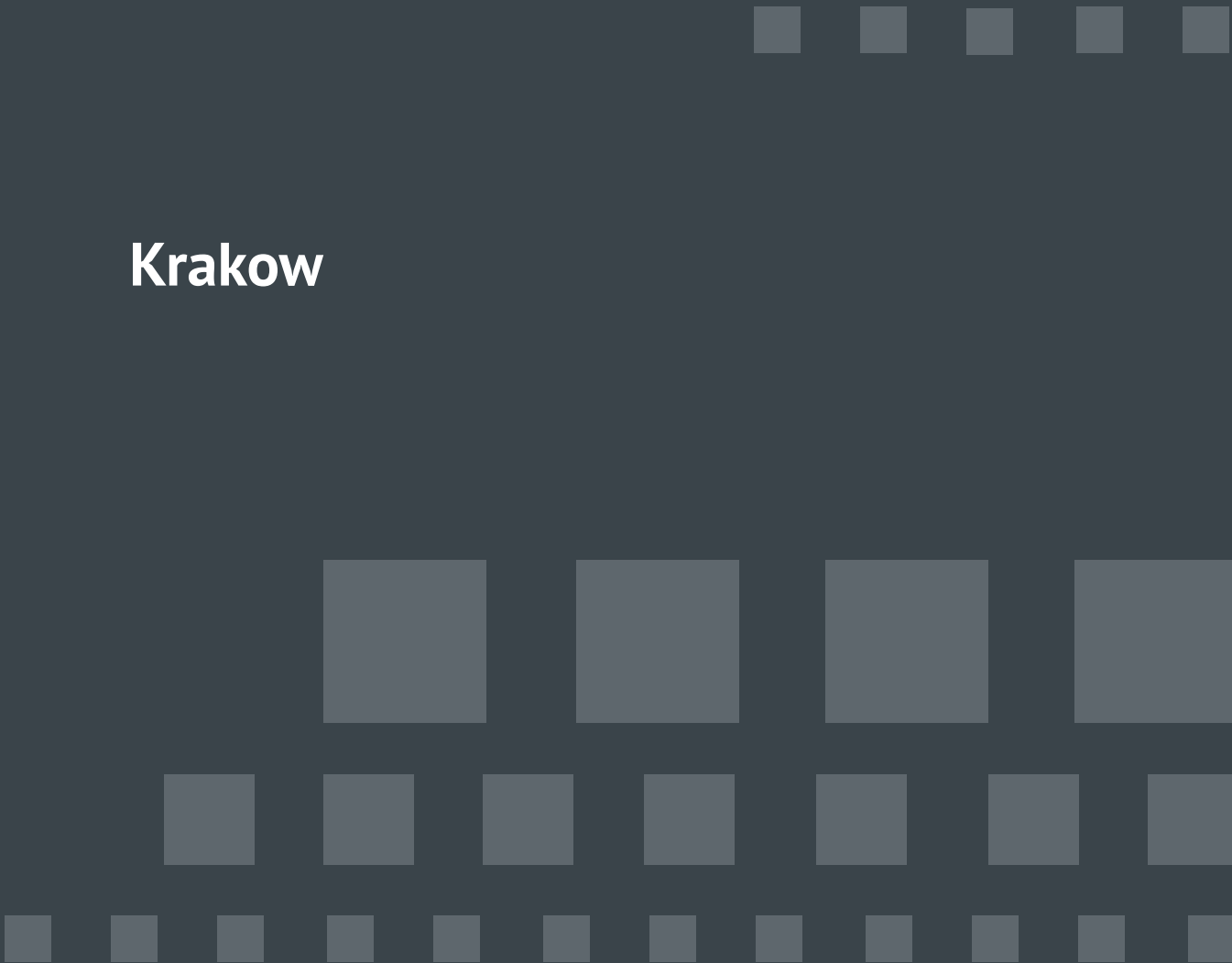


Krakow



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Chapter 1. Krakow

Main information and short history

Kraków^[a] (Polish: [\[ˈkrakuf\]](#), also known in English as **Cracow**, is the second-largest and one of the oldest cities in [Poland](#). Situated on the [Vistula River](#) in [Lesser Poland Voivodeship](#), the city dates back to the seventh century.^[6] Kraków was the official capital of Poland until 1596^[7] and has traditionally been one of the leading centres of Polish academic, economic, cultural and artistic life. Cited as one of Europe's most beautiful cities,^[8] its [Old Town](#) with [Wawel Royal Castle](#) was declared the first [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) in the world.

