

The Royal Castle



The Royal Castle served as residence of Mazovian princes. Upon transfer of the capital from Kraków to Warsaw, it became the seat of the King and the government. The castle has been renovated repeatedly and destroyed completely during World War II. It was rebuilt between 1971-1988 using the castle remains its own and rubble. Today, the segment with the clock tower (from which every day at 11:15 a bugle call is played) opens the way to the Old Town. The Castle museum's attractions include original paintings by Rembrandt and Bernardo Bellotto (who was called Canaletto); he was the court painter of the last Polish King. His paintings of Warsaw's buildings faithfully represented the reality of the city, and as such, were invaluable resources in the post-war reconstruction of the city. From the Vistula River side are the **Kubicki Arcades**, which have helped to buttress the castle, as well as giving the garden façade a monumental shape. Following the 1831 Uprising they were used as stables and barracks, and then as garages. The arcades are original, as they were not destroyed during World War II. The Castle is near the **Column of King Zygmunt III Waza**, the oldest and tallest secular monument in Warsaw. It was raised in 1644 by King Władysław IV, in honour of his father Zygmunt III Waza, who moved the capital from Kraków to Warsaw. The monument stands 22 metres high with the actual figure of the King measuring 275 cm. The sword he holds in his right hand symbolises bravery, while the cross he holds in his left hand symbolises his readiness to fight evil. According to legend, should the King's sword fall downward, disaster is sure to follow.



The Royal Castle
Plac Zamkowy 4, tel. 22 35 55 170, www.zamek-krolewski.com.pl

The Old Town



The Old Town is the historic centre and the oldest part of the town, as well as a living, breathing part of a very cultural capital. It was founded in the 13th century and served as the prince's castle; at that time, the village was surrounded by walls. During World War II, 90% of it was destroyed, but thanks to its excellent restoration and recovery, in 1980 it was granted the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site of Culture. Currently, it is a lively place, bustling with tourists and locals, and full of galleries, cafés and restaurants. In the Old Town market stands a **monument of the Warsaw Mermaid**, which has been on Warsaw's coat of arms for over 600 years. In Warsaw, there are many images of mermaids, which are the city's guardians and symbols. The two most important such monuments are situated in some of the most popular tourist spots: one is to be found on the banks of the Vistula River, where, according to legend, the mermaid came ashore (near Świętokrzyski Bridge); the second is less well-known but still worthy of attention, and is at the Markiewicz viaduct near Karowa Street.



The Old Town

Łazienki Królewskie



One of the most beautiful palace/garden complexes in Europe, founded in the 17th century. At one time, there was a zoo in this densely wooded area where the kings would hunt. The last Polish king, Stanisław August Poniatowski, a devotee and patron of the arts, then decided to create the largest and most beautiful garden in Warsaw on this spot, and he called it Łazienki Królewskie (which literally translates to 'the Royal Baths'). This beautiful park's surprising name comes from the exquisite and opulent royal baths built into the palace – these types of baths were a rarity at the time and a real symbol of luxury. In Łazienki, there are many historic buildings, most notably the royal summer residence, the Palace on the Island, where numerous parties took place and the famous 'Thursdays dinners' were hosted. Next to the Palace there is the Theatre on the Island. It's also recommended to seek out Mysławicki Palace, where royal courtiers lived, the Orangery, the Kordegarda and the White House. There is also the Fryderyk Chopin Monument, one of Warsaw's most recognizable monuments. It is the site of summertime Sunday concerts played by renowned pianists on a grand piano at the base of the monument. Łazienki Królewskie is the place of numerous cultural, scientific and artistic events, and is one of the favourite places for Varsovians to spend a Sunday afternoon. Rollerblades, skateboards and bicycles are not permitted in the park.



Łazienki Królewskie - Palace and Garden Complex
ul. Agrykoli 1, tel. 22 506 01 01, www.lazienki-krolewskie.pl

Wilanów Palace



Wilanów Palace was once the royal summer residence of King Jan III Sobieski and King August II, as well as many distinguished and noble families. The name of the residence and the whole area comes from the definition of 'Villa Nova'; it was Sobieski who gave this name to the lands when he purchased them in the 17th century. The impressive Palace combines the elements of a noble mansion, an Italian villa garden and a palace in the style of Louis XIV, the French 'Sun King'. The Palace is one of the most beautiful examples of European Baroque architecture and splendor, and is a testament to the Republic of Poland. It is worth mentioning that in 1805, Stanisław Potocki (former owner of Wilanów in the 19th century) assembled his art collection in the palace, thereby creating one of the first museums in Poland. Between the palace and Wilanowski Lake, there is a two-level Baroque Italian garden, with a romantic English style park in its southern area. The palace and park are an important place of cultural events and concerts, and in the place of the former riding school, there is the Poster Museum.



