

## AN IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS' SPECIAL - POLISH CASTLES AND PALACES

**Warsaw (2) - Kadyny (1) - Gdansk (1) - Poznan (2) - Krakow (2) - Reshow (1) - Lublin (1) - Warsaw (2)**

**DAY 1** - Upon arrival in **Warsaw**, transfer to a selected hotel for 2 nights. Time to rest up before a welcome dinner and overnight.



**DAY 2** - A sightseeing tour of Warsaw includes a visit to the Royal Castle or **Lazienki** (one of the most beautiful parks in Europe, founded in 1766 by Stanislaw August Poniatowski, the last King of Poland. Its name comes from the old baths converted into a garden pavilion by Tylman von Gameren in 1690) **Palace on the Water** (the former King's private residence is the most famous building of the complex. The marvellous interiors include: the Ballroom, Salomon Room, Portrait Gallery and Dining Room, where the famous "Thursday Dinners" took place. A gathering of prominent artists of the epoch, invited by the King to share thoughts and achievements.) Overnight in Warsaw.

**DAY 3** - Today we drive to **Kadyny**, en route stopping in **Malbork** to visit the Teutonic fortress (a seat of the Teutonic Order Grand Master, dating back to the 13th century), an outstanding example of medieval defensive construction. The fortification consists of three parts: Lower Castle [armoury, chapel, Gothic houses], Middle Castle [guest apartments, hospital, knights' chamber, Grand Master's apartments] and High Castle [treasury, sleeping rooms, refectory, convent room]. Overnight in Kadyny.



**DAY 4** - A morning departure to Gdansk. Sightseeing tour of the Tri-City of **Gdansk-Sopot-Gdynia** (Entrance to the Main Town through the High Gate dating back to the 16th century, decorated with emblems of Poland, Royal Prussia and Gdansk. Pass by the Renaissance Torture House and Gothic Prison Tower through the Renaissance Golden Gate to Długa Street, with late Gothic and Renaissance houses. View the historic interiors of the Town Hall, dating back to the 14th century. Then a stroll around the Town Square before a visit to the famous Artus Hall Court, built in 1481 as a meeting place for wealthy burghers. A stop at Neptune's fountain - symbol of Gdansk. Leave Długi Targ through the Green Gate, home of Polish Kings when they visited Gdansk. There are seven gates connecting the Main Town with the Old Harbour on Motława River. St. Mary's Gate will lead you to the most beautiful street of Gdansk, Mariacka Street, where silver and amber galleries are located. At the end of the street - St. Mary's Church Memling's monumental painting "The Last Judgement". The church, founded in 1342, is one of the biggest in Europe, large enough for 25.000 faithful, and is decorated with numerous Gothic sculptures. Then a short drive to the Gates of the Gdansk Shipyard, where the "Solidarity" Union started, and which later led to the collapse of the Communist regime in Eastern Europe. Homage to the victims killed in the 1970 protest, commemorated with a monument. A short stop at the Oliva Cathedral, Romanesque with later Gothic editions, founded in the 13th century as a Cistercian abbey. Mid-afternoon drive to Gdynia - a modern harbour town developed before World War II. Stop in Sopot - a picturesque pre-war summer resort with a beautiful promenade pier. Overnight in Sopot.

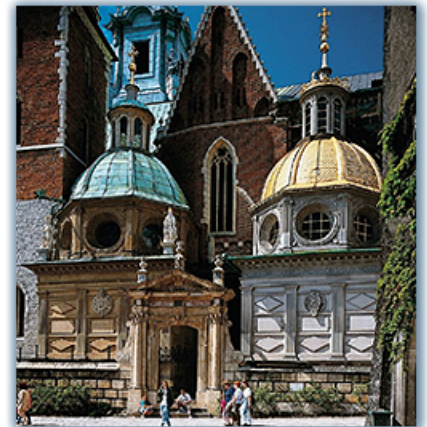
**DAY 5** - Today we head to Poznan. A visit to **Czarniejewo**, located 20 km southeast of Poznan. Czarniejewo is a classicist palace dating from 1780, surrounded by a magnificent English park. Overnight in Poznan

**DAY 6** - A morning sightseeing tour of **Poznan** is followed by a trip to **Kornik**. Here we visit the castle, built in the 16th century, rebuilt in the 19th century in English Gothic style, and the former home of the Zamoyski family. A great collection of furniture, paintings, sculptures, armours and oriental weapons. The castle is surrounded by a stylish park dating back to the 16th century, and now arboretum with numerous exotic plants. Later a visit to **Rogalin**, a Rococo -Classicists palace founded in 1770, completed at the beginning of the 18th century. It also boasts the biggest concentration of old oak-trees (over 900 trees with 2 m. in diameter) in Europe. Overnight in Poznan.



**DAY 7** - Today we drive to Krakow, en route stopping in **Czestochowa** - one of the most important sites in the Christian world. It is often called the Religious Capital of Poland. Here we'll see the Black Madonna Shrine (famous painting dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> century) and the fortifications of the Bernardine Monastery, a unique example of a monastery turned into stronghold. Overnight in **Krakow**.

**DAY 8** - A morning sightseeing tour of Krakow, includes a visit to **Wawel Royal Castle**. Built on the remains of a 10th century settlement and extended in Renaissance style in the 16th century, The magnificent Renaissance interiors contain numerous paintings, furniture and national memorabilia, as well as a collection of famous "Wawel Tapestries" designed and made in Flandre, especially for Wawel. An afternoon visit to the Renaissance castle in **Pieskowa Skala** - the most beautiful knights' castle in Poland. Founded in the 14th century, it was rebuilt in Renaissance style with beautiful Renaissance loggia and arcades in the courtyard. Overnight in Krakow.



**DAY 9** - Today we drive to **Rzeszow**, en route stopping to visit the Palace in **Baranow Sandomierski** - one of the most beautiful mannerist residences in Poland, initially built in Renaissance style at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. Many famous artists worked here: Santi Gucci, Tylman von Gameren and Falconi. Especially lovely is the inner courtyard, with galleries and beautifully decorated portals. Overnight in Rzeszow.

**DAY 10** - A morning visit to **Lancut**, a magnificent Palace erected in the 17th century for Lubomirski family. Then, as a property of the Potocki family, it was reconstructed in French Baroque style. Surrounded by fortifications and a magnificent park, it houses a museum of interiors, exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, china, tapestries and old furniture, and a unique collection of carriages. Drive to **Lublin** for overnight.

**DAY 11** - A morning visit to **Kozlowka Palace** - former Zamoyski family residence, founded in the 18th century and expanded at the beginning of the 20th century. The palace and Baroque garden, now partly houses an exhibition of Soc-realistic pieces of painting and sculpture (Stalin, Lenin, and Fidel Castro among many others). This afternoon we drive to **Warsaw**, where a final 2 nights are included.

**DAY 12** - A morning visit to **Wilanow**, often called "the small Versailles". It was the summer residence of King John Sobieski, who defeated Turks at the gates of Vienna in the 17th century. Magnificent interiors include furniture and china from the period, and a gallery of Polish portraits. Time to explore the beautiful surroundings with a variety of landscapes: an English park and an Italian Baroque and rose garden. This evening we can include (if scheduling allows) a farewell piano concert at the Palace on the Water in Lazienki Park. Overnight in Warsaw.

**DAY 13** - A departure transfer.

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