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 reported as a busy trading centre of Central Europe in 965.^[6] 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. The city has a population of about 780,000, with approximately 8 million additional people living within a 100 km (62 mi) radius of its [main square](#).^[9]

After the [invasion of Poland](#) by Nazi Germany at the start of [World War II](#), the newly defined [Distrikt Krakau](#) (Kraków District) became the capital of Germany's [General Government](#). The Jewish population of the city was forced into a walled zone known as the [Kraków Ghetto](#), from where they were sent to Nazi [extermination camps](#) such as the nearby [Auschwitz](#), and [Nazi concentration camps](#) like [Płaszów](#).^[10] However, the city was spared from destruction and major bombing.

In 1978, Karol Wojtyła, [archbishop of Kraków](#), was elevated to the [papacy](#) as [Pope John Paul II](#)—the first non-Italian pope in 455 years.^[11] Also that year, [UNESCO](#) approved [Kraków's entire Old Town and historic centre](#) as its first [World Heritage Site](#) alongside [Quito](#).^{[12][13]} Kraków is classified as a [global city](#) with the ranking of "high sufficiency" by the [Globalization and World Cities Research Network](#).^[14] Its extensive cultural heritage across the epochs of [Gothic](#), [Renaissance](#) and [Baroque architecture](#) includes [Wawel Cathedral](#) and [Wawel Royal Castle](#) on the banks of the [Vistula](#), [St. Mary's Basilica](#), [Saints Peter and Paul Church](#) and the largest [medieval](#) market square in Europe, [Rynek Główny](#).^[15] Kraków is home to [Jagiellonian University](#), one of the [oldest universities in the world](#) and traditionally Poland's most reputable institution of higher learning.

In 2000, Kraków was named [European Capital of Culture](#). In 2013, Kraków was officially approved as a [UNESCO City of Literature](#).^[16] The city hosted [World Youth Day](#) in July 2016.^[17]

Chapter 2. Culture

Information on main culture events in Krakow

Kraków was named the official [European Capital of Culture](#) for the year 2000 by the [European Union](#).^[191] It is a major attraction for both local and international tourists, attracting nearly 13 million visitors a year.^[192] Major landmarks include the [Main Market Square](#) with [St. Mary's Basilica](#) and the [Sukiennice Cloth Hall](#), the [Wawel Castle](#), the [National Art Museum](#), the [Zygmunt Bell](#) at the [Wawel Cathedral](#), and the medieval [St. Florian's Gate](#) with the [Barbican](#) along the [Royal Coronation Route](#).^[193] Kraków has 28 museums and [public art](#) galleries. Among them is the [Czartoryski Museum](#) featuring works by [Leonardo da Vinci](#) and [Rembrandt](#) as well as the [EUROPEUM - European Culture Centre](#) and the [Archaeological Museum of Kraków](#) whose collection highlights include the [Zbruch Idol](#) and the [Bronocice Pot](#).

Music

[Opera Krakowska](#)^[204] one of the leading national opera companies, stages 200 performances each year including ballet, operettas and musicals. It has, in its main repertoire, the greatest world and Polish opera classics. The Opera moved into its first permanent House in the autumn of 2008. It is in charge also of the *Summer Festival of Opera and Operetta*.

Kraków is home to two major Polish festivals of [early music](#) presenting forgotten Baroque oratorios and operas: *Opera Rara*,^[205] and *Misteria Paschalia*.^[206] Meanwhile, [Capella Cracoviensis](#) runs the *Music in Old Krakow International Festival*.

Academy of Music in Kraków, founded in 1888, is known worldwide as the *alma mater* of the contemporary Polish composer [Krzysztof Penderecki](#) and it is also the only one in Poland to have two winners of the [International Chopin Competition](#) in Warsaw among its alumni. The academy organises concerts of its students and guests throughout the whole year.^[207]

Music organisations and venues include: Kraków Philharmonic,^[208] *Sinfonietta Cracovia* (a.k.a. the Orchestra of the Royal City of Kraków), the Polish Radio Choir of Kraków, *Organum* Academic Choir, the Mixed [Mariański Choir](#) (*Mieszany Chór Mariański*), Kraków Academic Choir of the [Jagiellonian University](#), the Kraków Chamber Choir, *Amar Corde* String Quartet, *Consortium Iagellonicum* Baroque

Orchestra of the [Jagiellonian University](#), Brass Band of T. Sendzimir Steelworks, and *Camerata* Chamber Orchestra of Radio Kraków.

