

Castles and Palaces of Poland**9 days – 8 nights****Gdansk, Sopot, Gniew, Malbork, Kwidzyn, Torun, Poznan, Kornik, Rogalin, Ksiaz, Czochoa Castle, Wojanow, Niemodlin, Katowice, Pieskowej Skala Castle, Krakow****Discovery, Culture, History****Day 1 – Mon: Gdansk**

After arrival in Gdansk you'll be met and transferred to the hotel. Rest of day is free to rest and relax. Dinner and overnight at your hotel. [D]

Day 2 - Tue: Gdansk, Sopot, Gniew

This morning is dedicated to Gdansk. Like Warsaw, most of the city of Gdansk was destroyed at the end of the Second World War and the Old Town was rebuilt identically during the post-war period, allowing us today to give an account of the past greatness of the city, which was the richest city of the Kingdom of Poland, and one of the most powerful cities of Europe, in the 16th and the 17th century. The main axis of the old town (Głowne Miasto) is the Royal Way (Trakt Królewski). Along the street there are pretty colorful houses, the best-known of which is the Maison Dorée, the former home of a wealthy merchant. Visit the Main Town Hall, Artus Court, Uphagen house one of a few 18th century merchant town houses in Europe open to visitors and the only one in Poland. Next to Gdansk is Sopot, also known as the "Pearl of the Baltic". It's the most popular Polish seaside resort and also a hotspot for balneotherapy ("sopot" means "source"). With its "belle époque" style houses, its gardens and its long pier walk, Sopot is the charming asset of the Tricity. Walk along the pier which is 1700 ft. long and enjoy the Baltic breeze reminding you of where you are. Dinner in a authentic Polish restaurant before continuing to Gniew for overnight. [B/D]

Day 3 - Wed: Gniew (Malbork, Kwidzyn)

After the breakfast we visit Gniew Castle, known for being a most powerful Teutonic fortress on the left bank of the Wisła. It was built at the turn of the 13th and 14th century. and originally, it was the seat of the Teutonic order and commanders. Over the past centuries, the castle was rebuilt several times, particularly in the 19th century, when it was converted into an attic and a prison and it was destroyed in 1921 during a great fire. The fortress was rebuilt and now houses a section of the Archaeological Museum of Gdańsk. Since 1992, Gniewski Castle offers historical shows and chivalry tournaments and it has been one of the main centers of propagation of medieval traditions in Poland. Then, we drive to Malbork for a visit to the Museum originally built in stages from the beginning of the 1270s, becoming over time a fundamental element of the Teutonic Knights' fortress system in Prussia. In 1410, after the defeat of the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald, the fortress of Malbork, which the Polish-Lithuanian army could not conquer, allowed the Teutonic Order to escape destruction. In the year 1457, the Polish king bought Malbork from Germanic mercenaries. Following the first partition of Poland (in 1772), the lands of the north of the Republic Nobiliaria, including Malbork found themselves in the borders of Prussia. During the Prussian occupation, the castle was used as barracks and warehouse. Severely devastated, it found its Gothic style through reconstructions made in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1997, Malbork Castle was inscribed on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage List. One of the most important rooms of the castle is the Great Refectory, which in the Middle Ages was the largest reception hall of the fortress of Malbork. The great masters of the Teutonic Knights welcomed here their many visitors from all over Europe. Continue to Kwidzyn Castle is a medieval castle of the Bishops of Pomesania whose construction began in 1233. Classified as a historical monument, the castle currently houses a museum where you can admire several collections, such as porcelain tableware from the 18th and 19th centuries, glass tableware from the 19th century, 17th century paintings, a 14th century oak case, furniture and coins. an ethnographic collection containing a closet with two doors dating to 1789. The castle also houses archaeological finds, such as ceramic tableware, stone age flint tools and amber jewelry. After the visit we return to Gniew to enjoy a typical Polish dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 4 Thu: Gniew, Torun, Poznan

After breakfast we drive to Torun, a city created around 1250 by the order of the Teutonic Knights to

