops. They were commissioned by King Sigismund Augustus. 138 tapestries out of 360 have survived in this collection, ranked among the largest in Europe.

**18 CATHEDRAL**

The church represents an array of epochs and styles – The Gothic structure is surrounded with twenty one chapels – Gothic, Renaissance,



and Baroque. In its majestic, dark interior the royal sarcophagi, and the silver confession of St. Stanislaus, early-Renaissance stalls and the beautiful black crucifix of Queen Jadwiga. Thirty seven royal coronations took place at the cathedral. Almost all Polish kings found a place of final rest here – from Ladislaus the Elbow-High to August II. T. Kościuszko, J. Piłsudski, W. Sikorski, A. Mickiewicz and J. Słowacki are also buried in the cathedral crypts. Among the chapels, the most beautiful is the Zygmuntowska (Sigismund's) Chapel, a real masterpiece of the Renaissance. It is also worth to take an effort to climb the Sigismund Tower, to see the famous Sigismund, a huge bell, cast in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. from cannons, weighing 12.7 tonnes. Twelve people are needed to put it in motion. Its voice is heard from a distance of 12 km. In 2000 its heart broke. The new heart, weighing 350-kg, was cast and hung after a few months.

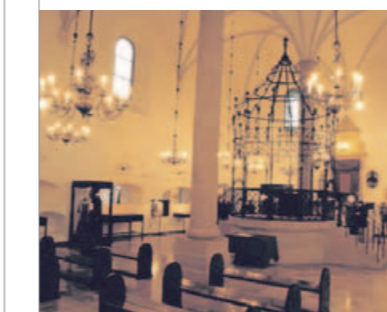


**KAZIMIERZ**

*Kazimierz was established by King Casimir (Kazimierz) the Great as a separate town. In the late 15<sup>th</sup> c an autonomous Jewish district was established here. Depopulated and dilapidating after the Second World War, the district is currently recovering its original splendour. It is the second largest, interesting complex of Jewish historic architecture after Josefov in Prague. Its historic centre is Wolnica Square but social and cultural life focuses around Nowy Square and Szeroka Street.*

**19 THE OLD SYNAGOGUE**

Situated in Szeroka Street, the former commercial centre of Kazimierz, the synagogue was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> c by Czech Jews and is the oldest synagogue in Poland. During the Second World War it was plundered and devastated by the Nazis. After the war, the synagogue has been renovated to serve as a Jewish history museum. One may see there a reconstructed bimah, a Baroque collection box, a Torah Ark (aron ha-kodesh), various



**20 REMUH SYNAGOGUE AND CEMETERY**

It is the smallest of Kazimierz synagogues, built in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. and still used for religious worship. It may be visited outside service hours. Next to it extends a beautiful Renaissance cemetery with numerous historic tombstones. Matzevahs and sarcophagi, adorned with intriguing ornamental motifs, are being renovated one after another. The most venerated site is the tomb of Rabbi Moses Isserless (Remuh) which draws Jewish pilgrims from all over the world.

**21 ISAAC'S SYNAGOGUE**

A large Baroque synagogue was built in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> c. It was commissioned by Izaak Jakubowicz, a rich merchant and banker. Its arcaded portal and fine stucco-work adorn the building. Destroyed by the Nazis during the Second World War has been gradually renovated since the 1980s. Inside, visitors may watch two films about Jewish martyrdom. Interesting 17<sup>th</sup>-century inscriptions on the walls are worth to note.



**22 TEMPEL SYNAGOGUE**

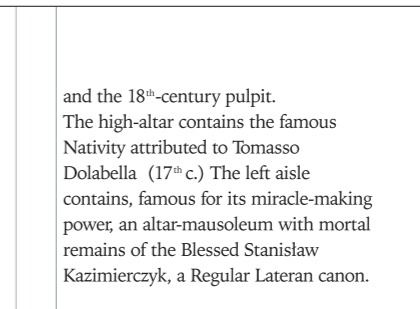
The youngest of Kazimierz synagogues was built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. by the Association of Progressive Israelites. Services were delivered here in Polish and German; changes were introduced to the liturgy, which raised protests among Orthodox Jews. The interior of the synagogue has been renovated by the World Monuments Fund. The women's gallery and the ceiling are richly adorned with stuccoes and frescoes in Oriental-Moorish style. The fine 19<sup>th</sup>-century stained glass windows on the ground floor and the upper floor add to the charms of the synagogue interior.

