



Poland

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Wrocław	863
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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Restauracja Pod Norenami (p856)
- ➔ Dwie Trzecie (p851)
- ➔ Szeroka 9 (p873)
- ➔ Papierówka (p866)
- ➔ Cafe & Restaurant Steinhaus (p864)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Wielopole (p856)
- ➔ Castle Inn (p850)
- ➔ Hostel Mleczarnia (p864)
- ➔ Hotel Stare Miasto (p866)
- ➔ Hotel Petite Fleur (p873)

Why Go?

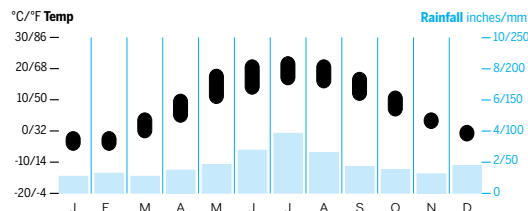
If they were handing out prizes for ‘most eventful history’, Poland would get a medal. The nation has spent centuries at the pointy end of history, grappling with war and invasion. Nothing, however, has succeeded in suppressing Poles’ strong sense of nationhood and cultural identity. As a result, bustling centres like Warsaw and Kraków exude a sophisticated energy that’s a heady mix of old and new.

Away from the cities, Poland is surprisingly diverse, from its northern beaches to a long chain of mountains on its southern border. In between, towns and cities are dotted with ruined castles, picturesque market squares and historic churches.

Although prices have steadily risen in the postcommunist era, Poland is still good value. As the Poles continue to reconcile their distinctive national identity with their place in Europe, it’s a fascinating time to pay a visit.

When to Go

Warsaw



May & Jun Stately Kraków returns to life after a long winter.

Jul & Aug A brief but hot summer is good for swimming in the Baltic Sea or hiking in the mountains.

Sep & Oct Warm and sunny enough for an active city break to Warsaw.



Poland Highlights

- 1 Experience the beauty and history of **Kraków's** Old Town.
- 2 Enjoy the student-fuelled party vibe in **Wrocław** (p863).
- 3 Remember the victims of the Nazi German genocide at **Auschwitz-Birkenau** (p858).
- 4 Relive Poland's inspirational anticommunist struggle at the European Solidarity Centre (p870) in **Gdańsk**.
- 5 Ski or hike the Tatra mountains from **Zakopane** (p861).
- 6 Prepare to be dazzled by the Museum of the History of Polish Jews (p850) in **Warsaw**.

WARSAW

POP 1.73 MILLION

Poland's vibrant capital, Warsaw (Warszawa in Polish, var-shah-va), is the country's largest city and epicentre of Polish commerce and culture. It offers an abundance of museums, clubs and concert halls, as well as the widest array of eating options. It's a major transport hub, and even if you're not planning a long stay, chances are you'll change

trains here or arrive at/depart from one of the city's airports.

First impressions may not be entirely positive. Warsaw was levelled during World War II by occupying German soldiers and rebuilt in the 1950s and '60s in bleak Soviet style. Modern touches added since communism fell in 1989 have softened the edges, however, and the passing decades have lent that old Soviet architecture a hip, retro gloss.