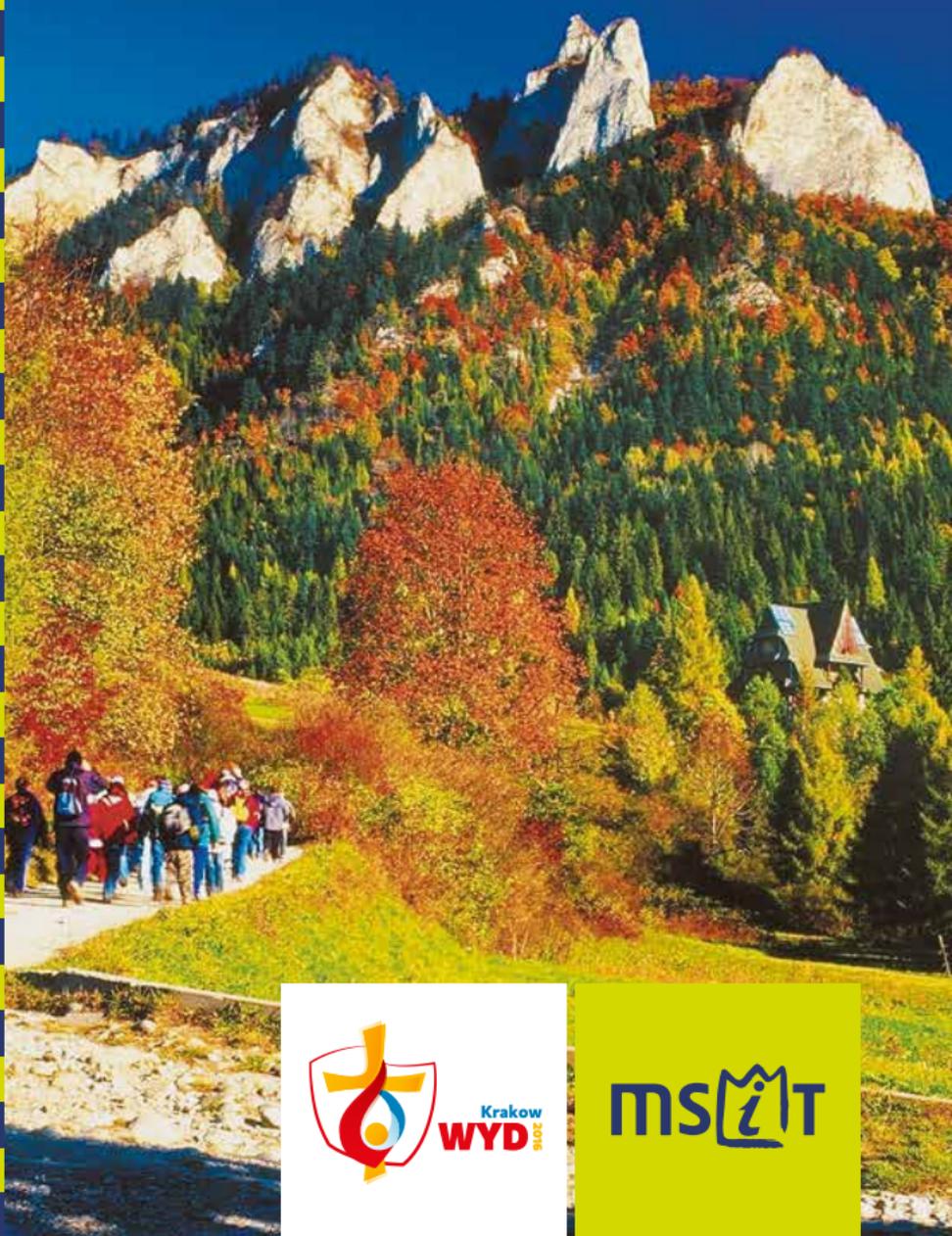




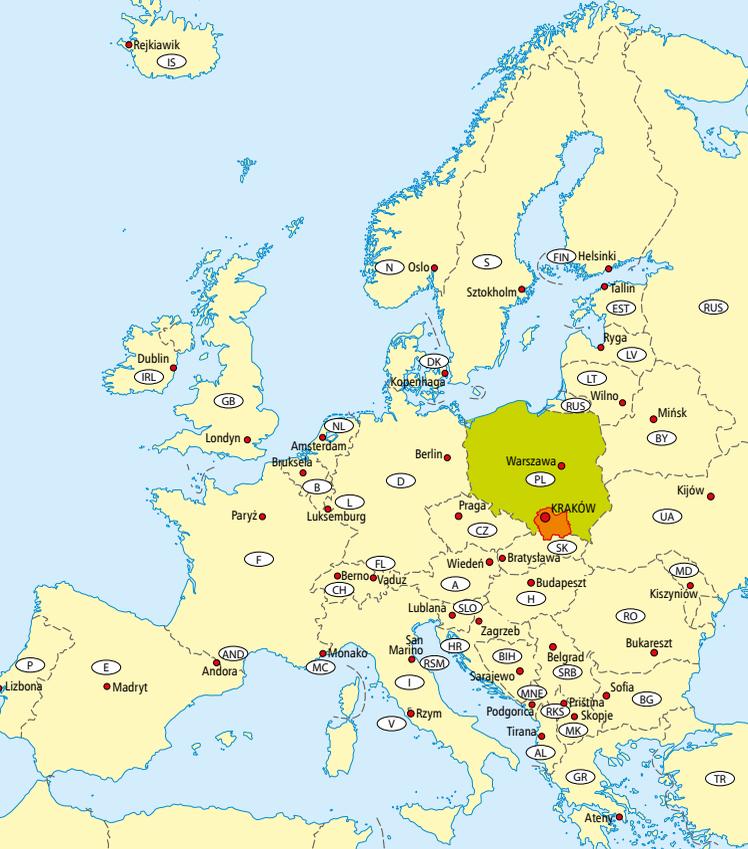
MAŁOPOLSKA

Weekend trips



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Weekend Trips



At the Pieniny Mountain trail, photo by J. Gorlach

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The peaks of the High Tatra Mountains lost in the clouds, the white rocks of the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland with the ruins of castles referred to as "Eagles' Nests," historic towns with old, charming tenement houses, green forests and woods... All this is waiting for visitors who plan to expand their sightseeing in Małopolska outside large cities. Once you have seen Tarnów and Nowy Sącz, once you have explored Zakopane and spent a few days in Kraków, it is worth continuing your sightseeing further afield. Around each of these urban centres, you will find a multitude of noteworthy places, and tourist trails that you can traverse, while admiring picturesque landscapes. Thanks to the rich topographical variety of Małopolska and its turbulent history, this region, like no other in Poland, can boast an enormous number of historic monuments and marvellous landscapes. The present guide features short descriptions of suggested routes starting in each of the main tourist centres in Małopolska. These routes are best for one-day car trips, but many of them can be visited during hiking trips or bike rides. Some attractions are best admired from the horseback or from the water, while sailing a yacht or kayaking.