serve as a base for the evangelization of Prussia and its conquest at the same time and is an outstanding example of Gothic architecture. Now, classified as World Heritage by UNESCO, it does not look like other cities of Poland because it was preserved during the war and the buildings are original. Torun has three splendid Gothic temples: The Church of the Blessed Virgin, with its slender walls and Franciscan convent, the post-Cistercian St. Jacob Church that has kept its original architecture and the Saint John Church, a powerful building from the middle of the 12th century where Copernicus was baptized. The mathematician and astronomer was born precisely in Torun, in a Gothic house, at No. 17 of a street that now bears his name. We'll take a walking tour around the Old Town to see Market Square, historical tenement houses, Town Hall and St Johns' Church, all reminiscent of a time in the past. At the end we visit to the interactive Museum of Gingerbread including a degustation of the typical product. Afterwards, we continue to Poznan one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in the country. Much of the city's charm lies in its old town, the historical and cultural center of the city. The old town is first discovered by the old square, built in 1253 at the time of the founding of Poznan. Today, it is the favorite meeting place for Poznan residents and visitors. The Town Hall, in renaissance style, dominates the old square. The façade, with its arcades, is surmounted by a frieze depicting the kings of the Jagiellonian dynasty. The town hall is surrounded by small arcaded fishmonger houses with a certain charm. A walk in the city will take us to Old Market Square and the Baroque Parish Church. The Imperial Castle built at the beginning of the 20th century by the last German Kaiser – Wilhelm II is also available to see. Tonight, we'll have dinner at a local typical Polish restaurant before going to the hotel for overnight. [B/D]

Day 5 Fri: Poznan, Kornik, Rogalin, Ksiaz

After the breakfast, we drive to the Castle in Kornik located on a marshy land, perhaps even on an island, and still surrounded by a moat. The castle was originally built on stilts and consists of two wings, the tower and the door, where a drawbridge leads. Throughout its history, it has given hospitality to a number of lords. The owner was fascinated by art and architecture turning the castle into a baroque building, giving it the appearance of a more sumptuous residence than a castle. The Castle has received two forequarters with domes, outbuildings around the barnyard, a brick bridge and a new French garden with an orangery and small zoo. Our next stop is Rogalin to visit the sumptuous neo-classical residence of the Raczyński family was built on the banks of the Warta River by Kazimierz Raczyński, administrator of Greater Poland at the end of the 18th century. A large lawn bordered with chestnut trees leads to horseshoe building whose right wing house is a reconstruction of the London cabinet of former exiled Polish president Edward Raczyński. Behind the left wing, the art gallery (Galeria Obrazów) brings together European and Polish canvases from the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The Polish painting department houses some masterpieces, notably by Jacek Malczewski. Jan Matejko's colossal Joan of Arc occupies an entire wall and dominates it all. In the forecourt shed, you will discover dozens of vintage cars including the last Poznan cab. The final stop will be Zamek Książ where we'll have dinner and overnight. [B/D]

Day 6 - Sat: Ksiaz, Czocho Castle, Wojanow

This morning will go to Ksiaz, whose Castle's history has been very eventful. Over the centuries, it changed owners several times, and finally in 1509 became the property of one of the richest families in Silesia - the Hochbergs. It remained in their possession until the Second World War, when this Baroque residence and adjacent land was surrounded by barbed wire and construction work began inside the castle (1943). The action was conducted as part of Operation Riese (German: giant) and was codenamed Brabant1. In the rock under the castle was dug a network of corridors with a length of nearly 2,950 feet and reaching 165 feet deep. A central transport connected the underground labyrinth to the surface and separate elevators also led to the baroque part of the castle. After the war, two underground tunnels were discovered, which - according to some researchers - show the desire to bring a railway line to the castle. According to some hypotheses the underground complex under Książ Castle was prepared as Hitler's new headquarters. According to others, it was to host a powerful command center for a complex of underground factories and laboratories, engaged in research into new types of weapons. Both hypotheses are equally probable. It's important to note that Duchess Daisy, the aunt of Winston Churchill, resided there. From here we proceed to visit Czocho Castle a

medieval fortress that, for centuries, was the habitat of the country's great noble families. Its historic décor with its original fortified walls allows for an unforgettable stay. It is said that during the Second World War, this medieval, defensive construction was a school for Abwehr coders. In the afternoon, we continue to the Palace of Wojanow for dinner and overnight. [B/D]

Day 7 - Sun: Wojanow, Katowice (Niemodlin)

Hopefully you enjoyed your stay and breakfast at the Wojanow Palace hotel. We head to Vroklow, our next destination for a walking tour around the Market Square to see the unique City Hall in gothic style, the Cathedral Island and the Four Religions District. Following the tour, a short drive to visit, built in 1313 by the family of Prince Boleslaw I for defense purposes. Fortified many times, destroyed and burned by European powers, it has witnessed many important historical events in the region. The turbulent history and the ever-changing inhabitants of the castle have had an impact on the architectural style of the building. The walls, the catacombs and the hidden spaces may still contain treasures belonging to these powerful families who for 700 years have lived there. For years, the castle has been a place of inspiration for artists, painters, writers and poets. After the visit we continue to Katowice for dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 8 - Mon: Katowice, Pieskowej Skala Castle, Krakow