A panorama of Krakow Kazimierz – St. Catherine's Church and Corpus Christi Church



**23 CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH**

One of the greatest churches in Krakow, funded by Casimir the Great. Various architectural styles blend together here – late Gothic (top of the facade), Renaissance (belfry), and Baroque (side chapels). In its atmospheric interior one can admire masterworks of sculptors' art – the 17<sup>th</sup>-century stalls in the chancel



**24 ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH**

The Augustinian church, funded by Casimir the Great, represents the Krakow Gothic style at its best. The great structure of the church looks particularly impressive after the recent renovation. The high-altar, a work of Krakow carvers from the 17<sup>th</sup> c, ornamental stael and a 15<sup>th</sup>-century figure of Madonna with Child and wall paintings in the chancel with the scenes from the life of St Augustine, attract the viewer's attention in the church's bright interior. Medieval paintings can also be seen in adjoining ambulatories of the Augustinian Monastery.



**25 PAULINE CHURCH ON SKAŁKA**

The origins of the church date back to the 10<sup>th</sup> c. It is traditionally believed to have been the site where St Stanislaus was beheaded by Boleslaus the Bold. In the left aisle is a real jewel of the Baroque style – pastel colours, gilt ornaments, sculptures of angels and saints. The rococo organ is especially valuable element of interior furnishing. In the Crypt of the Meritorious below the church rest J. Długosz, J.J. Kraszewski K. Szymanowski, A. Asnyk, S. Wyspiański, J. Malczewski, H. Siemiradzki and Cz. Miłosz. In front of the church is a pond with the statue of St Stanislaus – legend has it that the quartered body of the martyr was thrown into that pond.

The Gothic interior of St Catherine's Church has excellent acoustics and is a venue of many musical events



*A guide to Krakow*

# KRAKOW

The city on the Vistula River, for five centuries the capital of Poland, has accumulated one fourth of Poland's total number of museum artefacts.

A visit to Krakow is a meeting with the most glorious era in our history. Krakow's Old Town with Wawel and the Kazimierz district were placed on the first World Heritage List, created by the UNESCO in 1978. It should be remembered that this prestigious recognition had then been awarded to only 12 of the most famous world heritage sites, including the Egyptian pyramids and the Great Wall of China. Today the list contains almost 700 sites.

## THE MAIN MARKET SQUARE

It is the largest medieval square in Europe (approx. 200x200 m). It was laid out when the city received its charter in 1257. The Churches of St. Mary's and St. Adalbert were built earlier, and thus they are not aligned with the sides of the Main Market Square. The Cloth Hall, the Town Hall and numerous townhouses were built later. The most recent addition is the monument of Adam Mickiewicz, designed in 1898 by Teodor Rygiel; today it is the most popular meeting place for young people. Looking at the restored colourful townhouses and mansions surrounding the square it is hard to believe that they are 500-600 years' old. The Grey House (Szara Kamienica) at no. 6 deserves a closer look. Legend has it that it was donated by King Casimir the Great to his mistress, Sarah. The Pod Krzysztofory Palace



A panorama of the Main Market Square with St Mary's Church, the Cloth Hall and the Town Hall Tower

(no. 35) is also noteworthy, as kings John Casimir, Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki and Prince Józef Poniatowski once stayed there. Today it houses the Krakow's Historical Museum. The Pod Baranami Palace (The Rams' Palace) at no. 27 is a home for a popular cabaret. House No. 15 is renowned for its restaurant, Wierzynek, whose traditions go back to a famous feast given at the house in 1364.

### 1 THE CLOTH HALL

The origins of the Cloth Hall go back to the 13<sup>th</sup> c., but at that time it was just a double range of cloth trade stalls. They differed from other trade facilities at the Main Market Square only because of their size. In the 14<sup>th</sup> c. the merchants built a 108-metre long hall, which two centuries later was reconstructed after a fire as an impressive Renaissance building with a parapet adorned by mascarons. The Cloth Hall acquired its current appearance in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. when

Adam Mickiewicz's monument and Cloth Hall



the neo-Gothic arcades were added. Continues a centuries-old tradition, trade still flourishes in the stylish stalls of the Cloth Hall. Merchant and guild emblems may be seen on the walls, along with the armorial bearings of Polish cities. The upper floor houses a Gallery of Polish 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Painting and Sculpture, where one can admire famous works by P. Michałowski, H. Siemiradzki (*Nero's Torches*), J. Matejko (*The Prussian Homage*), (*Kościuszko in the Battle of Racławice*) and W. Podkowiński (*The Frezno*), as well as canvasses by A. Grottger, A. Gieryski, J. Chelmoński and J. Malczewski.