Performing arts

The city has several famous theatres, including the Narodowy Stary Teatr (the [National Old Theatre](#)),^[200] the [Juliusz Słowacki Theatre](#), the Bagatela Theatre, the [Ludowy Theatre](#), and the Grotoska Theatre of Puppetry, as well as the [Opera Krakowska](#) and Kraków Operetta. The city's principal concert hall and the home of the [Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra](#) is the [Kraków Philharmonic](#) (*Filharmonia Krakowska*) built in 1931.^[201]

Kraków hosts many annual and biannual artistic events,^[202] some of international significance such as the Misteria Paschalia (Baroque music), Sacrum-Profanum (contemporary music), the Krakow Screen Festival ([popular music](#)), the Festival of [Polish Music](#) (classical music), Dedications (theatre), the [Kraków Film Festival](#) (one of Europe's oldest short films events),^[203] [Etiuda&Anima International Film Festival](#) (the oldest international art-film event in Poland), Biennial of [Graphic Arts](#), and the [Jewish Culture Festival](#). Kraków was the residence of two Polish [Nobel laureates](#) in literature, [Wisława Szymborska](#) and [Czesław Miłosz](#); a third [Nobel laureate](#), the Yugoslav writer [Ivo Andrić](#), lived and studied in Kraków. Other former longtime residents include internationally renowned [Polish film directors](#) [Andrzej Wajda](#) and [Roman Polanski](#), both of whom are [Academy Award](#) winners.

Festivals

Table 1. Festivals that are the most popular among recipients, organized by the Krakow Festival Office

Festival name / date	Cooperating entities	Number of participants
Wianki – The Fête de la Musique	City of Krakow	90,000
Film Music Festival	RMF Music, City of Krakow	31,202
Conrad Festival	City of Krakow, Krakow UNESCO City of Literature, Tygodnik Powszechny Foundation	21,000

Table 1. Festivals that are the most popular among recipients, organized by the Krakow Festival Office (continued)

Festival name / date	Cooperating entities	Number of participants
Etno Krakow Festival	City of Krakow, Rozstaje Association: U Zbiegu Kultur i Tradycji	6,775
Mysteria Paschalia Festival	City of Krakow, French Institute	5,569
Sacrum Profanum Festival	City of Krakow, Millennium Bank, Bunkier Gallery of Contemporary Art	5,126
Opera Rara Festival	Capella Cracoviensis, City of Krakow, MOCAR Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow	4,654
Miłosz Festival	City of Krakow, City of Literature Foundation	2,400

Museums and national art galleries

Kraków's 28 museums are separated into the national and municipal museums; the city also has a number of art collections and public art galleries. The [National Museum](#), established in 1879, as well as the National Art Collection on [Wawel Hill](#), are all accessible to the general public.

The National Art Collection is located at the [Wawel](#), the former residence of three dynasties of Polish monarchs. Royal Chambers feature art, period furniture, Polish and European paintings, collectibles, and a major collection of 16th-century monumental [Flemish tapestries](#). Wawel Treasury and Armoury features Polish royal memorabilia, jewels, applied art, and 15th- to 18th-century arms. The Wawel Eastern Collection features [Turkish](#) tents and military accessories. The National Museum holds the largest body of artworks in the country with collections consisting of several hundred thousand items kept in big part in the Main Building at Ul. 3 Maja, although there are eleven other separate divisions of the museum in the city, one of the most popular being [The Gallery of the 19th Century Polish Art in Sukiennice](#) with the collection of some of the best known paintings and sculptures of the [Young Poland](#) movement. The latest division called [Europeum](#) with [Brueghel](#) among a hundred Western European paintings was inaugurated in 2013.^[194]

Other notable museums in Kraków include the [Manggha](#) Museum of Japanese Art and Technology (at M. Konopnickiej 26),^[195] [Stanisław Wyspiański](#) Museum (at 11 Szczepanska St),^[195] Jan Matejko

Manor in Krzesławice,^[53] – a museum devoted to the master painter and his life, Emeryk Hutten Czapski Museum,^[196] and Józef Mehoffer Manor.^[195]

The Rynek Underground museum, under the main square, showcases Kraków's over 1000-year history through its streets, activities and artifacts. The construction of the museum was preceded by extensive excavations which started in 2005^[197] and, as more and more was found, continued eventually until 2010.

Krakil - Museum of illusions is a space where illusions meet scientific inventions and the arts: physics and optics are displayed together with artworks and classical riddles.