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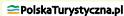
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Wawel Hill, photo by M. Zaręba
Pieskowa Skała, photo by M. Zaręba ▾

A Weekend Trip around... Kraków

In the vicinity of Kraków you can find both rocky limestone Jurassic valleys, as well as boggy plains covered with wild forests. You can set out on a trip among the hills or spend some time in the kingdom of fishermen, that is, in the Carp Valley. Such landscape diversity offers great opportunities, and if you add numerous historic buildings that can also be found here, you will realise with certainty that the vicinity of Kraków is as interesting as the capital of Małopolska itself.

The Kraków-Częstochowa Upland is a perfect area to enjoy active outdoor leisure, especially hiking and cycling. Here you can find Ojców National Park and a few landscape parks, protecting the picturesque region of the Krakowski-Częstochowska Jurassic Upland. It is also a great area for rock climbing and horse riding, e.g. along the Jurassic Horse Riding Trail.

Five out of fourteen Małopolska sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List are located in the vicinity of Kraków. These include: the Salt Mine in Wieliczka, founded in the 13th century, the Saltworks Castle in Wieliczka, the Salt Mine in Bochnia, the Mannerist Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, and the Auschwitz-Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp in Oświęcim.



Wieliczka Salt Mine, UMWM photo archive

▾ Niepołomice, photo by J. Podlecki

The Subterranean Salt Kingdom in Wieliczka

About 12 km south of Kraków lies the town of **Wieliczka**, featuring the **Salt Mine**, established in the 13th century. The underground tourist trail that leads through a network of corridors, huge chambers, and even chapels carved in salt (such as the spectacular Chapel of St. Kinga with salt bas-reliefs and altars) is the main attraction of the salt mine apart from the underground **Kraków Saltworks Museum**. It houses a collection of exhibits devoted to the history and technology of salt mining. "On the surface above," it is worth visiting the nearby **Saltworks Castle** (which was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013) with the second part of the exhibition of the above-mentioned museum, featuring, among others, a collection of about 600 salt shakers. A visit to Wieliczka can conclude with a walk around the nearby steep Górný Main Market Square.

From Wieliczka you can head 16 km south to the town of Dobczyce, passing by a **small Romanesque church in Dziekanowice** on the way. A rocky hill in **Dobczyce**, by Dobczyckie Lake, features the **ruins of a royal castle**. A small **heritage** park comprising several historic wooden buildings that have been transferred there, is located in front of the castle gate. A **Baroque church**, built from the stones acquired after the demolition of the castle walls, stands nearby.

Following a scenic route from Dobczyce along the shores of the barrier **Dobczyckie Lake** (a water source for Kraków), you can head to Myślenice. It is a small town, beautifully located by the Raba River at the foot of the Beskid



The Niepołomice Forest, a bison, UMWM photo archive

Mountains. Worth seeing here are two Gothic **churches**, and the **Greek House Regional Museum** located in the 17th-century inn. The district of **Zarabie** offers great sports areas and walking promenades for those seeking outdoor activities. Alternatively, you can make a trip to the town of Niepołomice, located north-east of Wieliczka, featuring a Renaissance **royal castle** with an arcaded courtyard and an interesting museum that are worth visiting. The **Gothic church**, founded by King Casimir the Great, is lo-

located in the town centre and features two chapels: the Renaissance Chapel of the Branicki Family, and the Baroque Chapel of the Lubomirski Family. Beyond Niepołomice stretches the **Niepołomice Forest** with many tourist trails. Moreover, the oldest female convent in Małopolska, the **Benedictine Convent** in the village of **Staniątki** is also located in the vicinity of Niepołomice.



Wieliczka Salt Mine, ul. Daniłowicza 10, Wieliczka,

☎ +48 12 278 73 02, 12 278 73 33 or 12 278 73 66,

▲ www.kopalnia.pl; visiting only with a guide

Kraków Saltworks Museum, ul. Zamkowa 8, Wieliczka,

☎ +48 12 2785849, ▲ www.muzeum.wieliczka.pl

Castle Museum and Heritage Park in Dobczyce,

☎ +48 518 825 830 or 12 271 11 76 (branch office of PTTK),

▲ www.zamek.dobczyce.pl

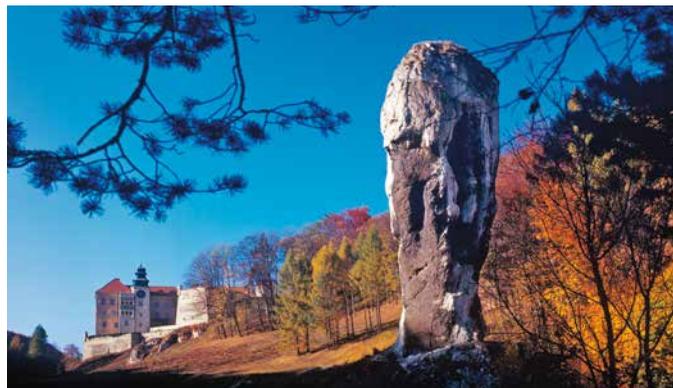
Museum in the Niepołomice Castle, ul. Zamkowa 2, Niepo-

łomice, ☎ +48 12 261 98 51, ▲ www.muzeum.niepolomice.pl

Greek House Regional Museum, ul. Jana Sobieskiego 3,

Myślenice, ☎ +48 12 272 02 11,

▲ www.muzeum.myslenice.edu.pl



Castle in Pieskowa Skała and the Mace of Hercules, photo by D. Zaród

Trail of the Eagles' Nests - Ojców, Pieskowa Skała, Rabsztyn

Northeast of Kraków stretches the picturesque Jurassic land of the limestone Kraków-Częstochowa Upland. It is an extensive plateau covered with rocky outliers and cut through by rocky gorges and deep valleys. The longest and the most interesting one is the Prądnik River Valley. Its most scenic area of highest natural value is now part of the protected area of **Ojców National Park**.

