



POLISH
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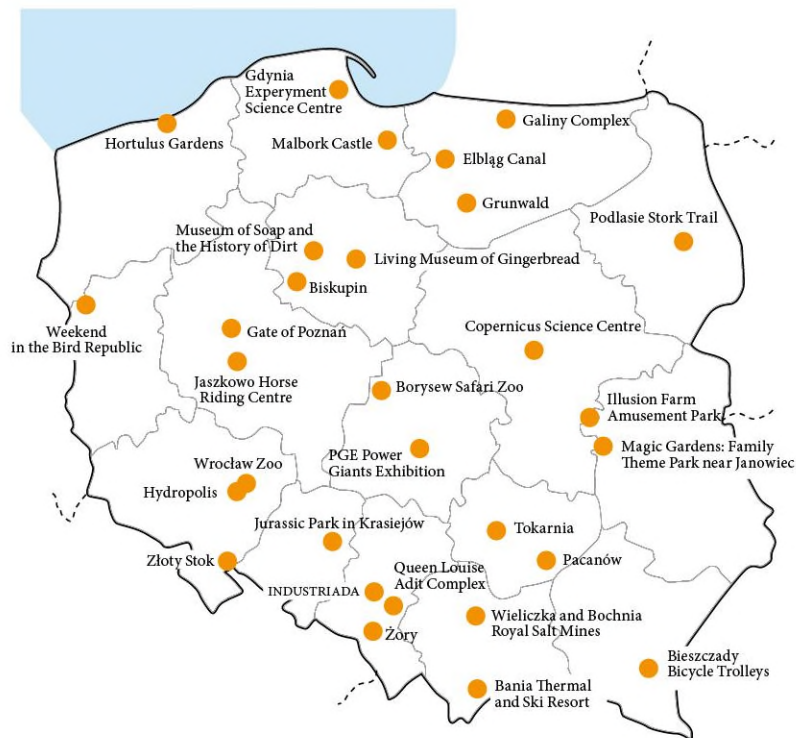
POLAND

Prime Tourist Attractions for Children



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We all love family trips, but sometimes it's hard to think of a good destination. In this brochure we want to help you discover many places you would never have thought of when planning a family outing. We will prove to you that even when you have children, you are not doomed to visiting plastic and often tacky attractions created specially with the youngest tourists in mind. There is a growing number of places with original proposals for the most demanding customers, namely families with kids. You can find them all over Poland. They are not always typical attractions for children; some are "normal" museums that have done something turning them into great family tourism sites. It could be a special tour route, audio guides allowing visitors to explore at their own pace, multimedia stations, guides who talk about historic sites not only with passion but also humour, or sometimes a play area or a special sticker as a bonus for plucky young tourists. Every place can be interesting to kids as well as parents. The Polish Tourism Organization has long been working to seek out true gems in the tourist offerings of different provinces. This is one of the purposes of the competition awarding Polish Tourism Organization Certificates, the entrants being the best regional tourist attractions. The great majority of sites listed in this publication have been winners of this competition. These are places where children are welcomed with open arms, where exhibitions or themed events are prepared specially for them, where kids are important. Read about them and then... off you go! Go in spring, summer, autumn or winter. The weather is unimportant; what matters is your attitude and wanting to spend time with your kids. Poland for families awaits!

Hortulus Gardens

Losing yourself in the world's biggest hornbeam maze. Seeing hundreds, if not thousands, of floral compositions. Resting amidst nature. All this is offered by Hortulus Gardens in the tiny town of Dobrzyca, between Mielno and Ustronie Morskie.

Actually, the gardens are a little distance apart. First, in 1992, the Hortulus Themed Gardens were set up. These are almost 30 compositions laid out on close to 5 hectares. Each is a small work of art. There is a rock garden, a woodland garden, a Japanese garden, a French garden, and an English garden with a rosarium. There's a garden inspired by the work of Antonio Gaudi and an equally magical garden of the senses. One visit is not enough – every season is different here, with different plants in the foreground and seasonal designs. There's plenty for kids as well: they can play hide-and-seek in the garden's recesses, have fun in the playground and search for details incorporated into the plant arrangements. They will like the Hortulus Spectabilis Gardens even more. In 2014, 180,000 (!) specially cut hornbeams were formed into an enormous maze. The corridors from which you have to find a way out are over 3 km long! At the centre of the maze is a 20-metre observation tower offering a view onto the whole complex and sometimes even the Baltic coast. The maze is surrounded by the Gardens of Magic, Energy, Time and Space, where everyone can find something of interest. There are spaces to relax in, playground equipment, symbolic stone circles, colourful floral and fragrant compositions. Everything is accessible even to the youngest tourists who still move around in pushchairs.

At the centre of the maze is a 20-metre observation tower offering a view onto the whole complex and sometimes even the Baltic coast.

www.hortulus.com.pl



EXPERYMENT Science Centre in Gdynia

Your first ever open-heart surgery. Looking for dinosaur bones. Experiencing an earthquake. Creating a whirlpool or a visualization of your face in 30 years' time. And, finally, returning to your childhood and going crazy in... a honeycomb. All this means you need to reserve several hours for a visit to the Experyment Science Centre in Gdynia.

Blending science with fun is a fool-proof way to create a family-friendly facility. The one in Gdynia has been in existence since 2007, so the first young explorers visiting it have long grown up. The popular science exhibition is divided into 5 sections: Hydroworld, The Tree of Life, Operation: Human, Towards Health, and Invisible Forces, so the devices on hand are really diverse. You can turn into a fakir and lie on a bed of nails. A few minutes later, you can find out how many barriers invisible to non-disabled people have to be overcome by people in wheelchairs. In addition, you can investigate the workings of the Archimedes screw or other simple devices you (theoretically) know from school. After this visit, you'll find it much easier to understand how electricity or sound works. The biggest segment is the enormous Tree of Life, with an observation deck in its crown. Since all of the centre's devices are located in one giant hall, you can see them all from up above. That makes it easy to check which sites are still waiting for you to discover them.