Wilanów Palace and Garden Complex
ul. St. K. Potockiego 10/16, tel. 22 842 07 95, www.wilanow-palac.art.pl

The Fryderyk Chopin Museum



Although it's rarely stressed about Chopin's life, the composer did spend his first 20 years in Warsaw - so the first half of his life was lived here. It was in Warsaw that he studied music, where he was formally educated, and where he gave his first recitals and concerts. In places that are particularly associated with Chopin, there are not only the plaques to mark their importance, but also multimedia benches which play Chopin tunes when a button is pressed. Additionally, on each bench there is a walking tour laid out. Called 'Chopin's Footsteps', it highlights the most important sites to do with the composer, and gives brief descriptions of each one. Thanks to a new media application installed on the benches, you may download the walking tour right onto your mobile phone, along with music, and interesting information about the life and travels of the composer. A highlight of Warsaw showcasing itself as a city of music and Chopin is the **Fryderyk Chopin Museum**. It's one of Europe's most modern biographical museums, and houses the world's largest collection of Chopin-related memorabilia. It is situated in the historic Ostrogski Castle. The collection includes manuscripts and printed copies of Chopin's works, his correspondence, autographs, notes, and personal items belonging to the composer (such as his piano, but also tie pins and calendars). There are also some extremely valuable exhibits on show, most notably the post-mortem face mask, and a cast of his hand. One of the Museum's many charms is that visitors do not have to enjoy the exhibitions as set out by a rigidly imposed route: thanks to a ticket with a chip inserted inside, every visitor may decide what he or she wishes to visit, and in what order. With numerous vibrant media exhibitions, touch screens, sound installations and even some unique fragrance-inspired exhibits, all your senses will be challenged – resulting in a full and very unique experience. In the Museum, one also has the chance to listen to live concerts.

More information about **Chopin Year 2010** at www.chopin2010.pl

The Fryderyk Chopin Museum (Ostrogski Castle)
ul. Okólnik 1, tel. 22 826 59 35, www.chopin.museum/pl

