

PolishOrigins PGSA Galicia Tour

Transportation: Air-conditioned minibus or bus

Experienced, English speaking tour leader throughout the whole itinerary

Term 1: June 9-20, 2019 12 Days

Term 2: September 22-October 3, 2019 12 Days

Itinerary proposal: The map marks major locations we will visit.



Important notices and remarks:

- This itinerary is for your general orientation. The order might be changed during the tour (we will always inform you earlier about such changes and adjustments). Closer to your arrival date you will also receive more detailed itinerary with hotel addresses, guide contact number, hours, etc.
- We recommend you have a small amount of Polish zlotys in cash with you. Small, local shops and markets for snacks, traditional products or souvenirs usually do not accept credit cards. Dollar are easily converted to zlotys.
- You will have wi-fi (wireless Internet connection) in all your hotels.

Day 1 (Sunday) Arrival in Kraków or Rzeszów

Meet your guide at the airport in Kraków or Rzeszów. Airport transfer on the arrival date is included.

Important note: arrivals in Kraków must be before noon to enable timely travel to assemble in the Rzeszów area.

Introduction to Galician genealogy research - about 1h30m

After hotel check-in we will arrange a meeting to introduce our guide and hold a short genealogy lecture by one of our researchers and genealogy guides.

Then an evening welcome dinner (3-course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in Rzeszów area

Day 2 (Monday) Day trip to Sanok

After breakfast departure to Sanok.

This morning we visit the State Archives in Sanok for a presentation about their collection and some examples of documents from the area.

After some free time for lunch we will visit the ethnographic open-air museum in Sanok with a local English-speaking guide.

The Sanok Open Air Museum has the largest collection of historical buildings based on folk architecture in Poland. The Lemkos, Bojkos, Western Pogorzans, Eastern Pogorzans and Dolinianie are the natives of this mountain region. A slice of their lives, rituals and practices dating from the 17th to the 20th century are variously represented in the museum. History in the form of peasants' dwellings, estate manors, religious buildings like a chapel and a 17th century Orthodox Church, a water mill, a smithy, a windmill, a charnel house, a sawmill, granaries, and even the local inn has been recreated in the museum. The Sanok Museum beckons you to take a walk down memory lane to gain a taste of how your ancestors lived.

A few years ago the museum underwent a major transformation. A "new" Rynek (Town Square) was built just inside the entrance. It is a replica of a Galician town square from the second half of the 19th century, inhabited by Polish, Jewish, and Rusyn populations. Besides reconstructed houses from various Subcarpathian towns, there is also a genuine Jewish house, firehouse, tavern, post-office, chemist's, shop, barber's and others. The exhibits include replicas of original Galician houses from different towns of the region.

In the evening dinner is included (3-course menu with water, tea or coffee).

After dinner we will invite you for a country party in Strzyżów.

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in Rzeszów area.

Day 3 (Tuesday) Day trip to Przemyśl and Łańcut

After breakfast we set off for a full day excursion commencing at the State Archives in Przemyśl with a lecture about the cadastral maps in Galicia including a presentation of examples from the archive.

Free time for lunch.

In the afternoon we visit Łańcut Palace and synagogue.

Łańcut palace is one of the most beautiful aristocratic residences in Poland. It is sometimes called the Potocki Palace because that family lived here for a few generations.

The palace was built in 1628-1641 by Stanisław Lubomirski, and rebuilt in 1894-1903 in the style of French Neo-Baroque. It is famous for its excellent interiors, orangery, and extraordinarily interesting collection of horse-drawn carriages. The palace complex is surrounded by an old and picturesque park in the English style filled with pavilions and farm buildings, all part of the former daily life of the castle.

Here in these beautiful surroundings you will have a glimpse of everyday life of the nobility in their manor houses or palaces: Who they were. What they were doing and dreaming. What they ate. How noble culture in Galicia influenced politics to change the Polish history.

Dinner: (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

After dinner return to the hotel.

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in Rzeszów area

Day 4 (Wednesday) Journey through the Carpathian Mountains

After breakfast check we begin our travel to the Zakopane area with several stops on the way. We will focus on wooden architecture, history and the culture of the region. We have chosen the route with the best landscapes.