www.experyment.gdynia.pl



Malbork Castle

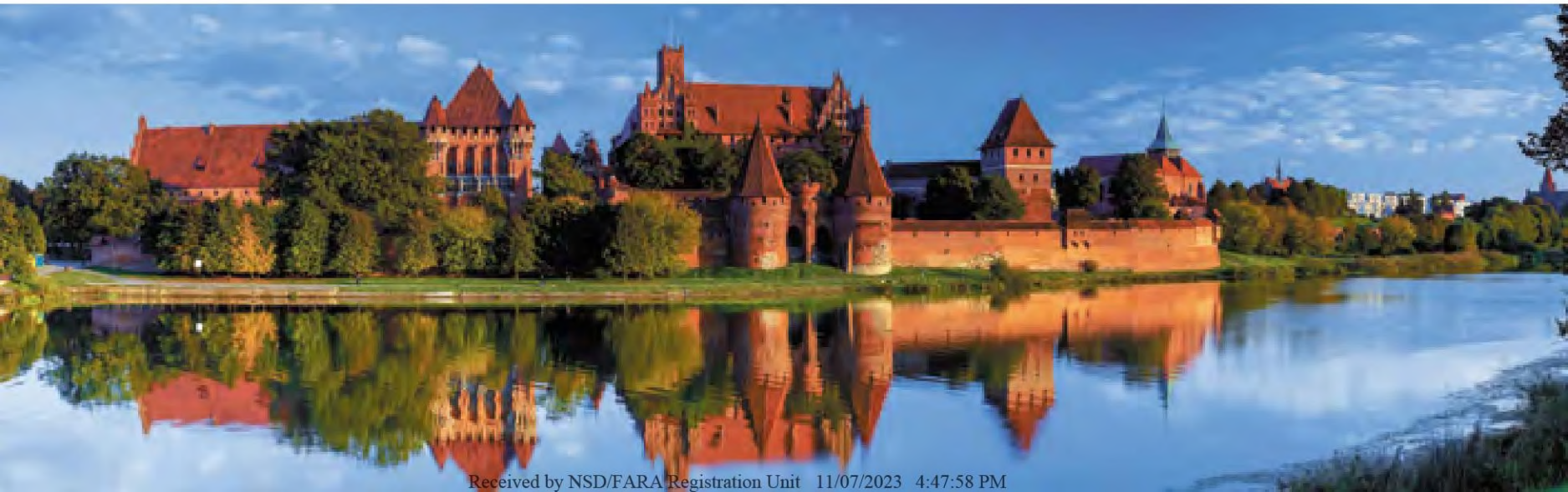
Did you know that Poland is home to the world's biggest castle measured by land area? That castle is the Malbork stronghold picturesquely situated on the River Nogat.

The complex occupies 21 hectares, and the volume of the buildings is – believe it or not – a quarter of a million cubic metres. To tour it you need a lot of time and... comfortable shoes. The history of this stronghold of the Teutonic Knights dates back to 1280, when the first stage of construction began. Over the centuries, the castle changed hands and was damaged and rebuilt several times, until – in 1961 – it was turned into the Malbork Castle Museum. In 1997 it became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today Malbork Castle can be toured with a guide or individually – with audio guides. There's even a special route for families. It's the perfect way to learn about the history of the castle and Polish-Teutonic clashes. Young tourists armed with earphones can traverse the castle rooms, the chapel and

courtyard by themselves, and also climb the tower. It's worth seeing the exhibitions, e.g. of Baltic amber, and the armoury. Early 15th-century reality is introduced by Nicholas, part of the stronghold crew. He'll tell you about the customs followed at the castle, the monk-knights and the Grunwald expedition. He will also help you find the castle's darkest corners, e.g. the latrine. The time it takes to complete the route and the order of sights is up to you; even if you lose your way in the castle hallways, the audio guide will adjust its story to your current location. After the tour it's worth seeing the castle from a tourist boat cruising along the River Nogat, or taking a stroll along the river. Then, you will see the full magnitude and majesty of the Malbork stronghold.

The castle can be toured with a guide or individually – with audio guides along a special route for families.

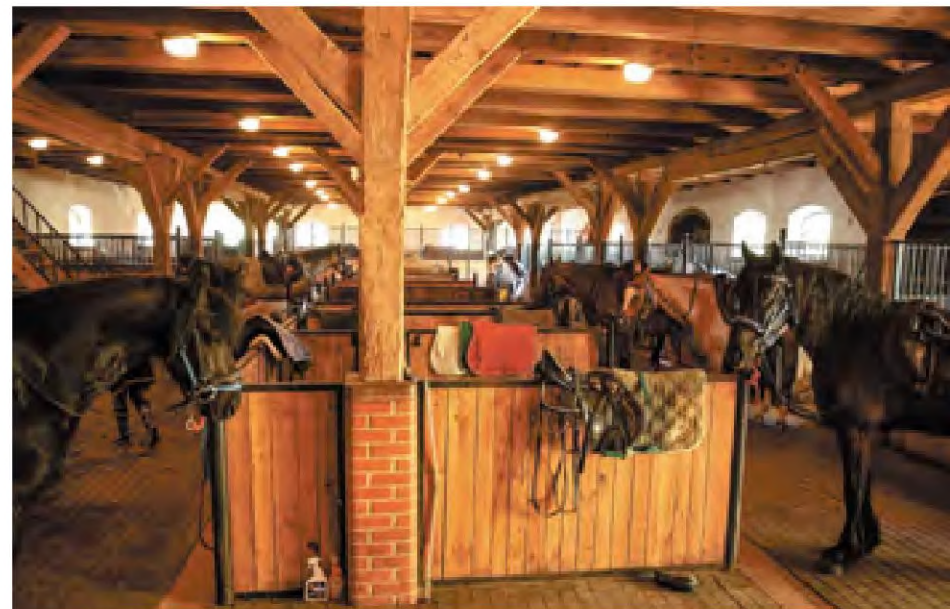
www.zamek.malbork.pl



Galiny Palace and Manor Farm Complex

A 16th-century palace, a 19th-century manor farm and many hectares of forests, meadows, pastures and ponds. This is the perfect place to spend a peaceful family weekend, especially since the Galiny complex in Masuria has many features set up with young kids in mind.

The very possibility of spending the night in a palace whose beginnings date back to the second half of the 16th century is exciting. And that's just the start of many adventures amidst wonderful Masurian nature. Among other things, children can enjoy a miniature-animal farm with goats, ponies and sheep. The staff don't just tell you about the animals, they also let you help care for them and feed them. The youngest visitors, by themselves or with their parents, can also learn to ride a horse or drive a carriage with professional instructors. Afterwards, you can relish the delicious palace cuisine based on organic produce. Experienced riders can go further afield, and there's plenty of places to go! The complex is surrounded by a park, with ponds and the Bird Island in its eastern part and the Pisa River valley in the western part. In winter, it's great for cross-country skiing. The conditions are also ideal for bicycle tourism, especially since guests can rent bicycles with child carriers. With the Green Velo Eastern Bicycle Trail running nearby, there are many excursion options. Masuria explored on horseback or by bicycle? Why not?!



www.palac-galiny.pl



Elbląg Canal

The Elbląg Canal, 151 km long, is Poland's longest navigable canal. It is also the only one running partially along... grass. How is that possible? And why go to so much bother?

The history of the Elbląg Canal dates back to 1844, when Dutch engineer Georg Jakoby Steinke started working on a project enabling timber to be transported from Masurian forests to the Vistula Lagoon and onwards to the Baltic. The difficulty lay in the fact that the difference in water levels along the way was close to a hundred metres. The solution was to be provided by one of the most innovative and boldest hydraulic engineering projects in Europe. And it was a success! In 1860 the first ships sailed down the canal linking Elbląg, Hawa and Ostróda. Thanks to a unique system of 5 inclined planes (Buczyniec, Kąty, Oleśnica, Jelenie and Całuny), vessels

float from the water onto enormous platforms on which they are then dragged along tracks to the next water section. That's right: ships on rails! Not only do they ride on grass, but the whole mechanism works without electricity. Huge ships are transported thanks to the power of water alone. Curious? This project has amazed and fascinated people from the very beginning, which is why regular tourist cruises on the Elbląg Canal were launched in 1927. During a cruise, from a few hours up to half a day long, you could admire not only this technological marvel but also the natural wonders around it. And it's the same today.

www.ostroda2012.pl

www.zegluga.com.pl



Ships on rails! This attraction seemingly taken straight from a child's dream actually exists!