### 2 ST. MARY'S CHURCH

The church, founded by Krakow burghers in the 13<sup>th</sup> c., is one of the finest Gothic parish churches in Poland. Its interior captivates the viewer with its outstanding polychromies by Jan Matejko, as well as by its stained-glass windows, both 14<sup>th</sup>-century and

The Prussian Homage by Jan Matejko



The interior of St. Mary's Basilica with the high-altar by Veit Stoss and Jan Matejko's polychromy

those designed by S. Wyspiański and J. Matejko. One should take a glance at the epitaphs of prominent families and take a seat in the wooden Baroque stalls, centuries ago reserved for the City of Krakow's councillors and magnates. But the real jewel of the basilica is its high-altar, the work of Wit Stwoszc (Veit Stoss). It is 13 metres high and 11 metres wide and is the largest medieval wooden altar in the entire Europe. It took 12 years for the Master to complete his work. The altar consists of 200 figures, from as small as 3 cm to as high as 3 m;

they were carved with great precision revealing all anatomical details. The central scene depicts the Dormition of Our Lady; bas-reliefs on side wings illustrate scenes from the New Testament. From the higher of the two towers of the church (81 m), a bugle is played every hour. Behind the basilica are the small Mariacki Square (on the site of a former parish graveyard used until the 19<sup>th</sup> c.), and the charming St Barbara's Church dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> c. (once a funeral chapel).



A unique atmosphere of the Main Market Square evenings

### 3 ST. ADALBERT'S CHURCH

This Romanesque church is one of the oldest historical buildings in Krakow; its origins date back to the 10<sup>th</sup> c., although its present appearance is the result of the reconstruction in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. Legend has it that the church was built on the site at which St. Adalbert gave sermons. In 1241 the Cracovians found shelter there during the Mogul invasion of Batu-Khan's army. Several steps down lead us to the interior of the church, as the ground level is now higher than during the Middle Ages. Once inside, one should not miss a look at the figure of Christ crucified on the rood-screen. The crypt houses an exhibition on the history of Krakow's Main Market Square, where one can see wooden water pipes dating from the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries.



### 4 TOWN HALL TOWER

The brick tower is the only surviving part of the Krakow Town Hall which was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. Badly dilapidated, the Tower was demolished in the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. The tower is 70 metres high. The entrance on the side of the Cloth Hall is guarded by two stone lions. The Tower houses a section of the Historical Museum; the vaults offer a venue for the Ludowy Theatre (The Town Hall Stage). It is worth to take the effort to climb the tower to admire an impressive panorama of the Old Town. On the Square, between the Town Hall Tower and the outlet of Szewska Street one can see a commemorative plaque, at the site where in 1794 Jędrzejko took the oath as the leader of the nation.



## THE MAIN MARKET SQUARE SURROUNDS

The historic architecture and medieval urban layout have survived in the surrounds of the Main Market Square. Many architectural landmarks that recall the ancient past now house smart shops, elegant restaurants and cafes, which make sightseeing in the old town a real pleasure.



### 7 THE SLOWACKI THEATRE

This eclectic building, modelled after the Paris Opera, was designed by Jan Zawiejski and built in 1893. The most outstanding Polish actors – Helena Modrzejewska, Aleksander Zelwerowicz and Ludwik Solski (the theatre director 1905-1913) – performed on its stage. It was the venue for world premieres of Kordian (1899), Forefathers' Night and The Wedding (1901). The stage is adorned with a fine curtain by Henryk Siemiradzki, who painted on it various allegorical and symbolic figures connected with theatrical art. The famous dressing room once used by Solski may also be visited at the theatre.

### 6 THE FLORIAŃSKA GATE

Dated to the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> c., along the neighbouring walls and three towers, the gate is part of the powerful fortification system which once surrounded Krakow with a 3-km long band. It was reinforced with 47 towers,



eight gates and a moat. The Floriańska Gate opened the Royal Route which royal and envoy processions took on their way to Wawel. In the 19<sup>th</sup> c., city walls were demolished and replaced by the Planty Park.