Travelling from Kraków, it is best to visit **Ojców**, situated 25 km away. Here you can visit the **ruins of the Royal Castle** and the wooden **Chapel on the Water**, constructed directly above the waters of the Prądnik River. Numerous tourist trails run from Ojców, along the Prądnik Valley, to the foot of many rocky walls and crags, e.g. to the **Kraków Gate** at the end of Ciasne Skałki Gorge, and farther to **King Łokietek Cave**. In the vicinity, you can also follow an interesting educational path up **Okopy Mountain** to **Dark Cave** or visit **Sąspówka Gorge**, a favourite place of the dam-building beavers.

In the northern part of the park you will find the famous outlier called the **Mace of Hercules**, and behind it, the magnificent **Castle in Pieskowa Skała**, located on a cliff above the Prądnik River and featuring an interesting museum of art style changes from the medieval times to the 19th century, as well as the gallery of English painting. The castle with its arcaded courtyard, external elegant loggia and a reconstructed garden is one of the greatest examples of Renaissance architecture in Małopolska.

On the way from Ojców to Pieskowa Skała, you can visit the **Hermitage of Blessed Salomea** and a small Baroque



Wierchowska Górna Cave,
photo by M. Zareba

church in the village of **Grodzisko**. A wooden settlement stood here in the early Middle Ages, and the Convent of Poor Clares was established here in the 13th century and headed by Salomea herself.

Coming back from Ojców through Sąspów and Jerzmanowice, it is worth visiting **Wierchowska Górna Cave**, the most interesting cave on the Jurassic Upland, which has been adapted for tourists. You may also visit the village of Bębło with an impressive **Grodzisko Rock** (512 m above sea level), which is the highest peak in the Polish Jurassic Upland in the vicinity of Kraków.

Olkusz is not far away from Jerzmanowice. The town, established in the 13th century, was a prosperous centre of lead and silver excavation. It has preserved many historic monuments until now, such as the magnificent Gothic **Basilica of St. Andrew** with Renaissance organs of high historic value. The **Regional Museum** located in a historic, 16th-century mansion at the market square is also worth visiting, as well as Poland's largest museum of African studies.

The vicinity of Olkusz boasts **Rabsztyn Castle**, preserved as a permanent ruin (now partially reconstructed) and located on a rocky hill. Further north of Olkusz, among the forests, stretches the **Błędownska Dessert**, a unique area of quicksand. Its most beautiful part is located south of the village of Chechło.

i **The Ojców Castle**, ☎ +48 12 389 20 05, ▲ www.ojcowski-park-narodowy.pl; **Pieskowa Skała Castle Museum** (The castle is closed to the public until 2016), ☎ +48 12 389 60 04, ▲ www.pieskowaskala.eu
Wierchowska Górna Cave, ☎ +48 12 411 0 721, ▲ www.jaskiniawierzowska.pl, **Fire Fighting Museum of the Olkusz Land**, ul. Floriańska 8, Olkusz, ☎ +48 32 643 28 45, **Rabsztyn Castle**; Collection of minerals from the Olkusz lands and fossils from the Kraków-Czestochowa Jurassic Highland ▲ www.mok.olkusz.pl; **B. Szczygieł and B. Szczygieł – Gruszyńska Africanist Museum**, ul. Szpitalna 32, Olkusz, ☎ +48 32 754 44 55, ▲ www.mok.olkusz.pl
W. Wołkowski's Works Museum, ul. Szpitalna 32, Olkusz, ☎ +48 32 754 44 55, ▲ www.mok.olkusz.pl



The Glove Rock, UMMW photo archive

A Trip to the Kraków Valleys

Many attractive landscapes can be found in the vicinity of **Krzeszowice**, a town 25 km west of Kraków. When visiting the area, it is worth seeing at least one of a few gorges called the Kraków Valleys. They are protected as part of **Kraków Valleys Landscape Park**. You can take a walk in the forested Kluczwydy Valley with ruins of the knights' castle and see an impressive rock gate at the end of Bolechowicki Gorge. The Kobyłańska Valley features numerous crags, walls and limestone ridges, whereas in the long Będkowska Valley you can admire, among others, the highest rock wall in the Jurassic Upland called the Sokolica Wall and a real karst spring.

Near Krzeszowice, the beech woods of the Eliaszówka Valley hide a Baroque monument of high artistic value: the 17th-century **Monastery of the Carmelites** in the village of **Czerna**. A beautiful small wooden church dating from the early 16th century is located in the neighbouring village of **Paczółtowice**. The village also boasts a large **golf course Krakow Valley Golf & Country Club**. In winter, instead of playing golf, you can ski here, and enjoy horse riding or a shooting range all year long.

South of Krzeszowice, behind a strip of vast woods, there are magnificent **ruins of Tęczyn Castle** located on a dormant volcano. Other attractions of the Tenczyński Ridge include the rocky Mnikowski Gorge and Zimny Dół Nature Reserve.



Market Square in Trzebinia, photo by A. Brożonowicz
Heritage Park: the Vistula Ethnographic Park, photo by A. Brożonowicz



Lipowiec Castle, photo by M. Zaręba

Oświęcim, Chrzanów, and the Surroundings

Oświęcim is a town boasting an over 800-year-old history. It is the former capital of the Duchy of Oświęcim and one of Poland's oldest castellan settlements. During the Second World War the Nazi Germans built here the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp (inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List). Today, the **Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Site** is visited annually by over one million tourists and pilgrims, while Oświęcim is considered the World Centre of Peace. Numerous initiatives appealing for reconciliation, tolerance and dialogue originate here. The town was awarded the title of the Messenger of Peace, and is a member of the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities.

The present day Oświęcim is an open, tourist friendly, and dynamically developing town that offers a wealth of interesting cultural, sport and peace events.

The character and atmosphere of Oświęcim is influenced by the traces of the town's long history dating back to the 13th century. The **Castle of the Oświęcim Dukes** towering over the town, the mysterious **churches**, picturesque **tenement houses** surrounding the market square, and the winding side streets invite you to walk around, offering a possibility of travelling into the past. The **Castle Museum**, established in 2010, features



exhibitions devoted to the 800-year-long history of the town. In order to facilitate sightseeing in Oświęcim, hiking and bicycle tourist trails have been marked in town. The international **Greenway Bicycle Trail** (Kraków-Vienna section) also runs through the town. The green **Planty Park at the Soła River** is an ideal place for walks and relaxation. Oświęcim features traces of Polish and Jewish cultural coexistence, such as the Salesian Church, the **Chevre Lomdei Mishnayot Synagogue** preserved until now, and the **Jewish Museum**.