Re-Enactment of the Battle of Grunwald

Who doesn't remember the two naked swords and brave Zawisza the Black thrashing the Teutonic Knights? The magnitude and importance of what was one of the greatest battles in medieval Europe is highlighted in history class, in Sienkiewicz's famous novel and, finally, in the film by Aleksander Ford. However, it's best to see it directly in the fields of Grunwald. Thanks to an annual re-enactment, that's exactly what you can do.

The outdoor re-enactment of the battle brings knightly brotherhoods from all over Europe and tens of thousands of thrill-seeking tourists to the fields between Grunwald, Stębark and Łodwigowo. Although the actual staging of the Battle of Grunwald takes place on the day of the anniversary, 15 July, the re-enactors arrive a few days earlier. Before the Polish-Lithuanian forces united under Jagiełło's command clash with the Teutonic army, there are tournaments, fairs, concerts and shows to enjoy, all of them set in the reality of 1410, of course. Tourists can expect to see winsome maidservants and knights in shining armour, medieval dances, feasts, craftsman displays and many other attractions. All this enables kids not only to find out what the old life and customs were like, but also to take part in them. In this case, the battle itself is just the cherry on the cake. Although there is plenty of excitement during the re-enactment, spectators can be sure of one thing: victory will always be ours.

www.grunwald1410.pl



Podlasie Stork Trail

Why do storks have such long beaks? Why is the Orthodox church in Trześćianka green and the one in Narew blue? How many European bison are there in Białowieża Forest? The answers to these and hundreds of other questions can be found during a trip along the Podlasie Stork Trail.

The Podlasie Stork Trail leads through the most beautiful and still natural north-eastern regions of Poland, including as many as 4 national parks (Biebrza, Białowieża, Narew and Wigry). Storks can be seen along the whole trail, but the greatest number is found in the village of Pentowo, which received the title of European Stork Village in 2001. In the summer months this “stork village” boasts as many as 26 occupied nests. Around 120 storks take off for warm countries every year. You can watch the stork families from a 12-metre observation tower. Although the stork trail was established for watching these beautiful birds, the area it crosses has plenty of other attractions. The picturesque localities making up the Land of Open Shuttles are definitely worth seeing. In Tykocin, you have to try Jewish cuisine and see the Baroque synagogue, Talmudic house and cemetery. In Białowieża, the gateway to Białowieża Forest, children will love the European Bison Show Reserve. Cruising along the Augustów Canal or sailing on Lake Wigry is an unforgettable experience for the whole family. Sounds interesting, right? And that’s just the start of a long list of places to visit. Add 400 km of bicycle trails and your holiday is all planned.

In Pentowo – the famous European Stork Village – you can observe some 120 storks. There is no other place in Poland with so many of them.

www.podlaskizslakbociani.pl



Weekend in the Bird Republic

What do you associate with Lubuskie province? Calm? Nature? Leisure? After a weekend in the Bird Republic, there can be only one answer. The Lubuskie region is a paradise for ornithologists, a true birdwatching heaven.

The Bird Republic is an area at the mouth of the River Warta, near the village of Słońsk. Why was it set up there? Because this is one of Europe's most important wetlands. During bird migration time, hundreds of thousands of birds can be observed here. The goose, white-tailed eagle, common teal and oystercatcher are just some of the more than 250 species. You can watch the birds during guided tours or just by walking from one observation tower to the next. For a true natural adventure,



www.tps-unitisviribus.org.pl



take your binoculars to the trails of the greylag goose, corncrake, woodpecker, red kite and hoopoe, or follow the Woodpecker Route – a family-oriented educational path. For the more active, there's canoeing, cycling tours or events such as... the Cow Holiday. Besides all the natural attractions, the Bird Republic offers sightseeing as well. To supplement your weekend amidst nature, be sure to visit the Exhibition of Regional Mementoes documenting the first traces of settlement in the area and the ruins of the castle of the Knights Hospitaller in Słońsk. Like any democratic country, the Bird Republic has a constitution, and tourists have the right to receive a passport and take part in the congresses of citizens held in April.



Gate of Poznań ICHOT (Interactive Centre for the History of Cathedral Island)

Porta Posnania (or Gate of Poznań) is probably one of the most successful blends of tradition and modernity in Poland. But it is not the simple building imaginatively embedded in the existing landscape that attracts crowds of tourists. They come to see the multimedia exhibition presenting the history of Poznań's Cathedral Island (Ostrów Tumski), the Wielkopolska region and the Polish state. After all, this is where Duke Mieszko I's fortified settlement was located!

This museum has no historical objects on display; history is presented through multimedia. You tour Porta Posnania on your own, the way most children love so much – with an audio guide. What is more, kids not only get their own version of history telling, but encounter many special attractions along the route as well. There is a special “playroom” where you can go back in time to the Piast era: try on a period costume in a virtual wardrobe, see how the stronghold functioned (you can even get to it via a glass dome), or copy the seals of different rulers. Elsewhere, you can play an enormous history board game, and further still, read interactive books. Both children and adults are most amazed by the virtual Golden Chapel. Walking between different parts of the exhibition along glass walkways, you can admire a panorama of Cathedral Island. Spectacular views also await visitors on the building's roof. After seeing the multimedia display you walk – across a footbridge

The multimedia Porta Posnania provides a good excuse for family exploration of Cathedral Island and its environs.

www.bramapoznania.pl



over the River Cybina – into the real world. With the map you find by completing the whole route, you can continue discovering more secrets of the oldest part of Poznań, with the cathedral where, according to tradition, Poland's first rulers were buried, and the Genius Loci Archaeological Reserve. Right next to it – in the Śródka neighbourhood which you can reach via Jordan Bridge – is the already famous 3D mural created as part of the Centrum Warte Poznania competition.



Jazkowo Horse Riding Centre

Jazkowo: a small village in the Wielkopolska region, familiar to horse-lovers like no other locality in Poland. Credit for this is due to Antoni Chłapowski, a descendant of General Dezydery Chłapowski, who set up the Jazkowo Horse Riding Centre, an international training centre, in 1995. Today it is one of the largest horse riding centres in Europe.

The centre specializes in teaching children and adolescents, but entire families can train there. Most of the more than 200 horses on hand are ponies up to 148 cm tall, perfect for working with the youngest riders, while adults are given larger, gentle mounts. Besides learning to ride a horse, course participants learn the rudiments of bareback riding and horse care. This is an out-and-out school of life offering an extremely familial and friendly atmosphere. Guests live in a hotel established in a restored 19th-century palace or in agritourism rooms. Apart from its educational value, Jazkowo offers natural wonders. It lies within Rogalin Landscape Park. Lots of animals live among the old oaks. This is an excellent base for sightseeing – on horseback, of course, but also during hiking, cycling and water excursions, since the River Warta runs through the park. There are also quite a few historical sites nearby: Raczyński Palace in Rogalin, the castle and park in Kórnik, and the Józef Wybicki Museum in Manieczki. Everyone will find something interesting in Jazkowo.

www.centrumhipiki.com



Archaeological Museum in Biskupin

Have you ever dreamed of time travel? At Biskupin you can go back a few thousand years, take a walk among Neolithic houses, try your hand at ancient crafts, and see how families lived in the early days of the Polish state.