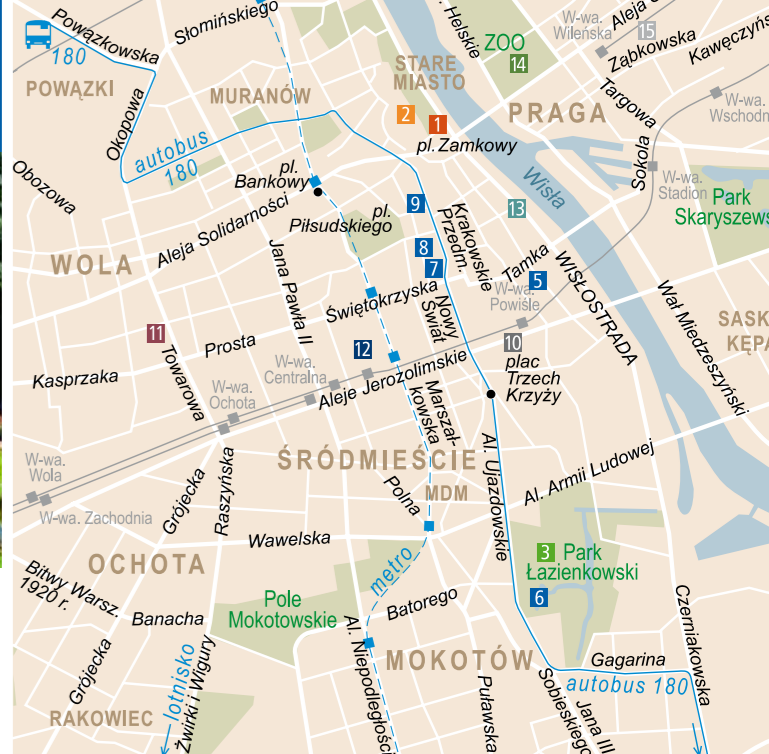


Fryderyk Chopin's Warsaw



The Fryderyk Chopin Monument in Łazienki Park is one of the most recognizable places in Warsaw, and the most famous monument of the composer in the world. There are many reproductions of the monument, the most famous of which is a 1:1 replica in Japan. Since 1959, the Monument has been the site of summertime Sunday open-air concerts (from mid-May to late-September at noon and 4:00 pm) devoted to the music of Chopin, played by renowned pianists. In **Holy Cross Church** on Krakowskie Przedmieście Street lies Chopin's heart; it was his desire to have his heart buried in a free Poland (Chopin actually died in Paris and his body is Père Lachaise cemetery). In 1880, a marble monument, crafted by Leonardo Marconi, was erected in the church. The inscription on it reads: 'Where your treasure is found, there is also your heart. To Fryderyk Chopin – The Compatriots.' *Holy Cross Church, ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 3, www.swkrzys.pl* Right next to the church is **Czapski Palace**; in 1827, the Chopin family - 17-year-old Fryderyk, his parents and their two daughters, Ludwika and Izabela - lived here. It was in this place that Chopin composed many pieces. Fryderyk lived here until November of 1830, when he left Poland forever. Since his time, some of the housing has been made available to the public. The Chopin Family Drawing-Room is also located in the Palace, and displays furniture which is complemented by period instruments, as well as portraits of Chopin and drawings depicting Warsaw at the beginning of the 19th century. *Czapski Palace in the Fine Arts Department of Graphic Design (ASP Wydział Grafiki), ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 5* **Chopin Centre Kordegarda 2010** (ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 15/17) In front of the Radziwiłł Palace, where eight-year-old Fryderyk played his first public concert, there recently opened a centre to host and celebrate events in 2010, the Year of Chopin. At the centre, you may purchase publications devoted to the composer – everything from some memoirs of the era, to more scientific studies, as well as guides and children's books. Its specially-designed interior allows you to freely browse through the publications on offer, listen to recordings and watch videos and presentations about Chopin.

Take a walk and follow the steps of Chopin in Warsaw. Download our free MP3 guide and see multimedia benches which play Chopin tunes. www.um.warszawa.pl/chopin2010



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www.warsawtour.pl
www.um.warszawa.pl

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The National Museum



The National Museum in Warsaw is the largest art museum in Warsaw and one of the most important cultural institutions in the country. A large part of the collection is presented in the following permanent galleries: Ancient Art, Eastern-Catholic Art, Medieval Art, Polish Painting, European Painting, 20th century Polish Art and Decorative Arts. The collections include monuments of early Christian art, sculpture, panel painting and goldsmithery from all regions connected historically with Poland in the Middle Ages, as well as works of art from other important centres of Europe such as images, sculptures and handicrafts from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century. A huge painting by Jan Matejko (19th century), 'The Battle of Grunwald' is an undeniable attraction of the museum, with its imposing dimensions of 426 x 987 centimeters. There are a huge number of temporary exhibitions on display, which come from all over the world. The wing of the building from the side of the Vistula River is **the Polish Army Museum** which is the only museum in Poland depicting the history of the Polish Army from its beginnings in the 10th century to the end of World War II. In the courtyard in front of the museum you can see military equipment from the First and Second World Wars, including tanks and helicopters.



The National Museum, Al. Jerozolimskie 3
tel. 22 629 30 93, www.mnw.art.pl. On Saturdays admission free.

The Warsaw Rising Museum



The Warsaw Rising Museum opened on the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising, and is one of the most interesting and most-visited museums in the capital. It's housed in a former tram powering station at 79 Grzybowska Street. In addition to the main building, there is also Freedom Park and Memorial Wall and Bunker. Until the recent opening of the Chopin Museum, the Rising Museum was the most modern and newest museum in Warsaw. Its exhibitions show not only the city's heroic struggle, but also the daily life of the insurgents. One of the Museum's many attractions is a replica of a bomber, the B-24J Liberator. The Museum also offers a wide variety of educational and cultural activities: it organizes classes and workshops for young people, it creates numerous very interesting educational games, and also schedules lectures, films, concerts and theatre performances. The most important events take place during the week of August 1st, to commemorate the outbreak and duration of the Uprising.



The Warsaw Rising Museum, ul. Grzybowska 79
tel. 22 539 79 05, www.1944.pl. On Sundays admission free.

The Palace of Culture and Science



It was given by Stalin as a 'gift from the Soviet Union to Polish nation', and it is the youngest monument in Warsaw, as it is just barely 50 years old. Despite its youth, it is the most characteristic (and the tallest) building in Warsaw, standing at 234.5 meters, it is visible from every corner of the city.