The town's vicinity, especially the Vistula Valley towards the town of Zator, has been known for centuries for carp ponds; therefore, the area is referred to as the **Carp Valley**. It is a perfect place for fishing or waterfowl and wetland bird watching. The greatest attraction here for youngsters is the amusement park complex – **Zatorland**.

On the way from Kraków to Oświęcim, it is worth stopping in the village of **Wygielzów**, featuring a large **heritage park** and the ruins of **Lipowiec Castle**. The open-air Skansen museum currently houses 25 historic wooden objects, enhanced by "small" architectural items, such as shrines, wells and apiaries. The exhibits have been divided into two sectors: small-town and rural.

The nearby **Chrzanów** is best known for one of Małopolska's largest **Jewish cemeteries**. It is also worth taking a stroll around the town centre: the small market square or **Henryk Avenue**. Tourists eagerly visit the **Church of St. Nicholas** with the Gothic chancel, and the **Museum in Chrzanów**. It is also worth stopping by the 16th century court storage shed – now the Museum of Chrzanów. It is a pleasure to walk through the renovated



The castle in Oświęcim, photo by A. Brożonowicz



Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, UMWM photo archive

Calvary Paths and the Pope's Hometown

Only 35 km away from Kraków, over the hills and the green valleys of the Beskids, in **Kalwaria Zebrzydowska** stands a magnificent church and monastery complex of the Bernardines. It is one of the most important centres of pilgrimage in Poland. A number of churches, chapels, and shrines were built here at the beginning of the 17th century in order to create the **Calvary Paths**, conceived as a memorial of the Passion. Thanks to its beautiful landscape and highly original buildings, this oldest Polish Calvary complex has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Kalwaria is also famous for its unique **Passion Plays**, staged every year during Holy Week.

Among the nearby places of interest is **Lanckorona**, which has retained the charm of a small Galician town with its sloping, cobbled **market square**, and the reconstructed one-storey wooden houses.

If you visit Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, which used to be frequented by Karol Wojtyła as a place of prayer (also after he became Pope), it is worth making a trip to **Wadowice**, the birthplace of the Polish Pope, situated only 15 km to the west. The tower of the **Basilica of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, the late Baroque church dating from the late 18th century with the 15th-century chancel, dominates over the market square in Wadowice. Karol Wojtyła was baptised in this very church. Nearby, a small tenement house where the future Pope was born features a **museum**, which was renovated in 2013. After the museum visit, you can have a rest in the nearby café and enjoy a **"papal cream cake."** From Wadowice it is worth going for a hike in the Low Beskids, to the Leskowiec Peak and the neighbouring **John Paul II Ridge**.

Family Home Museum of the Holy Father John Paul II in Wadowice, Kościelna 7, the Museum Office on 8 Spadzista Street, ☎+48 33 823 35 55, 33 823 35 65, ▲ www.domjp2.pl
Sanctuary in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, ul. Bernardyńska 46, ☎+48 33 876 63 04, ▲ www.kalwaria.eu

City Park with a modern playground for children.

North of Chrzanów lies the industrial **Trzebinia**, featuring the magnificent **Minor Basilica of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, which is also the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima, an interesting **Manor of the Zieleniewski Family**, and the local **Jewish Cemetery**. The palace-park complex in the nearby village of **Młoszowa** is also worth seeing.

Heritage Park: the Vistula Ethnographic Park, Lipowiec Castle, ul. Podzamcze 1, Wygielzów, ☎+48 32 613 40 62,

▲ www.mnpe.pl

The Carp Valley, information: The Carp Valley Association, Rynek 2, Zator, ☎+48 33 841 05 84, ▲ www.dolinakarpia.org

Zatorland, ul. Parkowa 7, Zator, ☎+48 667 979 220,

▲ www.zatorland.pl

Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Site and Museum, ul. Więźniów Oświęcimia 20, Oświęcim, ☎+48 33 844 81 00 or 33 844 80 99, ▲ www.auschwitz.org

Castle Museum in Oświęcim, ul. Zamkowa 1, ☎+48 33 842 44 27, ▲ www.muzeum-zamek.pl

Jewish Education Centre in Oświęcim, pl. ks. J. Skarbka 5, ☎+48 33 844 70 02, ▲ www.ajcf.pl; Closed on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. Centre is also open to visitors at other times after a reservation made in advance.

Museum in Chrzanów, ul. Mickiewicza 13, ☎+48 32 623 51 73, ▲ www.muzeum.chrzanow.pl



The Bochnia Salt Mine, photo by R. Korzeniowski

A Weekend Trip around... Tarnów

Day trips from Tarnów offer a possibility to visit many marvelous buildings and historic monuments. There are also many attractions of nature, such as the original sandstone outliers, formed in various shapes as a result of erosion, in the Petrified City Nature Reserve. Not far from Tarnów, along the Dunajec Valley, you can find picturesquely situated mountain lakes – Czchowskie and Rożnowskie Lakes (described in the section on weekend trips from Nowy Sącz). Their shores have been adapted for swimming in several places, where you can also rent water sports equipment.

As for the original historic buildings around Tarnów, one has to mention the beautiful late Gothic church in Dębno, as well as the magnificent aristocratic residence in Nowy Wiśnicz, dating from the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. Bochnia boasts the oldest Polish salt mine (even older than the Salt Mine in Wieliczka), whereas Lipnica Murowana features a historic wooden church (both sites have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List). The village of Zalipie, with its living folk tradition, famous for flower patterns painted over the houses and house furniture, is also a great tourist attraction.

A Taste of the Bochnia Salt

The oldest operating **salt mine** in Poland (inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013) is located in **Bochnia**. Salt has been extracted since the 13th century, which makes the Bochnia Salt Mine older by several dozen years than the Wieliczka Salt Mine. However, the salt mine in Bochnia was established a few dozen years earlier. A visit to this salt kingdom

includes a visit to the chapel and the underground chambers, located on two levels, reaching the depth of 223 metres below the ground. The latest attraction featured in the mine is an underground multimedia exhibition, offering “a journey in time” and presenting the history of the mine and mining technology in the company of the eminent figures of the past, and even a ghost...



Town hall in Tarnów, photo by A. Brożonowicz

From Bochnia, situated 45 km west of Tarnów, you can visit **Nowy Wiśnicz**, which is only 5 km to the south. Here, the market square features several elegant tenement houses and a beautiful church in the early Baroque style. The Renaissance **Castle** of the Kmita Family, dating from the 15th and 16th centuries, located on a hill towers over the town. In the following century, the Lubomirski family transformed the castle into a huge bastion fortress. An interesting and intimate historic monument: the wooden **Koryznówka Manor House** featuring the **Jan Matejko Museum** is located at the foot of the castle.