The Biskupin archaeological reserve is the most distinctive site of its kind in Poland, maybe even in Europe. Its historical value is often compared to Italy's Pompeii!

The remains of a settlement were discovered in 1933 when the water level of Lake Biskupińskie dropped. Archaeological digs began almost immediately. Today when you enter the spacious reserve, the first thing you admire are reconstructions of huts and their interiors. One of the long houses, typical of the Neolithic era (4000 BCE), features an exhibition on the epoch of the first farmers. Next is the Lusatian Settlement with a tower, rampart and two rows of buildings, which is the reserve's most famous part, from the turn of the Bronze and Iron Ages (2700 BCE). The next and newer section is the early Piast village (ca. 1050 CE). During the season (May-September) reconstruction craftsmen are on site giving presentations.

The biggest attraction for kids, though, is not the historical buildings but a pen with farm animals: sheep, goats, cattle of the Polish Red breed, and Konik horses. To make your trip even more exciting, you should get to Biskupin by taking the narrow-gauge train that runs from Żnin. Another fun option is a cruise on Lake Biskupińskie on the *Venetian Devil*. From the water, you can see even better just how beautiful a spot the first settlers chose for their home.

www.biskupin.pl



If you want to travel in time, visit Biskupin. Especially in summer, you can feel as if you were living in the times of the first Piasts.



Museum of Soap and the History of Dirt

Why was antiquity the cleanest era, while the court of Louis XIV stank worse than a farmhand's hut? Who invented the shower and when? How many rolls of toilet paper was a Polish citizen once entitled to? To find out, you don't have to scour the Internet. Just go to Bydgoszcz and visit the Museum of Soap and the History of Dirt.

If dirt didn't exist, we probably wouldn't have soap. But since dirt has always been a part of human life, the Museum of Soap is full of curiosities that will surprise not only children. Visitors travel through the ages with a guide. They learn that in ancient times people washed (or rather cleaned themselves) 5 times a day. In the Middle Ages, the trend was very different... The view that a pious person only needed to be washed after birth and after death sounds terrifying today, back then it was cause for pride. The boldest visitors can find out for themselves how people bathed in a washtub (often while having a feast!) or how they washed their clothes using a washboard. Kids cannot believe, and their parents or grandparents remember with mixed feelings, that a Frania impeller washing machine, grey soap and a cut-up newspaper as toilet paper was a daily reality.

Before their trip through times of dirt and times of cleanliness, tourists visit Auntie Hejtka's Laundry where they get to make their own soap. Colourful, smelling of lavender or vanilla, with the ingredients of your choice, it is the best souvenir from this museum.

Five times a day or twice in a lifetime?
At the Museum of Soap and the
History of Dirt, tourists travel
through the ages and get to choose for
themselves: to wash, or not to wash.

www.muzeummydla.pl



Living Museum of Gingerbread

What first comes to mind when you hear "Toruń"? GINGERBREAD! And if so, then also the Living Museum of Gingerbread. Whoever refuses to take kids to museums is bound to change their mind after visiting this one.

Kids are thrilled to see that the Living Museum of Gingerbread has no glass cases or "Do Not Touch" signs. It is all about questions, tasks and contributing to the story told by the Master Baker and the Spice Witch. Actually, without the tourists' participation the show presenting *katarzynka* and other kinds of handmade gingerbread would be impossible. After all, someone has to knead the dough for the gingerbread workshops.

While kids wonder why people got their gingerbread from the pharmacy in the olden days, their parents have a laugh at the anecdotes woven into the colourful stories. But making gingerbread is still the most exciting.

As the biscuits are baking, the visitors who made them are transported from the Middle Ages to the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. In the factory museum upstairs, the Rabiński siblings present the first machines for more mass production of gingerbread. You can also try to match the skills of the artist who decorates the gingerbread with icing. On your way out, a visit to the gift shop filled with handmade gingerbread biscuits and gadgets is an obvious choice.

At the Living Museum of Gingerbread every visitor becomes part of the story being told, from hand-kneaded Katarzynki gingerbread biscuits to the first mass-produced goodies.

www.muzeumpieniaka.pl



Copernicus Science Centre

The Copernicus Science Centre in Warsaw started with *The Big Bang*, an outdoor show that took place in November 2010. And just like Nicolaus Copernicus caused a revolution in science, the centre named after him has revolutionized the approach to child audiences of exhibitions popularizing science. But adults also love these multimedia presentations.

Today the Copernicus Science Centre is Poland's biggest centre popularizing different fields of science. Children as well as adults spend long hours there, in the company of explainers. They keep coming back, too, because there are so many exhibitions that it's impossible to see them all in one day.

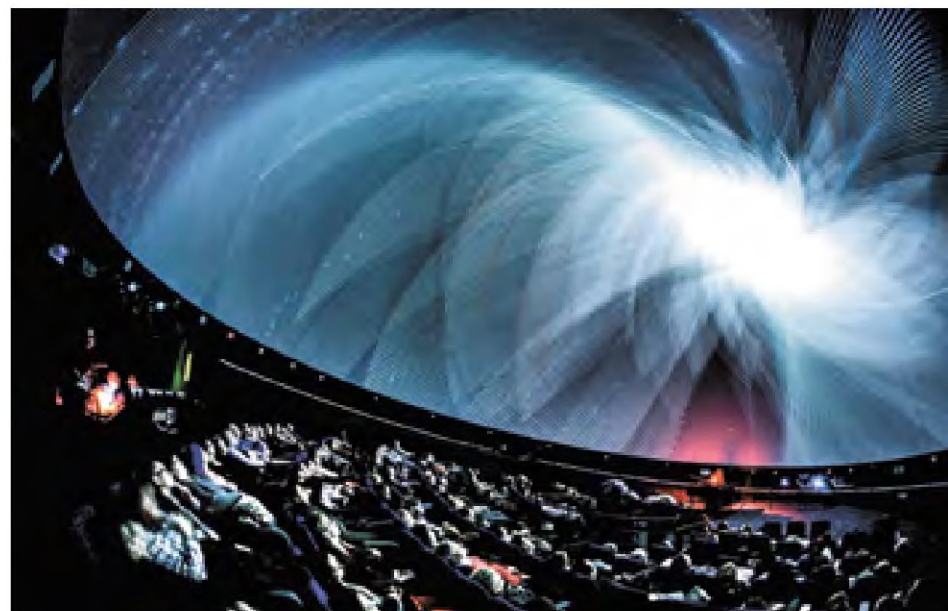
Even tiny tots have their special place here. The Buzz! zone was designed specially for the youngest explorers (up to the age of 5). It's a place you explore with all the senses. You can climb things, touch different textures, experiment with water (best take a change of clothes). But that's just the beginning; real science for everyone is just around the corner. Even the names – High Voltage Theatre, Thinkatorium, or Copernicus on Wheels – sound intriguing. And they are just some of the attractions in the largest part of the exposition, namely The Experimental Zone with more than 200 exhibits showing how humans and nature work. You can (should!) touch everything there, and put any question to the explainers, who will help with your experiments if needed.

