

## *A little bit of history*

The first traces of Krakow go back to the VII century. In the year 1000 a bishopric was established in Krakow. In 1241 during the invasion of the Tartars, all the buildings destroyed were replaced by new ones built in Gothic style. From 1386 the city was under the Jagiellonian dynasty and became the capital of the reign. In 1596 the capital was moved to Warsaw. After the third partition of Poland in the XVIII century, Poland became a province of Russia. The city became later a part of Austria. After independence was regained Krakow became a significant cultural center. After the II World War the city lost its privileged position. Today however, it is artistic and scientific circles that create the image of the city.



## *KRAKOW..the treasure of Poland*

*Discover the city and its secrets*



## Krakow at a glance

Krakow lies in the southern part of Poland on the Vistula river in a valley at the foot of the Carpathian Plateau, 219 m above the sea level.

This region has a temperate climate. Rainfall are typical of summer months. The best period to visit the city is from April to October.

Krakow has a distinctly medieval architectural layout. The fragments of the surviving city walls evoke the picture of a medieval fortress. The walls were 3 Km long, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the local authorities decided to demolish them and replace the walls with a strip of green land around the city called the "Planty". Now it forms an oval city park which begins and ends at the Royal Castle.



## Sights to see

Krakow is without doubt the cultural capital of Poland. The visit of the city should include the **Market Square**, which is the meeting point of all the citizens of the city. One of Krakow's biggest attractions is the **Wawel Castle**, which is among Europe's most beautiful royal residences. Next to the Wawel Castle stands the **Wawel Cathedral**, which is the most magnificent Polish cathedral and has been Poland's national sanctuary for a thousand years. Anyway, the best way to enjoy Krakow is a slow walk along the most beautiful of its streets which are rich in history, culture and charm.

## Entertainment

If you are a theatre lover April is the best month to visit the city. Every year the Krakow Theatre Reminiscences takes place. It is one of the major theatre festivals in Europe and shows the latest stage phenomena and sets new areas of theatre thinking. If you are searching for an active night life you are in the right place. In the splendid Old Town, underneath a façade of ancient architecture there is a world made of cafés, bars and clubs that just wait to be discovered.

## What to eat

Let's talk about Polish cuisine. Some typical dishes are for example: **zurek**, a soup based on fermented rye, **barszcz**, a soup made with beetroot, and **pierogi**, which are dumplings filled with meat, cabbage, mushrooms, bilberries, apples and strawberries. A local drink is **tatanka**, a delicious Polish beverage made with apple juice and a special kind of vodka. Of course you should try the great variety of Polish vodka.



## Shopping

The Old Town is stuffed with shops of all sorts. The main streets to go shopping are Florianska Street and Grodzka Street. There are also new shopping-malls. Sales-seasons in Krakow shops take place from mid-January through February and from July to mid-August. So if you are searching for a bargain...come and try Polish sales!!!