Almost 10 km south of Wiśnicz, in the Uszwica River Valley, lies the village of **Lipnica Murowana**. It is famous not only for the **Easter Palm contest** organised during the Palm Sunday, but also for the wooden **Church of St. Leonard**, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

On the way back to Tarnów, a visit to the village of **Dębno** is a must. You can visit the beautiful small **Castle** of the Dębiński Family, built of brick and stone at the end of the 15th century, which presently houses an interesting museum.

i **Bochnia Salt Mine Health Resort**, ul. Solna 2, Bochnia, ☎ +48 14 615 24 60, ▲ www.kopalniasoli.pl
The Nowy Wiśnicz Castle, ul. Zamkowa 13, ☎ +48 14 612 85 89, ▲ www.zamekwisnicz.pl
Koryznówka Manor House – Jan Matejko Museum, Stary Wiśnicz 278, ☎ +48 14 612 83 47, ▲ www.muzeum.tarnow.pl
Castle Museum in Dębno, Dębno 189, ☎ +48 14 665 80 35, ▲ www.muzeum.tarnow.pl



The Petrified City, photo by D. Gebuś

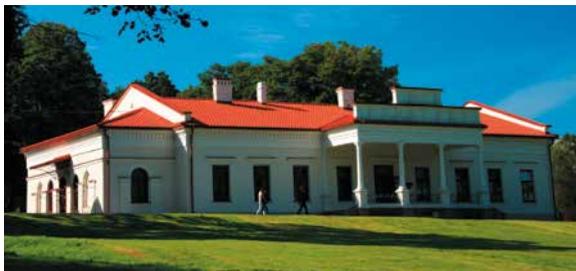
A Trip to the Petrified City

Only 18 km south of Tarnów lies the town of **Tuchów**, where you can find the Redemptorist Monastery with a **Marian Sanctuary**. 11 km further down the Biała River Valley, you can see the village of **Gromnik** with its beautiful wooden **church** dating from 1727. The road along the river then leads to the town of **Ciężkowice**, featuring the market square, adjacent to a neo-Gothic church, surrounded by **historic buildings** dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, such as arcaded wooden houses, among others.

The **Petrified City Nature Reserve** is located near Ciężkowice, and boasts rocks in fanciful shapes reflected by their names, such as: the Witch, the Badger, the Pyramids, and the Town Hall.

On the other side of the Biała River Valley, the **Manor House of Ignacy Jan Paderewski**, at present the biographical museum devoted to the famous pianist, stands hidden in a quiet park in the village of **Kąsna Dolna**.

The Manor House in Kąsna Dolna, UMWM photo archive



Zalipie, photo by P. Mierniczak

Painted Cottages

Travelling up north from Tarnów, along the Dunajec River, through Żabno, you reach the village of **Zalipie** (located 34 km away from Tarnów). This village is famous for the original tradition of decorating houses, farm buildings and even wells and kennels with colourful flower patterns on a white background. The cottages are also decorated inside along with the house furnishings. This tradition is still alive: there is an annual competition for the best decorated house. Tourists can admire the beautiful old **Farmstead of Felicja Curyłowa**, which is a classical example of a **painting cottage** from Zalipie.

On the way back to Tarnów, it is worth crossing to the western bank of the Dunajec River and visiting the village of **Dołęga**, located at the edge of the forest in the vicinity of the village of Szczurowa. This is a unique opportunity to see what typical residences of the early 20th-century gentry looked like. Dołęga boasts a charming, classical **manor house** from around 1845, with the preserved interior furnishings dating from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. You can also visit a study office of Prof. Michał Siedlecki, famous Polish oceanologist.



Felicja Curyłowa Farmstead, Zalipie 135, Olesno, ☎ +48 14 641 1912, ▲ www.muzeum.tarnow.pl
Manor House in Dołęga, Dołęga 10, Zaborów, ☎ +48 14 671 54 14, ▲ www.muzeum.tarnow.pl
Road Building Museum in Szczucin, 1 Maja 39, ☎ +48 14 643 63 81, ▲ www.gddkia.gov.pl



Town Hall in Nowy Sącz, photo by J. Gorlach

A Weekend Trip around... Nowy Sącz

Nowy Sącz lies in the extensive mountainous valley, between the hills of the Island, Sądecki and the Low Beskids. Around here you can enjoy a number of outdoor leisure activities, such as hiking and cycling along numerous tourist trails. A visit to Nowy Sącz is also a perfect opportunity to explore the culture of the Lemko residents of the Low Beskids. Hidden among the mountains are the beautiful wooden Orthodox churches, at present, often turned into Catholic churches, with characteristic three onion-shaped towers.

Nowy Sącz is also a town surrounded by several water reservoirs, such as Klimkówka Reservoir among the Low Beskids Mountains, and Rożnowskie and Czchowskie Lakes, located at the foothills. These are ideal sites for swimming and other water sports.

Worth visiting in winter are the numerous ski stations, such as Jaworzyna Krynicka with a cable car in Krynica-Zdrój, Rytro or Wierchomla Mała. Several spas, famous for its curative mineral water springs, are situated among the mountains in the vicinity of Nowy Sącz, with the most beautiful spa resort in Poland located in Krynica-Zdrój.



Orthodox Church in Powroźnik, photo by K. Syga

A Trip Down the Poprad River Gorge to Krynica-Zdrój

Stary Sącz is only 8 km away from Nowy Sącz. Its vast **market square** surrounded by historic low buildings is not the only tourist attraction of the town. In the 13th century, Princess Kinga, the wife of Prince Bolesław the Chaste, founded here a fortified **Convent of Poor Clares**. After her husband's death, Kinga became a nun, and at present, she is recognised by the Catholic Church as a saint.

Travelling along the Poprad River Valley, which narrows south of Stary Sącz, you pass by Rytro with the ruins of the 13th-century castle, and reach **Piwniczna-Zdrój**. Rafting trips on flatboats are organized along the Poprad River section stretching between Rytro and Piwniczna. The part of the Poprad Valley stretching between Piwniczna and the spa of Muszyna is famous for picturesque landscapes.