The exhibitions are complemented by the outdoor Discovery Park, a rooftop garden (open from May to October) and the Copernicus' Sky planetarium as a separate attraction. Is there anything missing? Probably only the option to stretch time so you can take it all in.

www.kopernik.org.pl



A place where young and old alike get to explore the mysteries of science. It's no coincidence that everything started with a "Big Bang"!



Illusion Farm Amusement Park

Children love amusement parks, and the Illusion Farm doesn't just provide lots of fun but also quite a bit of easily digestible knowledge. It's done in such a way that even parents are not bored.

In this park beautifully situated in tiny Mościska, roughly halfway between Warsaw and Lublin, the attractions are split into 4 sections: "illusion", "adventure", "thinking cap" and "be active". For kids thirsting for adventure, that's a truly explosive mix. It's most interesting here in the summer, when you can sunbathe at the lake, go boating, use the sports fields and climbing wall. But the crowds don't flock to the Illusion Farm for holiday weekend recreation. They come for the world of magic into which the park's various sites lead them.

In the illusion museum, visitors are watched by the multiplied face of Albert Einstein, and after that... things only get better. A hall of mirrors, a rotating cottage, an Ames room, a flying hut of mysteries, a fairy-tale shadow theatre, a maze of forgetfulness and... a head on a platter – kids need watching there because their senses are likely to trick them. And besides magic? There's the Egyptian Museum and Pharaoh's Tomb. There's a raft trip and a trapper's pathway in the marsh. And for the boldest – a wild dragon reserve. Then there's the woodland of experiments, wooden games, playgrounds, and an activity zone with a zip line, trampolines and a ropes course. After a fun-filled day visitors can refresh themselves with sausages they cook themselves over a fire.

Illusion, adventure, thinking cap, be active – there is a selection of attractions for every family member.

www.farmailuzji.pl



Borysew Safari Zoo

Want to stand face-to-face with a white lion? You don't have to travel far: 15% of the global population lives... near Łódź. Welcome to the Borysew Safari Zoo.

Initially Borysew was home to African animals only. On about 25 hectares, today you can admire species from 6 continents: Europe, Africa, Asia, North and South America, and Australia. More than 600 animals live in the zoo's spacious enclosures. Visitors can walk among the pens, or you can take the colourful little train, which means you will reach even the farthest corners of the zoo as well as being able to listen to stories about its residents. At the end of this ride, kids will know lots of fascinating facts about animals. People stay the longest at the pens of the white lions and white Bengal tigers. These extraordinary and rare wild cats feel so much at home in Borysew that they've even given birth to cubs. This birth in captivity was such a sensation that international media wrote about it.

For the youngest children, the mini-zoo is just as much fun, with rabbits, goats, Cameroon sheep, alpacas, Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs and donkeys. You can even feed some of them. It's also worth being there for the show feeding of animals like seals, tigers, tapirs and meercats.

For kids in need of even more activity, there's a play area set up in spherical tents and a 7D cinema to enjoy.

**Borysew Zoo will amaze everyone.
Can you believe that you are more
likely to meet a white lion near
Łódź than in Africa?**

www.zoosafari.com.pl

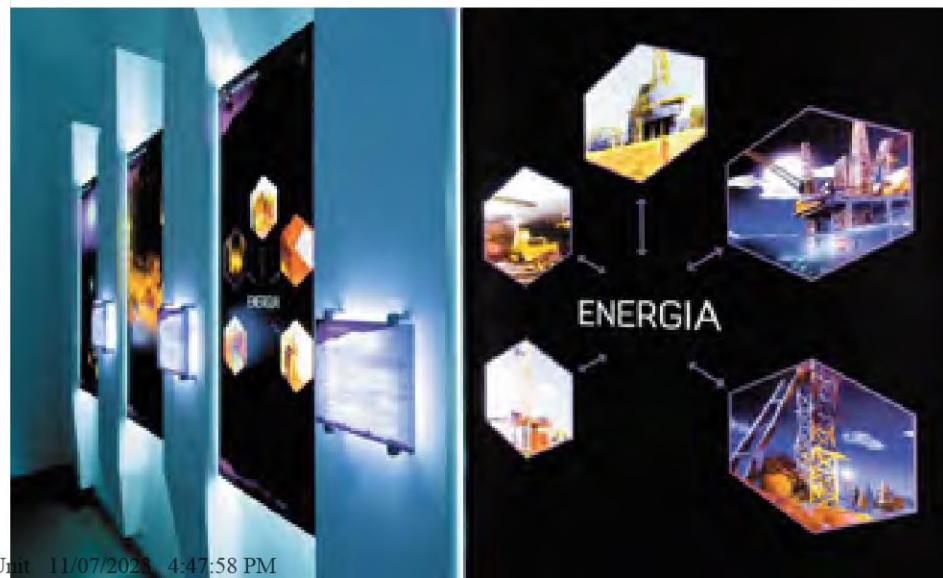


PGE Power Giants Exhibition Municipal Cultural Centre in Bełchatów

Power Giants. The very name is intriguing. What is this? A team of superheroes? Giant creatures threatening our planet? Nothing of the kind. It is one of the most family-friendly multimedia museums in.

The exhibition is located in Bełchatów for a reason. The town is home to an active brown coal mine and a power plant. As they view the exhibition, children – and not just they – are shown how electricity is produced by the virtual Power Giant family: smart and unruly Volty, rebellious and mysterious Joulie, clever Professor Om, Gaia as the personification of mother nature, and the Robot with a Coal Heart. Tourists listen to their stories via audio guides, and you can even choose a family route specially designed for young kids. As you put on the earphones, you enter a world of riddles, experiments and curiosities. During the tour you move around a tropical forest and across the sea bottom, do experiments with a power generator and electrical phenomena, view the bones of a mammoth found within the Bełchatów mine and... we won't tell you what else. The exhibition is interactive, fascinating and accessible. Leaving PGE Power Giants, every child knows how brown coal is turned into electricity. And, importantly, they learnt this not sitting in class but having fun.

This excursion is best supplemented with a trip to the nearby brown coal mine and the scenic viewpoints in Kleszczów and Żłobnica from which you can plainly see Bełchatów's Giants.



www.gigantymocy.pl



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You get to know the Bełchatów Giants in the company of the Gigusie family. Complicated phenomena become child's play when explained by Volty and Joulie.

Magic Gardens: Family Theme Park near Janowiec

A vast park divided into many gardens with different themes, plus playgrounds, tourist entertainers, a walk in the trees, and a beach in summer. And all this in a really nice, very picnic-friendly area. The Magic Gardens: likely the best recipe for tourism success.