On the way there will be also a short break for lunch or time to buy some snacks.

After arrival in the Podhale region, dinner will be in one of the restaurants serving traditional Polish cuisine (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in the Zakopane area
(about 8 miles from the center of Zakopane, away from the crowds of tourists, but with some spectacular mountain views)

Day 5 (Thursday) Tatra Mountains and Zakopane

After breakfast departure for a full day excursion.

Visiting the old part of Zakopane.

This is one of the most recognized places in Poland. Certainly. This is due to the unique ambiance arising from its combination of mountain tourist center, gate to Tatra Mountains and place where old traditions continue to be cultivated and preserved.

What is more, since the 19th century Zakopane is also the beloved town of Polish artists, writers, painters and poets. Some of the most significant people have made their way here, were inspired by the charm of the region, and left their own influence on this exceptional place.

There is a famous cemetery called Pęksowe Brzyzko, where almost all the tombs are unique works of art. Many of them were created in the studio of sculptor Wladyslaw Hasior.

*Many famous Poles are buried at Peksowe Brzyzko including
Witkacy – writer and painter
Kornel Makuszyński – poet
Wladyslaw Orkan – writer
Stanislaw Marusarz and Helena Marusarzówna – masters of skiing
Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer – poet
Tytus Chalubinski – doctor, lover of nature, and popularizer of Zakopane.
The oldest church in Zakopane is situated in front of the cemetery.*

Here, in Zakopane, just walking on the main street you will see wooden houses with beautiful, elaborate woodcarvings and you might see people in their regional clothes walking to the church for a wedding or some holiday. Be sure to have a taste of Oscypek, the regional smoked cheese made from sheep's milk in the same style as a hundred years ago.

If you know some Polish, or are at least familiar with its sound, your ears might capture the special accent of the dialect used in everyday conversation.

Some free time for lunch, free strolling and shopping in the local market.

In the afternoon we visit Chochółów, a unique village or 'living museum' comprised almost exclusively of the original Polish Góral highlanders' wooden houses.

We will have dinner in one of the restaurants with Goral folklore music (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in the Zakopane area
(about 8 miles from the center of Zakopane, away from the crowds of tourists,
but with some spectacular mountain views)

Day 6 (Friday) Niedzica Castle, Czorsztyn Lake and Pieniny Mountains

After breakfast departure we visit the Dunajec Castle in Niedzica

The Dunajec River has always been the natural border between different countries, lands, and regions. Today it divides Poland and Slovakia, but this was not always so.

Since medieval times, Poland's neighbor to the south was the Kingdom of Hungary. Here in Pieniny, on both river banks, are located two castles: one in Czorsztyn, on the historic Polish side, but today only the ruins remain. On the historic Hungary bank, presently in Poland as well, there is Niedzica Castle. It was erected between the years 1320 and 1326 by Kokos of Brezovica. Due to its location on the hill over the artificial lake (created in 1997 on the Dunajec river), it is known as one of the most picturesque castles in all of Poland.

The castle has a long, beautiful history with many mysteries and riddles hidden in the castle walls. One of them is a story of an Inca princess married to Sebastian Berzevicy, one of Niedzica's owners, in the 18th century. Testaments of the family have mentioned some lost treasures of the Incas hidden in the castle and some 'Quipu' writings have also been found in the castle. The notion that an Inca treasure map could be hidden somewhere in the depths of the castle is still cherished today.

Free time for lunch in Szczawnica.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, Szczawnica is well-known for being a tourist attraction. Due to the presence of springs and the favorable climatic conditions, many respiratory and digestive tract illnesses are treated here.

Before the war the resort was owned by the Stadnicki family. In 2005 it was recovered by the family descendants who have lovingly restored its former splendor and elegance.

Červený Kláštor in Slovakia, located at the banks of Dunajec river.

Carthusian monks founded the monastery in the early 14th century. The most famous monk from the "Red monastery" was brother Cyprian. He was a physician, barber and pharmacist. Well known as a botanist, to this day the museum in Tatranska Lomnica has preserved his herbarium. He cataloged and described nearly 300 species of plants growing in the Pieniny, and collected plants in the Tatras! Accordingly to the legend, he constructed a glider that flew from the peaks of the surrounding mountains to the monastery!