This morning we leave for Pieskowa Skala (means the rock of the little dog) is one of the most valuable monuments of Polish Renaissance architecture, located on a rocky promontory overlooking the Prądnik Valley. Originally it was a Gothic castle built in mid-fourteenth century by King Casimir the Great. Over the decades, it has been taken several times and therefore rebuilt and enlarged. In the mid-sixteenth century an Italian architect gave it the form of a Renaissance residence. One hundred years later, it was surrounded by fortifications. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the castle burned a second time which devastated most of its interior. Today, the castle houses a museum open to the public. The opportunity to admire several pieces as well as representations of exhibitions from different periods from the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century. Continue our drive to Krakow, the capital of Lesser Poland Voivodeship. Founded in the 7th century, the legend attributes its origin to the imaginary king Krakus. A testimony of the twelfth century, attributed to Vincent Kadlubek, bishop of Krakow, says that the ruler founded the city after killing a dragon whose cave was dug into the cliff of Wawel. The city still bears the name of its mythological founder. Krakow is one of the oldest cities in Poland and was its capital before Warsaw. Its historic center is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city of Pope John Paul II and astronomer Copernicus remains the cultural and scientific center of the country. The second oldest university in Central Europe is there. Once freed from the yoke of the USSR and communism, the old people's democracy adapts to a free-trade economy. Krakow now hosts fifty multinational companies. Krakow is the second most visited city in Poland, behind Warsaw, the capital. Today will be fully dedicated a tour of the city visiting the Main Square, the Cloth Hall, St. Mary's Church, historic churches around the Old City, the Jagiellonian University, Collegium Maius, Wawel the Royal Castle and the Wawel the Cathedral. In the afternoon we'll take a walking tour around Kazimierz, the historical Jewish district and, now, the hip center of the city full of galleries, little shops and clothing stores. Dinner in an authentic Cracow style restaurant and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 9 - Tue: Krakow, USA

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and some free time depending on your flight schedule. At the appointed time you'll be picked-up and transferred to the airport to board your flight back home. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [D] = Dinner | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner



Your Tour includes:

- Airfare USA-Warsaw//Krakow-USA
- Arrival and departure transfers
- 8 nights accommodation:
 - Gdańsk – 1 night
 - Gniew – 2 nights
 - Poznań – 1 night
 - Książ – 1 night
 - Wojanów – 1 night
 - Katowice – 1 night
 - Krakow – 1 night
- Meals:
 - Breakfast daily
 - 8 dinners
- Sightseeing or visit of:
 - Gdansk
 - Sopot
 - Gniew Castle
 - Malbork Castle
 - Kwidzyn Castle
 - Torun
 - Poznan
 - Kornik Castle

- Rogalin Residence
- Ksiaz Castle
- Czocho Castle
- Wojanow Palace
- Niemodlin Castle
- Pieskowa Skała Castle
- Krakow
- English speaking assistant/driver throughout the tour
- Guides for local visits
- Entrance fees for sites visited
- Transportation by A/C vehicle
- Hotel Taxes

Tour does not include:

- Taxes or surcharges related to airline tickets
- Travel insurance
- All alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- Other meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Extras and gratuities
- Early check-in, late check-out
- Expenses of personal nature

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel Name	Tripadvisor
Gdańsk	Scandic	4
Gniew	Zamek	4.5
Poznań	Novotel	3.5
Książ	Zamek	3.5
Wojanów	Pałac Wojanów	4
Katowice	Q Hotel Plus	4.5
Krakow	Mercure Old Town	5

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour prices:

From: \$3,869 including airfare

Add-ons available from all US gateways.

Prices are per person and may change without notice

This program can be customized for individuals and groups.

Changes to this program may be requested by phone (1855-55-TOURS) or using the web FIT Quote Request

• **Airfare**

We also be glad to adjust the airfare from your gateway so you take advantage of our special discounted leisure fares

• **Program**

You may add or remove;

- Trip days
- Cities and sites
- Meals

- **Other options**

- The program was designed with private services, however, we may substitute shared sightseeing where available
- If you prefer deluxe services we may operate this program including private driver, private guide and concierge service.

- **Quotation**

Once we have designed the program the way you want we'll give you a quote within 2 business days.

Tour Code: PL05GDN21PI

Options:

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for individuals, families and groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.
- Private arrival and/or departure transfer

Group Quotations:

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for individuals, families and groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.
- Private arrival and/or departure transfer
- The options suggested in the itinerary will be quoted at time of booking
- If you wish to use these programs for your group or as the basis for a customized journey please either call us (1-855-55-TOURS or use the web Group Quote Request.
- In either case our specialists will work with to refine all the details and they will get you a quote with 2 business days. Quotes may be obtained for the air and land portions of just for the land journey.
- Booking both air and land with us will represent savings for you because of our buying power and longtime relationship with the airlines.
- We will also may have the choice between regular fares and special leisure fares not available to the public.