Trzcianki, not far from Janowiec and Kazimierz Dolny, boasts a complex of sensory gardens that include a host of attractions for children. Walking along the paths, you reach successive fairy-tale lands. From the Wizard's House you can see a panorama of the park, in the Carrot Field – run among GIGANTIC vegetables, and further along – meet weird and colourful creatures, visit Dwarf Town with its multitude of rope bridges, tunnels and animations, and in the land of water – splash around and experiment. Older children are always excited to complete the Zoran trail, discovering its secrets during an outdoor game.

The newest and probably most exciting attraction is a system of bridges in the treetops. With over 400 m of corridors suspended above ground, it offers children many adventures. To complete the course, you have to scale a climbing wall, climb over some giant chairs, deal with many obstacles and go down a slide. While the kids are having fun, their parents can take a breather in the restaurant or on the observation deck, 20 m high and offering a great view of the whole Magic Gardens and surrounding area.



The Magic Gardens have lots of attractions for children, and ever since the walkways in the trees were opened – also thrills for parents.

www.magiczneogrody.com



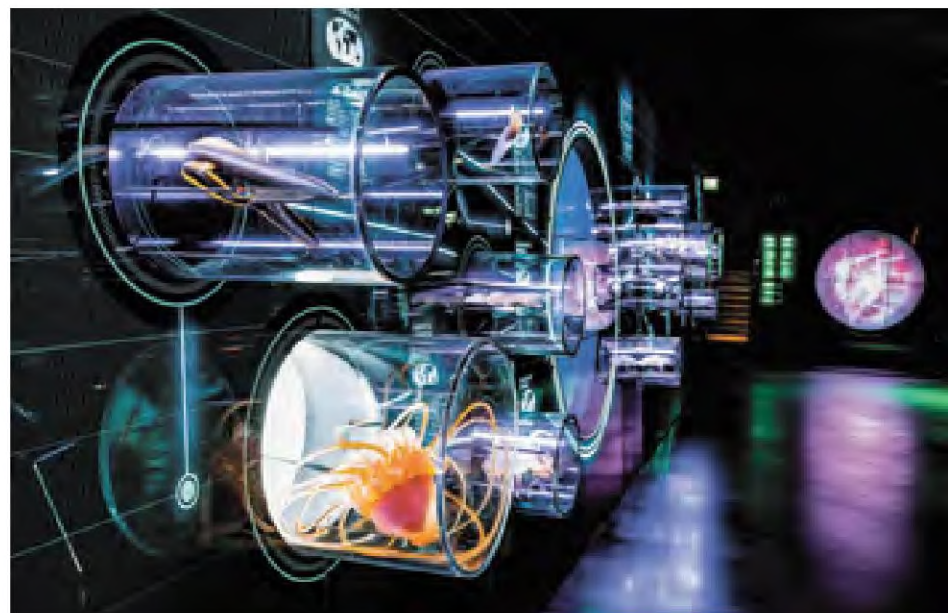
Hydropolis

Where does tap water come from? Which rivers are the biggest? When did life appear in water? What do our words sound like in dolphin language? How do you forecast weather from clouds? This and many other questions connected with water are explained in the multimedia exhibitions of Hydropolis.

How much can you say about water? In Wrocław – a great deal, but it's all very interesting. Entering the exhibition building, kids will be drawn to the whirlpool, some of them so strongly they will need encouragement to move along. And it only gets better! The exhibition in Wrocław is split into 9 zones, each presenting water from a different viewpoint. The most spectacular section shows Earth as the planet of water. A projection on a 65-metre screen tells the story of how water came into existence in the universe, and the central point of the room is taken up by a two-metre spinning globe. Exploring other displays – *The Ocean of Life* and *The Depths* – you will see how life in the water evolved and learn about the strangest, sometimes rather terrifying creatures living there. One fun element is a copy of the Trieste bathyscaphe which reached the Mariana Trench, the deepest place on Earth, in 1960. *Man and Water*, *The History of Water Engineering* and *The City and Water* remind us that we cannot function without water, both as individuals (60% of our body is water!) and as inhabitants of our planet. During your tour you can take a break in the relaxation zone and play in the children zone. It's an interesting fact that this innovative multimedia exhibition is housed in an old 19th-century pure water tank.

Water is everywhere. At Hydropolis you will see that theory presented the right way can be really fascinating.

www.hydropolis.pl



Wrocław Zoo

This is not just a space with animal enclosures, but also a fun-filled area for walking and recreation as well as education – an increasingly important element of such places. The Wrocław Zoo is one of Poland's biggest and most popular family-focused attractions, today often associated with its innovative Africarium.

The Wrocław Zoo is home to 14,000 animals representing more than 1,000 species, including the "Nemo fish" that children love so much, monkeys, seals, elephants and giraffes. Planning your visit, it's worth noting feeding times or when talks about different species are scheduled, as these are filled with fascinating facts. The youngest children are delighted with the farm animals they can feed in the mini-zoo. Older kids will be interested to visit the *Climate, Humans, Animals* pavilion, which has a lot of information about global warming and the problems humans are causing our planet. All this is offered in the attractive form of educational games and multimedia presentations. Amidst the zoo's paths, careful observers will find a dwarf, one of hundreds scattered all over Wrocław.



The real magnet that draws tourists to the zoo is the Africarium: a pavilion with African aquatic animals opened in October 2014. In 19 tanks you can observe animals from the Red Sea coral reef, the Nile hippopotamus, fish from lakes Malawi and Tanganyika, and sharks and manta rays from the Mozambique Channel. You see the latter from an 18-metre glass tunnel running straight through their tank. Be warned! If you start your tour from the Africarium, your kids will be so taken with diving penguins from Namibia and African fur seals that they might refuse to budge. Even the prospect of seeing elephants, gorillas or exotic butterflies could fail to change their minds.

A trip to the Wrocław Zoo should last a week: there are dozens of enclosures to see as well as the Africarium, educational pavilions, a mini-zoo, and for seekers of curiosities... one of Wrocław's famous dwarf figurines.

www.zoo.wroclaw.pl



Gold Mine and Medieval Mining Settlement in Złoty Stok

Where can you ride a replica of a tank designed by the great Leonardo da Vinci, take an underground boat ride, pan for gold, tour a mine and take a picture with a distinctive orange wagon, all in a single afternoon? These are all attractions you will find in Złoty Stok in Lower Silesia.

Miners first appeared in the gold mine (where poisonous arsenic was also mined) back in the 13th century, and worked there until 1962. Tourists first appeared in 1996, and have been coming to discover the secrets of the Underground Tourist Route with guides ever since. First they visit the museum section in the Gertrude Adit. The exhibition presents the history of gold mining, and further along is the treasury with bars symbolizing the 16 tonnes of gold mined here. There is also... the Museum of Warnings, Notes and Appeals with exhibits straight from communist Poland, which you reach via an 8-metre slide. There is also an optional 200-metre underground boat trip in the flooded part of the adit. And these are just some examples. To get to the mine itself, you

www.parktechniki.pl

www.kopalniazlota.pl/en/



have to walk to Złoty Jar, where the Black Adit is. And it's worth it! You get to see an underground waterfall and corridors that lead to the nearby Czech Republic. From a level lying below the waterfall, the Orange Underground Tram sets off on its 300-metre journey to the Gold Mine Central platform, taking visitors back above ground. More attractions of the Złoty Stok complex await there, including the Medieval Technology Park with its reconstruction of a historical mining settlement. Everyone can feel what it was like during the gold rush.