In the afternoon we return to Zakopane and dinner (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 4* Hotel in Zakopane area (about 8 miles from the center of Zakopane, away from the crowds of tourists, with some spectacular mountain views)

Day 7 (Saturday) Wadowice, the hometown of John Paul II

After breakfast and check out from your hotel we drive to Wadowice, the home town of Karol Wojtyła, St. John Paul II.

The museum opened in 2010. The new, multimedia exhibition takes visitors on a trip through different stages of the Holy Father's life, inviting reflection and showing the climate and life in pre-war Wadowice.

In the afternoon we arrive in Kraków, check in at the hotel with time for lunch.

After a short after-lunch rest, you will have a genealogy presentation with one of our researchers and genealogy guides and questions and answers session. The session will last up to 2 hours.

Dinner (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 3* Hotel in the center of Kraków

Day 8 (Sunday) Wieliczka Salt Mine and Kraków

You begin the day with a trip to the famous Wieliczka Salt Mine

The mine has been producing table salt since the 13th century. It was one of the world's oldest operating salt mines (the oldest being in Bochnia, Poland, 17 miles from Wieliczka). The mine reaches down to a depth of 327 meters (1073 feet), and is over 300 km (186 miles) long.

The Wieliczka mine tour features a 3.5-kilometers (1.8 mile) tourist route (less than 1% of the length of the mine's passages) that includes statues of historic and mythic figures sculpted by miners out of the rock salt. Even the crystals in the chandeliers are fashioned of salt. In 1978 the Wieliczka salt mine was placed on the original UNESCO roster of World Heritage Sites.

Free time for lunch.

In the afternoon visit the Wawel Hill with entrance to the cathedral and castle. Wawel is the center of Polish history and culture.

Dinner (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee).

Accommodation: 3* Hotel in the center of Kraków

Day 9 (Monday) Kraków

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning meeting at the State Archives (or Diocese Archives in Kraków)

You will receive a presentation about the collection and some of the most interesting documents from the collection.

This will be followed by a questions and answers session from which you might acquire clues to working with the museum for personal research.

City tour in Kraków - Main Market Square, Cloth Hall, St. Mary's Church, Jagiellonian University and more

We will walk in the narrow, romantic streets of the Old town. We will show you the courtyard of Jagiellonian University with its famous clock. You will meander through the medieval Cloth Hall where traditional souvenirs can be bought. We will listen to St. Mary's trumpet call (called 'hejnał'). According to a popular legend, during the Mongol invasion in Krakow a sentry on a tower of St. Mary's Church sounded an alarm by playing the hejnał allowing the gates to be closed before the Tatars could take the city by surprise. The trumpeter, however, was shot in the throat and did not complete the anthem. According to the legend, that is why now music ends abruptly before completion.

During the city tour there will be also a free time for lunch.

In the afternoon explore the Rynek Underground Museum and its main exhibition:

'Following the traces of European identity of Krakow' is a multimedia journey through time. The museum employs modern techniques such as holography to present the reconstruction of buildings. There are also models in three dimensions that can be seen on 37 touch screens, a vapor screen and dozens of different projectors.

Visitors wander through underground glass ramps and footbridges, suspended over medieval archaeological remains of Krakow, the oldest of which dates back to the eleventh century.

Dinner (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee)

Accommodation: 3* Hotel in the center of Kraków

Day 10 (Tuesday) Kraków, Kazimierz district

Breakfast at the hotel.

Guided tour in the Kazimierz Jewish district, visit Remuh synagogue and cemetery

Another face of this town is a Jewish Krakow wher a centuries-old tradition of creative coexistence of two cultures – Christian and Jewish - thrived. Despite the painful moments in history, this culture is still alive and builds a unique atmosphere of the city, especially in the Kazimierz district.