You leave the Poprad Valley in Muszyna and head for Krynica-Zdrój. On the way, you pass by the village of **Powroźnik** with its wooden **Lemko Orthodox Church** from 1600, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013. It is the oldest Orthodox church in the Polish Carpathian Mountains. It is a three-nave church crowned with three onion-shaped helmets. The interior features figure polychromy dating from 1607 and many icons of high historical value. **Krynica-Zdrój** is a famous spa situated at the foot of Jaworzyna Krynicka Mountain (1,114 m above sea level). You can reach the top of this mountain by a **cable car**, while the mountain slope features a large ski resort. The impressive old wooden **vil-las** are the main attraction of the town centre. One of them houses the **Nikifor Krynicki Museum**, a famous primitivist Lemko painter from the Low Beskids.



Church in Tropie, UMMW photo archive
Czchowskie Lake, photo by S. Gacek

Around Czchowskie and Rożnowskie Lakes

The main road from Nowy Sącz to Brzesko runs through very picturesque areas. Right after the village of Tęgorborze, you drive onto the **St. Just Mountain Pass** (400 m above sea level), which is a perfect vantage point. Another local tourist attraction is the **Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary** dating from the second half of the 17th century, which is situated over the mountain pass.

Further, the road leads to **Czchowskie Lake**. Right above it, **Tropsztyn Castle** is perched on a steep rock. A few kilometres further up north of **Czchów**, the remains of another castle appear in the form of a massive **tower**. In the town itself you can visit the **market square** with wooden houses, and a church from the 13th century. Another church from this period, the **Church of SS Andrew Zorard and Benedict**, can be found in the nearby village of **Tropie**.

Side roads lead from Tropie to **Rożnów**, which boasts a small 16th-century **bastion**. A little bit further, the valley is divided by a concrete **dam**, which formed Rożnowskie Lake. The scenic routes lead from Rożnów through Gródek by the Dunajec River, high over the eastern slopes of the lake in the direction of Nowy Sącz. The whole route is about 75 km long.



Sądecki Ethnographic Park, photo by M. Zareba

At the Foot of the Low Beskids

Travelling from **Nowy Sącz** to the east, in the direction of the Beskid hills, it is worth paying a visit to the biggest heritage park in Małopolska, i.e. **Sądecki Ethnographic Park**. The most interesting village in the Low Beskids is **Łosie**, once famous for the production of grease (used as a lubricant). Today, the Lemko culture and the **travels of "greasers"** from Łosie in particular, are portrayed in permanent exhibitions, e.g. at the Sądecki Ethnographic Park, and along the Greasers' Trail in Łosie. Near Łosie, the Ropa River is cut across by a dam, which creates **Klimkówka Lake** (perfect for windsurfing).

In the Ropa Valley, 34 km from Nowy Sącz, lies the town of **Szymbark**, known for its interesting **heritage park** and the **Manor of the Gładysz Family**, a fortified gentry residence from the 16th century.

A few kilometres further, in **Gorlice**, you can visit the **Manor of the Karwacjan Family** from the 15th century, and **a monument of the first street oil lamp**, commemorating its inventor, Ignacy Łukasiewicz, who was born in Gorlice.

i **Sądecki Ethnographic Park**, entrance from ul. Lwowska 226, ☎+48 18 4443570, ▲www.muzeum.sacz.pl
Heritage Park of Pogórzańska Village in Szymbark, ☎+48 18 351 10 18, ▲www.gorlice.art.pl,
Manor of the Karwacjan Family, ul. Wróblewskiego 10a, Gorlice, ☎+48 18 353 56 18, ▲www.gorlice.art.pl



A view of Giewont, photo by J. Gorlach

A Weekend Trip around... Zakopane

Zakopane is a place where you never get bored. The town's vicinity with the majestic Tatra Mountains are a perfect tourist destination, offering plenty to do both in the summer and in the winter.

The town itself features the original, wooden Zakopane-style buildings. Taking a trip through Podhale (the foothills of the Tatras), which is one of the most important tourist regions in Poland, you can encounter many historic monuments of high value, such as a small church in Dębno, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, or magnificent Castles in Czorsztyn and Niedzica above the waters of Czorsztyńskie Lake. Swimming areas are created around the lakeshore, along with water sports equipment rentals in the summer. The biggest attraction of Pieniny is rafting down **the Dunajec River Gorge**. Water forcing its way through rocky walls creates an unforgettable landscape.

In the winter, Zakopane offers high-quality ski slopes, including the famous runs on the slopes of Kasprowy Wierch, Gubałówka, Szymoszkowa, Harenda and Nosal. Other local towns also popular among ski lovers include: Witów, Suche, Bukowina Tatrzańska, Jurgów, Białka Tatrzańska, and Kluszkowce.

Après ski, you can relax in the modern, recently opened, baths with thermal waters, located in Zakopane, Bukowina Tatrzańska, Szaflary and Białka Tatrzańska.

The Tatra Museum, photo by J. Gorlach

Zakopane and the Tatra Mountains

Visiting Zakopane is a perfect opportunity to learn about the wooden architecture of Podhale highlanders, and to see the beautiful villas in the Zakopane style, which was inspired by the folklore of this region. It is worth visiting the Koliba Villa, housing the **Museum of the Zakopane Style**. Other unique examples of the Zakopane style include the Pod Jedlami Villa, Oksza Villa, and the charming chapel in Jaszczurówka designed by Stanisław Witkiewicz, the creator of the Zakopane style.

In the vicinity of Krupówki, a famous Zakopane promenade, there is the grand building of the **Tatra Museum** devoted to the mountains, the Podhale folklore, and the history of the exploration of the Tatra Mountains.

Zakopane features many churches and monasteries; however,

most pilgrims visit the **Marian Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima in Krzeptówki**, which is run by the Pallottines and strongly associated with John Paul II.

Before you set off for the Tatra Mountains from Zakopane, it is worth taking a **funicular railway** to the top of **Gubałówka Mountain** (1,120 m above sea level). This scenic mountain ridge emerges from



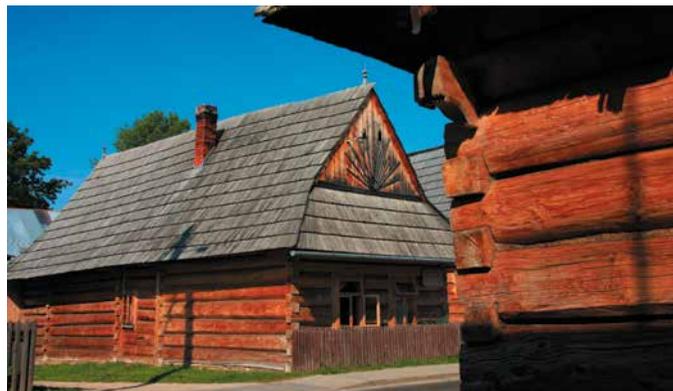


Morskie Oko lake, UMWM photo archive

the north of Zakopane, just on the opposite side of Giewont Mountain. Another way to admire the mountain panorama is to take a ride on a **cable car from Kuźnice to Kasprowy Wierch** (1,985 m above sea level). The most beautiful lake in the Tatra Mountains is **Morskie Oko**, lying at the foot of the highest peak in Poland, Rysy (2,499 m above sea level). An asphalt road reaches the lakeshore. Horse carts run almost to the shore itself over the distance of 7 kilometres (however, the last 2 km must be covered on foot).