Jurassic Park in Krasiejów

There comes a time in every parent's life when knowing all about dinosaurs is the most important thing ever. What do you do with those budding future palaeontologists? Take them to a dinosaur park. Your best bet is Krasiejów, where real dinosaur bones were once found.

The stimulus for setting up the Krasiejów Science and Entertainment Park came from the discovery of bones from 220 million years ago. The dinosaur remains here were much better preserved than elsewhere. Excavations are being conducted within the JuraPark to this day, as you can see when you visit (palaeontology pavilion). But before you get there, a train awaits to take you through a time tunnel into the world of dinosaurs. Besides a 1.5-kilometre educational path lined with 200 life-size dinosaurs (some 70 species!), tourists can enjoy a 3D prehistoric oceanarium, a 5D cinema, a playground and, in the summer season, a Jurassic beach with a lifeguarded swimming area..

Besides the dinosaur park, older children will enjoy the multimedia museum next door: the Science and Human Evolution Park. Crossing its threshold, they turn into temponauts – time travellers. When they put on a special helmet, they and their virtual guide will go back in time some... 66 million years, to the time when the dinosaurs died. They will ride a space shuttle and a time machine, see an exhibition on evolution and even some of their ancestors. Leaving the park, they will know things no biology lesson will ever teach them.



Sooner or later, kids in every family go crazy for dinosaurs. That's when Krasiejów is your best choice – and not just because it's a great amusement park. Dinosaurs actually lived there!

www.juraparkkrasiejow.pl



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Twinpigs American Theme Park in Żory

The Wild West in the heart of Upper Silesia? Of course! Travelling into the Beskidy Mountains along the popular national road 81, it's well worth stopping in Żory. To blow off some steam in the Twinpigs American Theme Park and get to feel the Wild West vibe, you'll need at least several hours.

Tourists hungry for excitement can take advantage of 40 different attractions in this family theme park. Strolling along the town's main street, you can encounter gunslingers or escaped prisoners, or even get caught in a shootout. There are fascinating cowboy, stunt and magic shows to watch. The boldest can try visiting a haunted mine, the 5D cinema or mysterious underground corridors. For the youngest kids there is a playground, giant soap bubbles, a mini-zoo, panning for gold. With their parents, they can get on a huge millwheel from which you can see the whole town.

The Wild West mood can continue into your meal (the Texas and Mexicana restaurants) and even into an overnight stay (for those who value comfort there's the three-star Texas Hotel, for those who want more excitement – a hostel with... prison beds that make the Wild West experience even more intense).

www.twinpigs.zory.pl



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Queen Louise Adit Complex

Riding a bright yellow mine wagon charmingly called Karlik. Getting dirty with real coal. Being startled by loud machinery and barely fitting into an excavation site the same size as some miners sometimes still have to work in today. Where? Only in Zabrze.

These are the attractions children can expect underground at the Queen Louise Adit. Almost in the very centre of Zabrze, a city that once made a living from mining and today draws upon its mining heritage, lies one of the Industrial Monuments Route's most important sites. The family trail runs just a few metres underground but is more exciting than many funfairs. Wearing mandatory safety helmets, tourists can find out for themselves what it's like to be a miner. They listen to the roar of machinery, squeeze along narrow galleries, answer quizzes on monitors along the way, and travel in time thanks to multimedia presentations. After experiencing the underground tunnels and learning quite a lot about historical and present-day mining, it's time to tour the complex above ground – the 12C Entertainment and Educational Park with a space for experiments and... a miniature mine. Although the material that kids extract from the play area is not coal but stones, the young miners don't seem to mind..

The newest attraction, opened in September 2018, is a unique, 1,100-metre-long boat trip in the excavation; this route is called Underground Trip Through Time. After descending into the adit you watch a film in which a miner tells the story of his great-great-grandfather, one of the adit's constructors. He did not live to see it completed – it took over 60 years to connect Zabrze with Królewska Huta. When the adit was cleared, coal was transported to metallurgical furnaces in Tarnowskie Góry and Gliwice, and onwards, along the River Oder, to Opole, Wrocław and even Berlin.

www.sztolniaiuiza.pl



When the railway reached Zabrze, the adit was no longer needed but its construction continued. Why? We don't know. However, it enables us to float right under the heart of Zabrze and think about how much work and determination it took to bring the "black gold" to the surface. Sometimes you wonder if what they managed in the 19th century would have been possible today.



INDUSTRIADA: Festival of Śląskie Province's Industrial Monuments Route

A beach 170 m underground? A zip line ride from a mine shaft tower? Fun to be had simultaneously in over 40 places and 25 towns? Such things are only possible during Industriada, one of Europe's biggest festivals of industrial culture heritage.

Industriada is the annual grand festival of Śląskie province's Industrial Monuments Route. During one weekend in June, events, concerts, performances, giant outdoor shows etc. take place at several dozen locations across Śląskie province, from Częstochowa to Żywiec. On this occasion, touring the IMR sites takes longer than usual and is different. You can peek into places not accessible during standard sightseeing, and even visit sites usually closed to tourists. The focus during the festival is on the history of magnate families but also stories about "ordinary" workers and their lives. The common denominator and pretext for the festival fun is the region's industrial past.



Industriada is held at real mines – like the UNESCO-listed Silver Mine in Tarnowskie Góry or the Guido Mine in Zabrze, at still populated mining housing estates in Katowice or Czerwionka, at operational breweries (Cieszyn, Tychy and Żywiec), at Silesia's "Eiffel Tower", i.e. the Gliwice Radio Tower. Among the more than 30 sites of the Industrial Monuments Route, family-friendly programmes are available, for example, at the Stary Młyn Museum of Crafts in Żarki (Kraków-Częstochowa Upland), the Queen Louise Adit and 12C Park in Zabrze, the Museum of Bread in Radzionków and the Narrow-Gauge Railway Station in Rudy (Upper Silesia). Close to 100,000 people took part in the latest Industriada – that's the best recommendation.

www.zabytkitechniki.pl



Ethnographic Park in Tokarnia

What did a 19th-century rural cottage look like? How many rooms did a large family, a parish priest or a teacher have? What games did children play? Open-air museums are the perfect places to discover the charms (and problems) of rural life long ago. Tokarnia additionally offers quests with riddles and tasks to make things even more exciting! Not only kids love this kind of attraction.

The Museum of the Kielce Region Countryside – Ethnographic Park in Tokarnia is an enormous open-air museum taking tourists back to the 19th century. They can explore examples of rural, manor-farm and small-town architecture.

The buildings come from different subregions: the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland, the Sandomierz Upland and the Nida Basin.

You can take any path in the museum, and you can also uncover the secrets of the cottages and their residents by following clues in the quests. There are 5 themed routes you can download to your phone (Story of Milling and Bread, Folk Beliefs of the Świętokrzyskie Region, Day in the Life of a Twine-Maker's Son, and Traditional Rural Trades of the Kielce Region – two parts). A tour filled with tasks, riddles and puzzles gives kids great satisfaction, and parents can learn quite a lot as well.