### 9 THE PIARIST CHURCH

The 18<sup>th</sup>-century church has a rich Baroque interior, including the most impressive illusion painting on the vaulting in the main aisle, and fine paintings and stuccoes in side chapels. The high-altar contains a copy of Rafael's Lord's Transfiguration. Right of the altar is the urn with the heart of the Piarist Stanisław Konarski. Adjoining the church is the Municipal Arsenal (Arsenal Miejski) which houses part of the Czartoryski Museum collection.

### 10 THE CZARTORYSKI MUSEUM

Facing the Piarist Church is the main seat of the Czartoryski Museum, in which two masterworks of world painting may be seen — *Lady with an Ermine* by Leonardo da Vinci and *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* by Rembrandt. On display are also works of the European painting, mementoes connected with Polish kings, hetmans and generals, and an exquisite collection of china, goldwork and arms.

### 8 THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS

It is one of the most beautiful examples of Gothic architecture in Poland. Especially noteworthy is its original palm vaulting supported on only one pillar. The walls of the chancel and of the aisle are covered with interesting 15<sup>th</sup>- and 16<sup>th</sup>-century paintings, renovated by Stanisław Wyspiański.



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### 11 ST. ANN'S CHURCH

The largest Baroque church in Krakow, dating from the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> c. was funded by the professors of the Jagiellonian University and designed by the Dutch architect Tilman van Gameren. He designed the church in such a way that the entire facade can be viewed from a narrow street. The collegiate church is the place of worship of St. John Cantius – in the side altar is a sarcophagus with the relics of the saint. The fine stucco decoration by the Italian Baltazar Fontana, is especially noteworthy.



Lady with an Ermine – a masterpiece by Leonardo da Vinci



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### 12 THE COLLEGIUM MAIUS

Plus ratio quam vis (Reason over force) reads an inscription on the wall of the Jagiellonian Ceremonial Room of the Collegium Maius. The oldest seat of the Krakow University was founded by the Jagiellons in 1400, but over the centuries was remodelled several times. A small, quiet courtyard surrounded with 15<sup>th</sup>-century arcades is one of Krakow's most magical sites. Its arcaded passages and the Jagiellonian University Museum with its interesting library collection, the oldest Rector's insignia, astronomical instruments and the unique collection of ancient globes, are certainly worth a visit.



The rich interior furnishing of this Gothic church burnt during a fire in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> c. The current interior decor is in the neo-Gothic style. Interesting elements of the church include the Chapel of the Rosary (17<sup>th</sup> c.) and the Chapel of St. Hyacinth, the co-founder and the first prior of the monastery (14<sup>th</sup> c.), and Veit Stoss's sepulchral plate (on the left from the high altar) of the outstanding humanist Filip Bounaccorsi (Kallimach). The passages of the Dominican Monastery adjoining the church are also open to visitors.

### 13 THE DOMINICAN CHURCH AND MONASTERY

The Gothic church was founded by Boleslaus the Chaste in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> c. The Duke found his place of final rest here, along with his sister, Blessed Salomea. The church is particularly interesting because of Stanisław Wyspiański's stained-glass windows in the chancel depicting St. Francis, Blessed Salomea and the four elements, a fine colourful polychromy in the chancel and the real masterpiece – God the Father – a stained-glass window over the main entrance. The stations of the Via Dolorosa were painted by Józef Mehoffer.



God the Father – Let it Be – a fine stained-glass by Stanisław Wyspiański



The church was erected on the initiative of the Rev. Piotr Skarga and funded by Sigismund III Waza for the Jesuits. It was designed by great architects, including Giovanni Trevano, and was modelled after the Roman church, the Il Gesu. It was built at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> c. In the crypt under the chancel Piotr Skarga is buried in a silver coffin. The church has a fine cupola on which a Foucault pendulum was hung. Its swinging proves that the Earth rotates. The church is guarded by the twelve apostles – copies of the original 17<sup>th</sup>-century sculptures.

### 14 THE FRANCISCAN CHURCH AND MONASTERY

This Gothic church was founded by Stanisław Wyspiański in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> c. Its thick walls (1.5 m) and narrow windows prove that it also had a defensive function. Its small interior is stunning with its splendid Baroque decor; its rococo boat-shaped pulpit is especially noteworthy. The treasury of the convent of Sisters of St. Clara adjoining the church houses precious reliquaries from the 13<sup>th</sup> c., a unique mosaic with Our Lady dating from the turn of the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> c. and a set of Nativity figurines from the 14<sup>th</sup> c., among the oldest in Europe.



## KRAKOW

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