The [Polish Aviation Museum](#), considered the world's eighth best aviation museum by [CNN](#), features over 200 aircraft including a [Sopwith Camel](#) among other First World War biplanes; a comprehensive display of aero engines; and a complete collection of airplane types developed by Poland after 1945.^[198] Activities of smaller museums around Kraków and in the Lesser Poland region are promoted and supported by the [Małopolska Institute of Culture](#); the Institute organises annual Małopolska Heritage Days.^[199]

Chapter 3. Religion

The metropolitan city of Kraków is known as the city of churches. The abundance of landmark, historic temples along with the plenitude of monasteries and convents earned the city a countrywide reputation as the "Northern Rome" in the past. The churches of Kraków comprise over 120 places of worship (2007) of which over 65 were built in the 20th century. More are still being added.^[167]

In addition to [Roman Catholicism](#), other denominations present include [Jehovah's Witnesses](#),^[168] [Mariavite Church](#), Polish Catholic Church, [Polish Orthodox Church](#), [Protestantism](#) and [Latter-Day Saints](#).^[169]

As of 2017, weekly Mass attendance in the [Archdiocese of Krakow](#) was 49.9 percent, above the national Polish average of 38.3 percent.^[170]

Kraków contains also an outstanding collection of monuments of Jewish [sacred architecture](#) unmatched anywhere in Poland. Kraków was an influential centre of Jewish spiritual life before the outbreak of World War II, with all its manifestations of religious observance from [Orthodox](#) to [Hasidic](#) and [Reform](#) flourishing side by side. There were at least 90 synagogues in Kraków active before the [Nazi German](#) invasion of Poland, serving its burgeoning Jewish community of 60,000–80,000 (out of the city's total population of 237,000), established since the early 12th century.^[171]

Most synagogues of Kraków were ruined during World War II by the [Nazis](#) who despoiled them of all ceremonial objects, and used them as storehouses for ammunition, firefighting equipment, as general storage facilities and stables. The post-[Holocaust](#) Jewish population of the city had dwindled to about 5,900 before the end of the 1940s. Poland was the only [Eastern Bloc](#) country to allow free Jewish [aliyah](#) (emigration to Israel) without visas or exit permits upon the conclusion of World War II.^[172] By contrast, Stalin forcibly kept Russian Jews in the [Soviet Union](#), as agreed to in the [Yalta Conference](#).^[173] In recent time, thanks to efforts of the local Jewish and Polish organisations including foreign financial aid from the [American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee](#), many synagogues underwent major restorations and serve religious and tourist purposes.^[174]

Chapter 4. Tourism

According to official statistics, in 2019 Kraków was visited by over 14 million tourists including 3.3 million foreign travellers. The visitors spent over 7.5 billion [złoty](#) (ca. €1.7 billion) in the city (without travel costs and pre-booked accommodation). Most foreign tourists came from Germany (14.2%), United Kingdom (13.9%), Italy (11.5%), France (11.2%), Spain (10.4%) and Ukraine (5.4%).^[209] The Kraków tour-guide from the Lesser Poland Visitors Bureau indicated that not all statistics are recorded due to the considerable number of those who come, staying in readily available private rooms paid for by cash, especially from [Eastern Europe](#).^[210]

The main reasons for visiting the city are: its historical monuments, recreation as well as relatives and friends (placing third in the ranking), religion and business. There are 120 quality hotels in Kraków (usually about half full) offering 15,485 overnight accommodations.^[211] The average stay last for about 4 to 7 nights. The survey conducted among the travelers showed that they enjoyed the city's friendliness most, with 90% of Polish tourists and 87% foreigners stating that they would recommend visiting it.^[210] Notable points of interest outside the city include the [Wieliczka salt mine](#), the [Tatra Mountains](#) 100 km (62 mi) to the south, the historic city of [Częstochowa](#) (north-west), the well-preserved former Nazi concentration camp at [Auschwitz](#), and [Ojcowski National Park](#),^[212] which includes the [Renaissance Castle at Pieskowa Skała](#).^[213] Kraków has been awarded a number of top international rankings such as the 1st place in the *Top city-break destinations 2014* survey conducted by the British [Which?](#).^[214]

Visit in Krakow

Kraków Four Day Itinerary Summary Duration: Four days of 8 to 10 hours of touring – excluding evening meals and strolls.

Areas Covered: Kraków Old Town; Wawel Hill; Auschwitz-Birkenau or the Wieliczka Saltmines (with optional shopping in Old Town); art and culture highlights in central Kraków; Nowa Huta; Podgórze and Kazimierz.

