

## **The UNESCO Trail – Poland's cultural heritage**

### **Day 1: TriCity**

Arrival in Gdańsk. Your journey on the UNESCO trail begins with **Gdańsk**, which is currently in line to be included on UNESCO's list of world heritage cities. You will walk along the Royal Way", taking in such major sights as the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Golden Gate, the Neptune Fountain, which stands in front of the late-Gothic Artus Court, and the City Hall dating from the 14-15<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The City Hall tower offers a spectacular view of the city. One of the most interesting buildings in old Gdańsk is **St. Mary's Church – the largest Gothic** church in Poland. Later you will travel to Sopot where you will be able to walk along the longest pier in Europe and have a coffee in one of the town's cafes, which will help restore your energy before we move onto Gdynia. Gdynia's harbour is home to many famous ships that are open to the public, including the destroyer "Błyskawica", a precious national relic and the only remaining ship that was built before the Second World War, and the Dar Pomorza, a Polish sailing frigate currently maintained in Gdynia as a museum ship. Overnight stay in Gdańsk.

### **Day 2: Gdańsk – Malbork – Toruń (196 km)**

After breakfast you will travel to **Malbork** to see the **Castle of the Teutonic Knights**, an outstanding feat of Late Medieval defensive and residential architecture. It consists of three castles surrounded by separate fortifications and covering a total area of 21 ha. You can also see the castle's amber collection. In 1997 the Castle Complex was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After visiting the castle you will go to **Toruń**, the birthplace of the **astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus**, who stopped the Sun and moved the Earth! The layout of the town's market square and adjacent streets has remained unchanged for 700 years. One of its peculiarities is the "Leaning Tower", built at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries, which is inclined at an angle just like the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. Overnight stay in Toruń.

### **Day 3: Toruń – Warszawa (225km)**

In the morning we will take you on a tour of **Warszawa**, whose **Old Town** is included on the UNESCO list as an example of faithfully reconstructed architecture that also contains fragments of the original buildings. Looking at the city today it is difficult to believe that it was virtually razed to the ground during the Second World War. Once known as the "**Paris of the North**" and blessed with 18<sup>th</sup> Century architecture it was bombed and dynamited out of existence. The colourful town houses, the surrounding defensive wall, church towers and the mass of the Royal Castle – all of them have been rebuilt from scratch. Amidst the capital's glass skyscrapers and broad streets you will discover restored palaces, period houses and entire streets. A real treasure is to be found in **Łazienki – a 17<sup>th</sup> Century architectural-park complex**. In the afternoon you will visit the State Chopin Museum housed in Ostrogski Castle, which dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Overnight stay in Warszawa.

### **Day 4: Warszawa**

Today you will visit **Żelazowa Wola**, an estate 50 km from Warszawa which was the birth place of **Frederic Chopin**. Today it houses a museum where visitors can see family portraits, documents and several manuscripts of the composer. Most of the rooms boast exquisite ceilings, chandeliers and candles in the Duchy of Warszawa style. The 18<sup>th</sup>-Century tile stoves also create the ambience of a manor house. Overnight stay in Warszawa.

### **Day 5: Warszawa - Kazimierz Dolny - Zamość (252 km)**

Today you will head for **Zamość**, another UNESCO-listed site, visiting on the way Kazimierz Dolny. In the town centre you will be able to admire renaissance town houses and from the Tower and Castle ruins as well as from Three Cross Mountain you will see how the layout of the town blends in with the natural landscape to form a harmonious whole. You will then move onto Zamość. The old town was classified a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1992 as an example of Renaissance urban architecture. Zamość was founded in the 16th Century at the behest of the magnate Jan Zamojski as the capital of

Braga Travel Consulting – [www.chinalife.com](http://www.chinalife.com) – [www.bonniebraga.com](http://www.bonniebraga.com) – email:  
[braga.bonnie@gmail.com](mailto:braga.bonnie@gmail.com) [bonniebraga@msn.com](mailto:bonniebraga@msn.com) [frances@bragatravelconsulting.com](mailto:frances@bragatravelconsulting.com) phone:  
1305-3824294 1305-6069894

his mighty domain. Zamość is known as "**the Jewel of the Renaissance**", "the City of Arcadia" and "the Padua of the North".

Overnight stay in Zamość.

#### **Day 6: Zamość – Łańcut – Kraków (320 km)**

In the morning you will travel to Łańcut to visit **Łańcut Castle**, one of the most beautiful aristocratic residences in Poland. It is famous for its marvellous residential interiors and fascinating collection of horse-driven carriages. The palace buildings are surrounded by many pavilions and estate outbuildings. You will then set out for the Royal City of Kraków.

Overnight stay in Kraków.

#### **Day 7: Kraków – Wieliczka (13 km)**

After breakfast we will take you on a sightseeing tour of the thousand-year old city of **Kraków**, whose Old Town was included on UNESCO's first list of World Heritage Sites in 1978 and the highlight of which is the **Market Square, the largest in Europe**, whose layout has remained unchanged since the city's foundation in 1257. Apart from the Old Town itself the Royal Castle – the seat of Polish rulers on top of **Wawel Hill** – is also on the heritage list. In the afternoon you will go to Wieliczka, the home of the world's oldest continuously operating company. Salt has been mined in Wieliczka since the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. Your tour of the mine will pass through 20 chambers on three underground levels where you will see lakes, chapels with salt figurines, bas reliefs and chandeliers.

Overnight stay in Kraków.

#### **Day 8: Kraków – Oświęcim (66km)**

Today you will see **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, an extermination camp museum which has also been included on the UNESCO list. On the site of the former camp you will find a dozen or so brick buildings in which the prisoners lived. Nowadays the museum includes an exhibition of various items plundered from both prisoners and those murdered on arrival.

Departure.

#### **LIST of UNESCO SITES IN POLAND:**

- 1) Kraków Old Town – unchanged since the Middle Ages.
- 2) Kraków Wawel Royal Castle - former seat of Poland's rulers.
- 3) Wieliczka Salt Mine – included the UNESCO List in 1978 and the oldest operating mine in the world today.
- 4) Kalwaria Zebrzydowska – a monastery and church with chapels, declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2000.
- 5) Warszawa Old Town – 90% destroyed after World War II and then rebuilt according to the city's spatial layout at the time of its foundation in the 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries.
- 6) Toruń – the birthplace of Nicolas Copernicus, which still retains its original medieval streets – declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997.
- 7) Zamość – City known as the "Jewel of the Renaissance", regarded as an ingenious example of urban design, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992.
- 8) Malbork – One of the biggest Gothic castles in Europe, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997.
- 9) Białowieża Forest - the oldest natural broadleaved and mixed forest in Europe. The Forest includes the Białowieża National Park, the highlight of which are its European bison.
- 10) Auschwitz-Birkenau – extermination camp museum, a place where the Nazis murdered Jews, Poles, Gypsies and Russians in World War II.
- 11) Świdnica and 12) Jawor – the biggest wood-constructed places of worship in Europe, both built in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Entered on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001.

For further details: email: [braga.bonnie@gmail.com](mailto:braga.bonnie@gmail.com)