The Palace of Culture has over 3,000 rooms, but its unquestionable attraction is the terrace on the 30th floor, with a breathtaking panoramic view of the capital. On the top of the Palace there is a clock, unveiled in 2000, which is the highest clock tower in the world, and also the second largest in Europe: each of the clock's four dials have a diameter of six meters. Another interesting feature is that the tower has some unique inhabitants - not everyone knows that a migratory falcon has a nest there, and for a number of years, she has been laying eggs in the Palace tower. At its inception in 1955, the Palace was the largest such structure in Europe. Adjacent to the Palace of Culture is Defilad Square, where PRL leaders gave their propaganda speeches. Today, plans are in the works to develop this space.

The Palace of Culture and Science, Plac Defilad 1
tel. 22 656 76 00, www.pkin.pl

University of Warsaw Library



The BUW building is an ultra-modern library consisting of two buildings: the front lobby area and the main section. These two sections are connected by a small passage – almost a little street, actually – which is covered by a glass roof. Parts of the ground floor are rented by commercial institutions. The entrance of the library building proper is dominated by a large open book with the inscription 'HINC OMNIA'; the library itself consists of four floors, with the ground floor available for library visitors. The biggest attraction is the BUW's roof garden, which spreads over an area of more than 1 hectare, making it one of the largest and most beautiful roof gardens in Europe. The University's roof garden is a beautiful place to rest and relax from the city bustle; it is not only open to students and academics, but is accessible to all locals and tourists. The garden consists of two parts: the upper area is 2,000 m², and the lower area is 15,000 m², linked by a fountain of cascading water. Plant-lovers will find much to admire, and those looking for a great view of the city will not be disappointed: from the deck, you get a sweeping view of Warsaw, the Vistula river and the Świętokrzyski Bridge. The garden's visitors can also see directly inside the library through special windows, or the glass roof itself.



The University of Warsaw Library
ul. Dobra 56/66, tel. 22 552 51 78/79, www.buw.uw.edu.pl

Zoo



The Zoo was founded in 1928; about 4,200 animals belonging to more than 500 different species call its 40 hectares home. There are animals native to Poland, such as otters, brown bears and storks, but there are also a number of exotic species, such as African elephants, Rothschild giraffes, Indian rhinoceros, gibbons, various species of birds, reptiles and tropical fish. Most animals can be viewed from runways, but are inside the buildings in winter.

Birds can be found wandering freely around the Zoo, living around its ponds and aviaries. The majority of them stay in the main aviary, a part of which is the only 'Hall of Free Flight' (Hala Wolnych Lotów) in all of Poland.

One interesting building is a modern pavilion for apes, which houses a group of chimpanzees and two young male gorillas. It can be observed from large indoor runways surrounded by water, or from large standing areas outside, separated by glass. The newest additions to the Zoo are a hippopotamus exhibition and a shark aquarium.

All new pavilions are designed to accommodate disabled guests, with ramps and lifts. There are several restaurants in the Zoo, as well as various souvenir shops. One shop is run by the Panda Foundation, and is located in the oldest house in the Zoo, the Chata pod Strzechą, which was built in 1928.

At the centre of the Zoo is the special 'Fairytale Zoo' (Baśniowe Zoo), where children can stroke the animals and feed them carrots and apples; there is also a large, modern, safe playground.



Zoo
ul. Ratuszowa 1/3, tel. 22 619 40 41, www.zoo.waw.pl

Ząbkowska Street and Koneser



Through the centuries, Warsaw's right-bank - the area called **Praga** - was an independent town, and it became formally attached to Warsaw only in the late 18th century, when it was considered a secondary part of the city. Owing to the fact that it emerged almost unscathed from WWII, today it is a fascinating district, overflowing with artistic studios, galleries, alternative theatres and underground clubs. Thanks to this infusion of cool culture, many of the surviving post-industrial buildings have been turned into cultural centres, cinemas, galleries and pubs. But it is also in Praga that we can find many streets which were undamaged during WWII, and so there are some beautiful pre-war lamp-posts, sidewalks and apartment blocks. One of the main streets of old Praga is **Ząbkowska Street**. For many people this area is 'Praga's Old Town'. It is here that can found one of Praga's most popular attractions: the old Koneser vodka factory. A complex of red brick buildings from the late 19th century, for over a hundred years, an alcohol factory was located on its premises. **Koneser** is now a modern cultural centre, with numerous cultural institutions and is one of the city's most important examples of post-industrial architecture.



Praga District
ul. Ząbkowska



- The Old Town
- Łazienki Królewskie
- Wilanów Palace
- Fryderyk Chopin
- The National Museum
- The Warsaw Rising Museum
- The Palace of Culture and Science
- The University of Warsaw Library
- Zoo
- Praga District

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