The best place to rest after the exhausting hike is the newly built **aqua park at the foot of Antałówka**, offering thermal water baths.

i Tatra Museum – Main Building, ul. Krupówki 10, Zakopane, ☎+48 18 201 52 05, ▲www.muzeumtatrzańskie.pl
Museum of the Zakopane Style, ul. Kościeliska 18, Zakopane, ☎+48 18 201 36 02, ▲www.muzeumtatrzańskie.pl
Funicular Rail Gubałówka, ul. Na Gubałówkę, Zakopane, ☎+48 18 201 48 30, ▲www.pkl.pl
Cable Car to Kasprowy Wierch, Kuźnice, ☎+48 18 201 45 10, ▲www.pkl.pl
Aqua Park Thermal Baths Zakopane, ul. Jagiellońska 31, ☎+48 18 202 58 15, or 18 200 11 22, ▲www.aquapark.zakopane.pl



Chochołów, UMWM photo archive

Through Podhale and Orawa

Podhale, one of the most beautiful regions of Poland, stretches at the foot of the Tatra Mountains. Several dozen years ago, all villages in Podhale only featured wooden cottages with shingled roofs. At present, only the village of **Chochołów**, situated 20 km from Zakopane, retained its character. Some of the **cottages** in Chochołów were built of massive timber logs, so that the entire wall was made up of only four thick beams – like in the famous cabin made of one fir, whose walls, erected in the late 19th century, were made of one fir log cut down at the nearby Ostrysz Hill.

From Chochołów you may go through the extensive peat bogs and flatlands of the Nowotarska Dale until you reach the Orawa region. Travelling through Czarny Dunajec and Jabłonka, you will get to the village of **Orawka**, with a wooden, Gothic **church** dating from 1656. The folk buildings of the Orawa region do not resemble the architecture of Podhale, which you can observe in the **Heritage Park in Zubrzyca Górna**, displaying numerous cottages in Orawa style, with *wyżka*, a chamber in the attic.

A tremendous massif of **Babia Góra** (1,725 m above sea level), referred to as the Queen of the Beskids, looms over Orawa. It is also the highest peak of the Beskids in Poland. A trek to the peak is not very demanding, as you can drive up to the height of 1,000 m from Zubrzyca Górna to the Krowiarki Pass. This trail leads through the area of Babia Góra National Park, and the hike to Babia Góra takes approx. 2.5 hours.

i Orawa Ethnographic Park in Zubrzyca Górna, ☎+48 18 285 27 09, ▲www.orawa.eu



Tatra National Park, UMWM photo archive

It is worth making a few stops on the way to or from Zakopane. In the village of Chabówka, situated 40 km away from Zakopane, there is the Rolling Stock Heritage Park with historic carriages and engines.

From Chabówka you can go through Jordanów to **Sucha Beskidzka** (33 km). The town is famous for a beautiful **Renaissance castle**, proudly bearing the name of “a small Wawel,” due to the charm of arcaded cloisters at the courtyard. The centre of Sucha features an 18th-century wooden **Tavern** named Rzym (Rome), presently a restaurant.

i **Municipal Museum of Sucha Beskidzka**, ul. Zamkowa 1,
 ☎ +48 33 8742605, ▲ www.muzeum.sucha-beskidzka.pl
Rolling Stock Heritage Park in Chabówka,
 ☎ +48 18 535 33 45, ▲ www.skansen.hg.pl

The Sucha Beskidzka Castle photo by P. Marekwica



Oscypek cheese, UMWM photo archive



Redyk herding, photo by J. Gorlach

Through Podhale in Search of Oscypek Cheese

For centuries, the highlanders in **Podhale** have pastured sheep on grazing lands, i.e. alps, situated high up in the mountains. Today, one of the symbols of Podhale, and the most famous regional delicacy is **oscypek**, i.e. a smoked, hard sheep's cheese.

A special **Oscypek Trail** runs through Podhale. It enables you to visit *bacówki* (**shepherd's huts**) in which local specialties are produced, including oscypek, a spicy *bryndza* (ewe's milk cheese), and other delicacies made of sheep's milk.

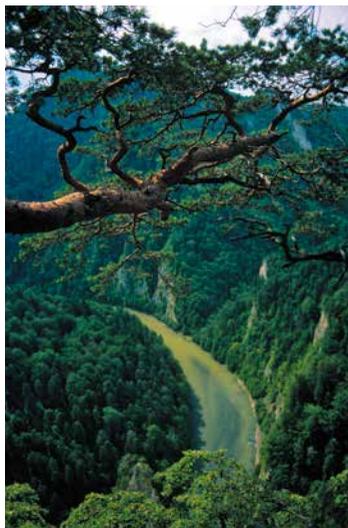
In the vicinity of Zakopane, it is worth taking a stroll along the picturesque **valleys of the Tatra Mountains: the Kościeliska and Chochołowska Valleys**. Both of them feature shepherds' huts producing *oscypek*, and along the way you can admire the landscape of the limestone Western Tatras. *Oscypek* is also produced in **Gorce**. This mountain range, which includes Gorczański National Park, is much less popular among the tourists, who more often visit the crowded Tatra Mountain trails. The beautiful, extensive **Hala Długa** (Long Alp) at the foot of Turbacz (1,310 m above sea level) is one of the places where a shepherd hut producing *oscypek* can be found.

