



Carpathian Mountains

POP 3.8 MILLION

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Café Helenka (p234)
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- ➔ Kryjówka (p209)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Małopolanka (p231)
- ➔ Hotel GAL (p205)
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- ➔ Grand Hotel (p209)

Why Go?

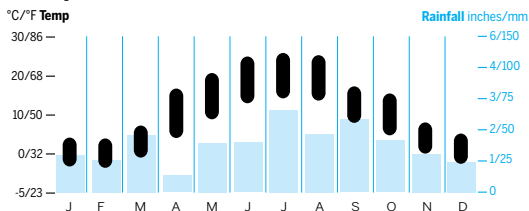
When thinking about Poland, mountains are not usually the first thing to spring to mind. In fact, the country's southern border is defined by the beautiful and dramatic Carpathian (Karpaty) chain, the highest mountain range in Central Europe.

The wooded hills and peaks here are a beacon for hikers, cyclists and skiers in season. And because of the region's remoteness, this 'forgotten corner' has been able to preserve its traditional folkways better than other parts of the country.

The centre is the resort of Zakopane in the heart of the Tatra Mountains (Tatry), the highest section of the Polish Carpathians, but the prettiest hills are arguably in the Pi-eniny or Bieszczady ranges. Elsewhere, a mosaic of modest towns provide jumping-off points for a half-dozen national parks. Historic regional towns such as Przemyśl, Tarnów and Sanok offer insights into the past.

When to Go

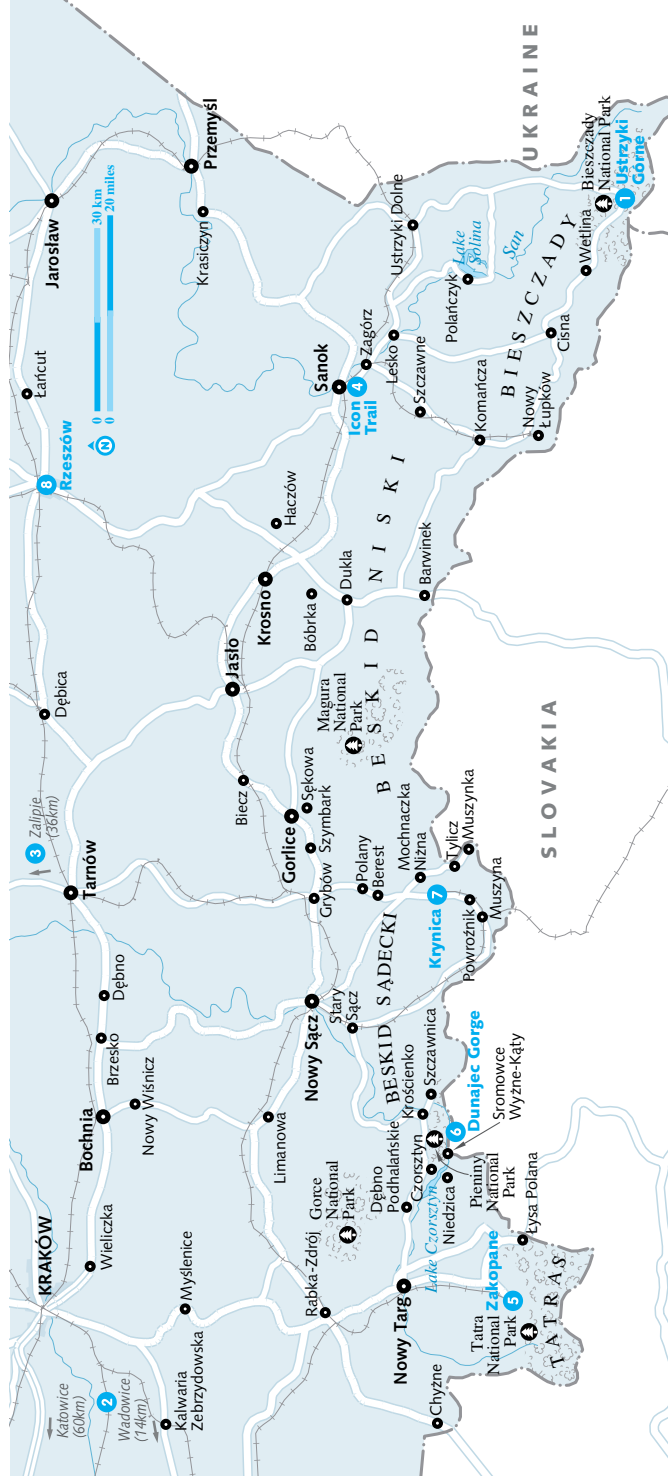
Zakopane



Jan-Mar Zakopane is the place for skiing and snowboarding in a season that lasts through March.

Apr-Jun Welcome the arrival of spring in the Bieszczady, Poland's remotest mountain range.

Jul & Aug There's no better place on a sunny summer afternoon than aboard a raft on the Dunajec River.



Carpathian Mountains Highlights

- 1 Viewing the natural beauty of the Bieszczady up close in **Ustrzyki Górne** (p220).
- 2 Enjoying a papal cream cake in **Wadowice** (p202), the town where Pope John Paul II was born.
- 3 Marvelling at the colours and patterns of the painted houses of **Zalpie** (p206).
- 4 Following the **Icon Trail** (p216) from Sanok and visiting the region's charming timber churches.
- 5 Hiking or skiing in the Tatra Mountains above
- 6 Relaxing on a raft down the **Dunajec Gorge** (p235).
- 7 Taking to the waters for a spa treatment in **Krynica** (p230).
- 8 Hitting the town after dark in lively, studenty **Rzeszów** (p207).