



Central Ukraine

Центральна Україна

POP 5.5 MILLION

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Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel 7 Days (p84)
- » Amadeus Club (p84)
- » Hetman (p84)
- » Ukraina Hotel (p73)

Best Museums

- » Nuclear Missile Museum (p78)
- » Korolyov Cosmonaut Museum (p72)
- » Pirogov Museum (p76)
- » Podillya Antiquities Museum (p82)

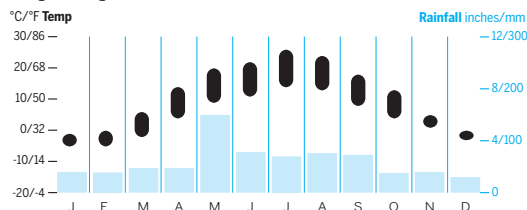
Why Go?

Layered with rich fertile soil, Ukraine's breadbasket heartlands are split between forested Polissya to the north, and the endless agricultural flatlands of Podillya to the south. Bucolic outdoor pleasures, some decidedly quirky museums and the show-stopping fortress town of Kamyanets-Podilsky are the odd mix of highlights provided by this often overlooked region.

Overlooked, that is, unless you are a Jewish pilgrim come to visit the tombs of Hasidic masters that dot the region. This was the birthplace of Hasidism and of the Jewish *shtetl* (village), both of which flourished within the Jewish Pale of Settlement, a demarcation line established by Catherine the Great in the 18th century to remove Jews from Russia and define the area they were allowed to inhabit. The Nazis obliterated practically every trace of Jewish culture here, with only the odd hauntingly abandoned Jewish cemetery remaining.

When to Go?

Zhytomyr



August Gaze in awe at Central Ukraine's humungous sunflower fields in full bloom.

September Pick mushrooms and berries in the vast forests of Polissya.

October Grab your jousting gear and head for Kamyanets-Podilsky's Terra Heroika Festival.



Central Ukraine Highlights

- 1 Take a stroll through the island town of **Kamyanets-Podilsky** (p79) to its photogenic fortress
- 2 Get all spaced out at Zhytomyr's **Korolyov Cosmonaut Museum** (p72)
- 3 Watch devout Jewish pilgrims revere deceased Hasidic masters in **Berdychiv, Uman, Bratslav and Medzhybizh** (p75)
- 4 Be careful what buttons you push at the **Nuclear Missile Museum** (p78)
- 5 Mummy's the word at Vinnytsya's **Pirogov Chapel** (p76), containing the embalmed body of Dr Pirogov
- 6 Amble around Uman's painfully romantic **Sofiivka Park** (p75), voted one of the seven wonders of Ukraine

POLISSYA

The woody, river-sliced region radiating out of Kyiv in all directions is known as Polissya. The bulk of the region lies north of Kyiv, extending into Belarus, and sees none of the tourist traffic of southern and western Ukraine. Those who do make it here are usually campers, mountain bikers, rock climbers, mushroom pickers, canoeists and the odd hunter. If you don't fit one of those categories, you might enjoy taking in Zhytomyr's

Soviet-era small-town charm or exploring the rich Jewish history of Berdychiv, both west of Kyiv. The eastern portion of Polissya is covered in the Eastern Ukraine chapter.

Zhytomyr ЖИТОМІР

0412 / POP 271,700

Some 140km west of Kyiv, no other right-bank city evokes the Soviet Union more than Zhytomyr. With its well-tended Lenin