You can climb there from Kowaniec (district of Nowy Targ) or from the village of Łopuszna, which is a less frequented trail. **Łopuszna** features a noteworthy wooden **church** from the second half of the 15th century, and an 18th-century manor house of the Tetmajer Family, now housing an interesting **Museum of Gentry Culture**.

i **Information about the Oscypek Trail:** ▲ www.tatry.pl
Museum of Gentry Culture, ul. Gorczańska 2, Łopuszna,
 ☎ +48 18 2653919, ▲ www.muzeumtatrzańskie.com.pl



Rafting down the Dunajec Gorge, photo by J. Gorlach



A view from the Sokolica Peak, photo by D. Zaród

Rafting across the Dunajec Gorge through the Pieniny Mountains

The wonderful scenery of the Dunajec River Gorge in Pieniny, with 300-metre-tall rocks makes an unforgettable impression. **Rafting on the Dunajec River** between Sromowce and Krościenko is one of the most unique tourist attractions in Małopolska; therefore, it is worth coming here from Zakopane, even though Krościenko is 55 km away.

Tourist trails through the **Pieniny National Park** lead to vantage points on the peaks of **Sokolica and Three Crowns Mountains** (982 m above sea level), the highest peak in the Pieniny proper. The nearby town of **Szczawnica** is an old **spa** with numerous mineral sources, historic wooden **spa buildings**, and a **cable car to the Palenica Peak** (719 m above sea level), from which you can take a trip along the picturesque Little Pieniny Mountain range. In the neighbouring Jawory, you can visit small charming nature **reserves: Homole Gorge and Biała Woda Gorge Reserves**.

i Rafting on Dunajec – The Polish Association of Pieniny Rafters, ☎ +48 18 262 97 21, ▲ www.flisacy.com.pl
Cable Car Palenica, ul. Główna 7, Szczawnica,
 ☎ +48 18 262 27 24, ▲ www.pkl.pl



Czorsztyńskie Lake, photo by J. Gorlach

Around Czorsztyńskie Lake

At the foot of Pieniny and Gorce stretches the picturesque **Czorsztyńskie Lake**. A few locations along the shore, such as Czorsztyn, Mizerna, Kluszkowce, and Maniowy, feature beaches and water sports equipment rentals. Sailing in such sceneries is a pure pleasure!

On the southern side of the lake, just above the dam, separating the Dunajec River, which contributed to the creation of the lake, towers **the Castle in Niedzica**. The building was used as a watchtower over the Polish-Hungarian border that used to run here. Opposite Niedzica, on the steep hill, you can see the **Ruins of the Castle in Czorsztyn**. This fortress also used to guard the Polish-Hungarian border, and today, adapted for sightseeing, it constitutes a perfect vantage point.

On the opposite edge of the lake, it is worth visiting the picturesque village of **Dębno**. The local **Church of St. Michael the Archangel**, dating from 1490, is a masterpiece by carpenter craftsmen. It is also one out of eight wooden churches in Małopolska inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

i Museum of the Castle Complex in Niedzica,
 ☎ +48 18 2629489, ▲ www.shs.pl/?projects=pozycja-1
Ruins of the Czorsztyn Castle, ▲ www.pieninypl.pl

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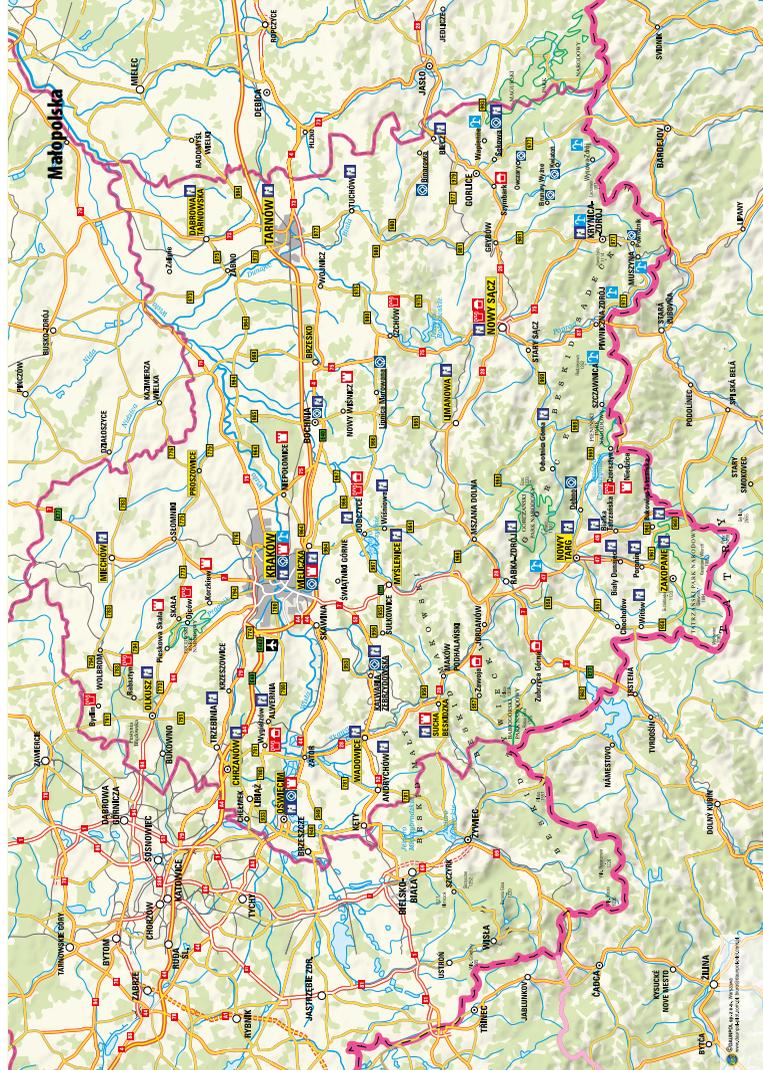
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MAŁOPOLSKA WEEKEND TRIPS

Capital of the region: Kraków

Major cities: Tarnów, Nowy Sącz, Oświęcim

Surface area: 15,190 km² (about 5% of the surface area of Poland)

Population: 3.35 mil. (about 8% of the population of Poland)

Landscape:

- the tallest peak – Rysy: 2499 m asl
- mountains – Tatras, Beskids, Pieniny, Gorce
- foothills – Carpathian Foothills
- uplands – Kraków-Częstochowa Upland
- lowlands – Vistula valley
- main rivers – Vistula, Dunajec, Poprad, Raba, Skawa, Biała
- water reservoirs – Czorszyński, Rożnowski, Czchowski, Dobczycki, Klimkówka
- the highest located, cleanest lakes – Morskie Oko, Czarny Staw, the lakes of the Valley of Five Polish Lakes
- the largest and deepest cave – Wielka Śnieżna Cave: over 22 km of corridors, 824 m deep

More information on

www.visitmalopolska.pl, www.muzea.malopolska.pl



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 MAŁOPOLSKA

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