



Kraków

POP 756,000

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Why Go?

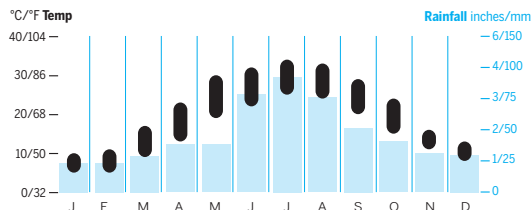
If you believe the legends, Kraków was founded upon the defeat of a dragon, and it's true a mythical atmosphere permeates its attractive streets and squares.

Wawel Castle is a major drawcard, while the Old Town contains soaring churches, impressive museums and the vast Rynek Główny, Europe's largest market square. In the former Jewish quarter, Kazimierz, remnant synagogues reflect the tragedy of the 20th century, just as its lively western quarter symbolises the renewal of the 21st. Here and throughout the Old Town are hundreds of restaurants, bars and clubs.

However, there's more to the former royal capital than history and nightlife. As you walk through the Old Town, you'll sometimes find yourself overwhelmed by the harmony of a quiet back street, the 'just so' nature of the architecture and light. It's at times like these that Kraków reveals its harmonious blend of past and present, an essential part of any visit to Poland.

When to Go

Kraków



May or Jun

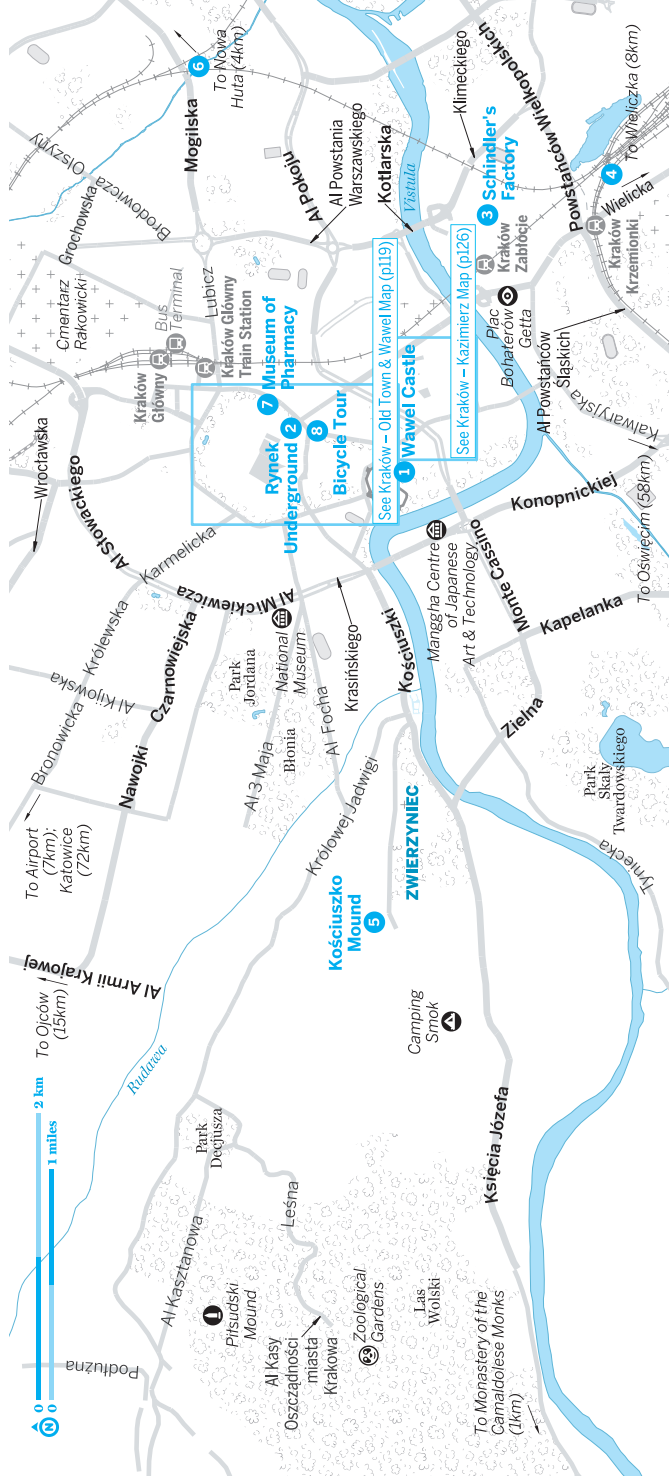
As spring ends, the Lajkonik Pageant features a parade.

Aug

The Pierogi Festival puts paid to summer hunger pangs.

Dec

Christmas sees the *szopki* (Nativity scenes) competition.



Kraków Highlights

- 1 Immersing yourself in Polish history at the multiple museums within the grand **Wawel Castle** (p115)
- 2 Heading beneath the vast Rynek Główny, Europe's largest medieval market square, to experience the multimedia **Rynek Underground** (p118) exhibition
- 3 Learning about WWII history in the magnificent museum inside **Schindler's Factory** (p127)
- 4 Marvelling at the amazing underground salt sculptures within the **Wieliczka Salt Mine** (p130)
- 5 Viewing the city from the heights of the **Kościuszko Mound** (p128)
- 6 Absorbing the startling contrasts presented by the communist-era architecture of **Nowa Huta** (p129)
- 7 Eyeballing odd elixirs and remedies at the wonderful **Museum of Pharmacy** (p123)
- 8 Taking in the sights of the Old Town on a **bicycle tour** (p131)