Originally founded as a separate town outside just Krakow, in later centuries it ultimately was absorbed within the limits of the city center. It is bursting with lively cafes, galleries and small shops with antiques and crafts. Yet, it retains its Jewish flavor in architecture, restaurants and musical entertainment. It is famous for the annual Jewish Culture Festival that invites the international stars of klezmer, folk, jazz and many other kinds of music.

Ethnographic Museum in Kraków.

This museum was renovated a few years ago, combining the old, valuable collections of traditional culture relics, with modern ethnographic and anthropological perspectives.

It will be the best resume of our trip to Galicia and the world of our ancestor's everyday life. The museum presents not only tangible items such as the interiors of houses of different regions, Polish traditional costumes, but also the intangible feeling from spiritual culture and traditional art. In this museum we will be able to sum up the places, moments and experiences we have shared during this few days together.

After visiting the main exhibition we will take you to the museum's archives to present you the old photographs of Galicia from their amazing collection. We plan to arrange there some lecture or workshops.

Free time for lunch.

Schindler's Factory Museum.

The exhibition is primarily a story about Kraków and its inhabitants, both Polish and Jewish, during World War Two. It is also a story about Nazi Germans – the occupiers who arrived here on 6 September 1939, brutally disrupting Kraków's centuries-long history of Polish-Jewish relations.

The wartime history of Oskar Schindler's factory was brought to light in 1993 by Steven Spielberg's film Schindler's List.

Dinner (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee)

Accommodation: 3* Hotel in the center of Kraków

Day 11 (Wednesday) Kraków and Auschwitz museum (optional)

Breakfast at the hotel.

You have a free day to enjoy Kraków with time also to relax, shop for souvenirs and pack before the departure.

We provide two optional activities (with supplemental fee) on this day:

- Trip to Auschwitz museum with the regular English tour in Auschwitz Museum plus both the Auschwitz and Birkenau sites. Please note that the maximum size of bags and backpacks allowed to bring into the museum is 30x20x10 cm. Also please note that distance and tour times make this a 6-7 hour excursion.
- Take the opportunity for a pre-scheduled (the number is limited), 1h 30m consultation with one of our English speaking researchers to analyze your genealogy data; locate the parishes, archives and institutions where the future research could be performed; check the resources available online; and receive suggestions for further steps that could be done in the future. There is a supplemental cost for this additional service.

In the evening: farewell dinner (3 course menu with water, tea, coffee)

Accommodation: 3* Hotel in the center of Kraków

Day 12 (Thursday) Kraków - departures

After breakfast check out from the hotel and departures.

The transfers to the airport in Kraków are included.

Pre- or Post-Tour Individual Genealogical Services

Before or after your PGSA tour, we offer you our Tailor-Made tour service by which you can explore the history of your particular family lines.

- We can perform research as directed by you based on your needs, the "brick walls" you have come upon or to expand or deepen you already have completed.
- Want to visit the actual soil of where your ancient roots lie? Let us take you to the areas and towns where your ancestors lived, to the churches where they worshipped, and possibly to the fields in which they worked and the cemeteries where they were buried.

To coordinate these plans, begin your contact with us through PGSA as you register for your PGSA tour.

Tour Cost

- \$2,530 Per person (\$211/day)
- \$ 694 Single supplement

Included in the tour's cost:

- English speaking tour leader throughout the itinerary
- Transfers on the days of arrival and departure
- Transportation, including fuel and parking fees, by air-conditioned bus suitable to the number of travelers and our staff
- Accommodation in TWIN or DBL room in Reszów area (3 nights with breakfasts), Podhale region (3 nights with breakfasts), Kraków (5 nights with breakfasts)
- 11 dinners (3 course menu with water, tea or coffee)
- Entrances to tourist attractions as specified in the itinerary
- Genealogy lectures and meetings at the archives as specified in the itinerary
- Accommodation and meal allowance for your guide and the driver

Not included in the tour cost are:

- Items of personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, mini-bar
- Gratuity to guides and drivers
- Air transportation to and from Poland

Special Notes:

- Passport (not expiring within six months of return travel); No visa requirement
- Please advise us of any dietary or health restrictions

On the PGSA website, please refer to "Some Important Points" on the Itinerary page and the "Terms and Conditions" on the Registration Form for further details.