Sights visited: The Royal Route; Rynek Główny (Main Square and the Cloth Hall); Rynek Underground; St. Mary's Basilica; Church of St. Francis of Assisi; Wawel Hill (Cathedral or Royal Apartments); Auschwitz-Birkenau or Wieliczka Saltmines; Plac Szczepański; Collegium Maius; National Museum,

Main Building; Nowa Huta; Arka Pana; Ghetto Heroes Square; Pharmacy Under the Eagle; Schindler's Factory; Kazimierz and Szeroka Street; Galicia Jewish Museum.

1. Day 1: Stare Miasto (Kraków Old Town) and Wawel
 - a. 8:00am: Breakfast: Milkbar Tomasz
 - b. 9:00am: Rynek Główny
 - c. 10:00am: Rynek Underground
 - d. 11:30am: St. Mary's Basilica
 - e. 12:30pm: Sukiennice to Church of St. Francis of Assisi
 - f. 1:00pm: Lunch: Grodzka Street
 - g. 2:00pm: Wawel Hill
 - h. 5:00pm: Dragon's Den
 - i. Early Evening: Rest at your hotel
2. Day 2: Auschwitz or the Wieliczka Saltmines and shopping
 - a. 8:00am: Wieliczka Saltmines
 - b. 12noon: Lunch: Pod Wawelem Kompania Kufłowa
 - c. 2pm: Ciuciu Cukier Artist
 - d. 2.30pm: World of Amber
 - e. 3pm: Karmello
 - f. 3.30pm: Galeria Plakatu (Cracow Poster Gallery)
 - g. 4pm: Pasaż 13
 - h. 4.30pm: Szambelan
 - i. 5.30pm: Massolit Books & Café
 - j. 7pm: Kogel Mogel
 - k. 9pm: Wódka Café Bar
3. Day 3: Art and Culture and Nowa Huta
 - a. 8:30am: Bistro Charlotte – Chleb i Wino
 - b. 9.30am: Plac Szczepański and the Palace of Fine Arts
 - c. 10am: Collegium Maius
 - d. 11am: National Museum, Main Building
 - e. 12.30pm: Lunch: Bunkier Cafe
 - f. 2pm: Nowa Huta
 - g. 3pm: Nowa Huta Museum
 - h. 4.30pm: Arka Pana
 - i. 5.30pm: Restauracja Stylowa
 - j. 7pm: Night Stroll in Planty Park and Nocturnal Exploration of the Old Town
4. Day 4: Podgórze and Kazimierz

- a. 9:00am: Breakfast: Swoją Drogą
- b. 10:00am: Ghetto Heroes Square and Pharmacy Under the Eagle
- c. 11:00am: Schindler's Factory
- d. 1:00pm: Bernatek Footbridge
- e. 1:30pm: Lunch in Kazimierz
- f. 2:30pm: Szeroka Street
- g. 4:00pm: Galicia Jewish Museum
- h. 5:00pm: Judah Square Food Truck Park
- i. 5:30pm: Bar hopping around plac Nowy

Chapter 5. Transport

Public transport is based on a fairly dense network of tram and bus routes operated by a municipal company, supplemented by a number of private minibuss operators. Local trains connect some of the suburbs. The bulk of the city's historic area has been turned into a [pedestrian zone](#) with rickshaws and horse-drawn carriages; however, the trams run within a three-block radius.^[152] The historic means of transportation in the city can be examined at the [Museum of Municipal Engineering](#) in the Kazimierz district, with many old trams, cars and buses.^[153]

Railway connections are available to most [Polish cities](#), e.g. [Katowice](#), [Częstochowa](#), [Szczecin](#), [Gdynia](#) and [Warsaw](#). International destinations include [Bratislava](#), [Budapest](#), [Vienna](#), [Prague](#), [Berlin](#), [Hamburg](#), [Lviv](#), [Kyiv](#), and [Odessa](#) (June–September).^[154] The [main railway station](#) is located just outside the Old Town District and is well-served by public transport.

Kraków's airport, officially named [Kraków John Paul II International Airport](#) (IATA: **KRK**), is located 11 km (7 mi) west of the city. Direct trains cover the route between [Kraków Główny train station](#) and the airport in 20 minutes. Kraków Airport served around 5,800,000 passengers in 2017.^[155] Also, the [Katowice International Airport](#) is located 80 kilometres (50 miles) or about 75 minutes from Kraków.^[156]

In Autumn 2016 Poland's oldest [Bicycle-sharing system](#) was modernized and now offers 1,500 bikes at 150 stations under the name of Wavelo ([pl](#)), which is owned by BikeU of the French multinational company Egis.^[157]