It is worth planning your visit to this open-air museum on days with special events, when many of the buildings come to life thanks to entertainers. You can also spend the night: guest rooms are available in an eight-family house from Ruda Pilczycka built in 1914. Imagine the ambience!

www.mwk.com.pl/pl/sg/nasze_obiekty/park_etnograficzny_w_tokarni/



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Pacanów: European Capital of Fairy Tales, Children's Culture Festival

Are you familiar with Koziołek Matołek, the silly goat? Maybe not, but every Polish child is! Generations have followed his exploits, so a visit to the Centre of Fairy Tales in Pacanów is a great adventure for kids and parents alike. And if you're there during the Children's Culture Festival, it's even more exciting.

Pacanów is called the European Capital of Fairy Tales for a reason. The innovative museum there leads tourists into the magical and colourful world of their childhood story books. On a fairy-tale platform you board a special train that takes you – with various adventures on the way – to the exhibition. Once you've explored the history of animated cartoons, you can watch them on screen, including older ones your parents will know from their childhood and newer ones that even young children will recognize. To top off the experience, you can have fun in a garden with secret nooks and story characters, or enjoy a performance at the Little Theatre which you enter... through a keyhole.

If you're in Pacanów around 1 June, you'll have even more fun. For Children's Day, the Children's Culture Festival has been held there since 2003. It's one of the biggest events for children and teenagers in Poland. The whole of Pacanów fills up with story characters from the farthest corners of the globe. Dance groups, theatres and actors come to visit Koziołek Matołek. They form a colourful parade and perform on stages set up in different locations. Pacanów is truly a fairy-tale town then. As a festival participant you not only get to spend the most fairy-tale weekend of your life, you might also find out why they shoe goats in Pacanów.

www.centrumbajki.pl



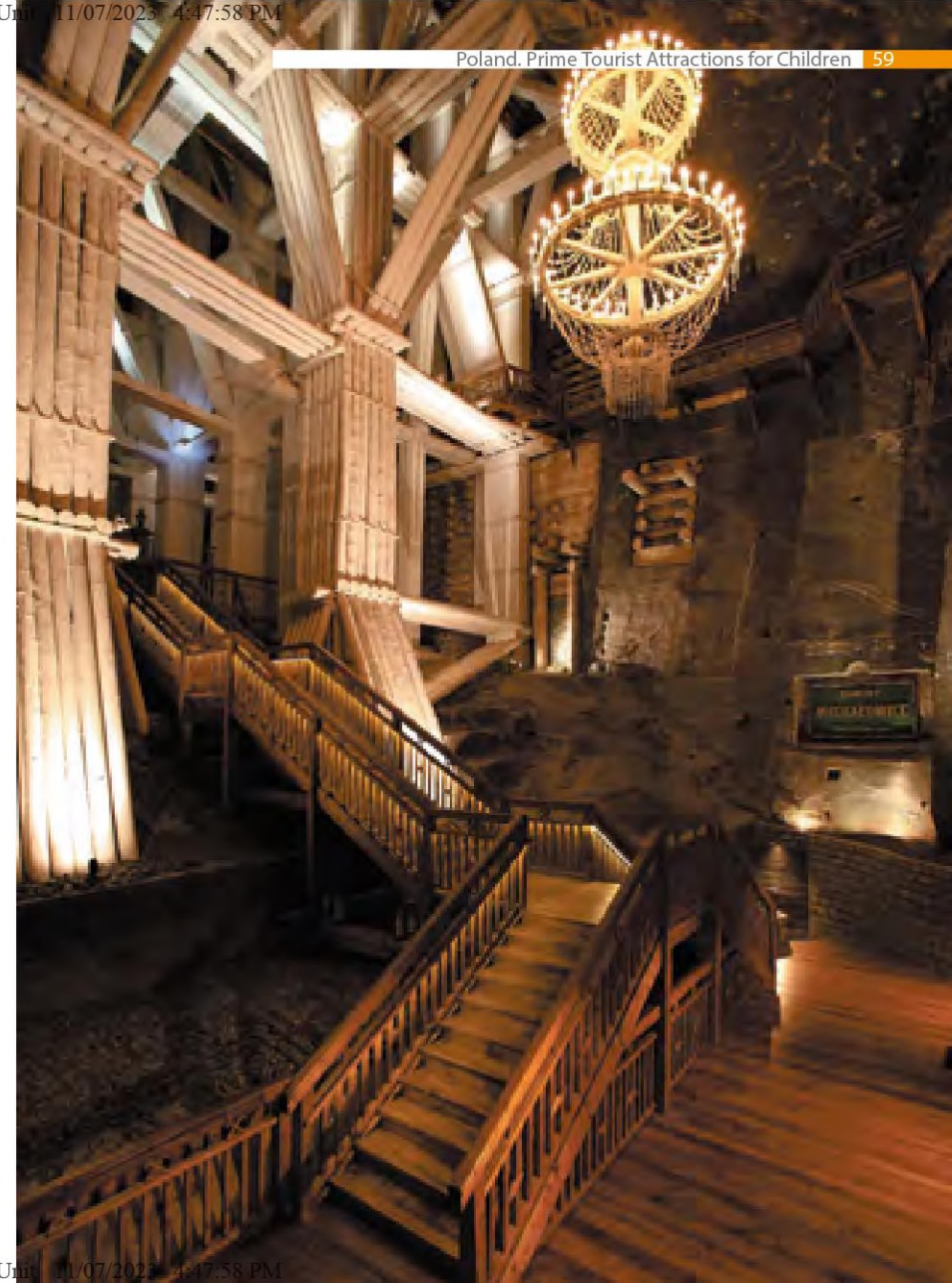
Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines

Hearing how Hungarian miners were brought to Polish salt mines. Seeing the monumental Saint Kinga's Chapel. Going down an underground slide and riding a train or boat underground. Finally, inhaling "salty" air as you sleep underground. All this is only possible at the Royal Salt Mines.

The history of salt mining in Bochnia and Wieliczka dates back to the 13th century, which makes these two sites the oldest of their kind in the world. In addition, salt is being mined all the time in Bochnia, right next to the part of the mine open to tourists! These are not the only reasons both mines are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The most famous underground chamber in Wieliczka is Saint Kinga's Chapel. You can see it during a family tour of the mine. Along a special route, children don't discover the secrets of Wieliczka but visit an underground country called Saltland. There are extra animations in the Pistek chamber, they meet the Treasurer, read the diary of the salt dwarf... Another interesting option for all visitors is the underground exhibition of the Kraków Salt Works Museum and the Salt Works Castle with an archaeological exhibition and one presenting... salt cellars and salt shakers. There is also a graduation tower near the entrance to Wieliczka's underground routes. In Bochnia, families will enjoy the underground multimedia exhibition the most. You don't tour the corridors but travel in time to the 13th-century reality of lands ruled by Boleslaus the Chaste and his wife, Princess Kinga. Besides guides, the history of the salt mine is recounted by the ghost of a Cistercian monk from Bochnia. Many attractions await kids in the biggest accessible chamber, Ważyn. It includes a mini-playground, a sports field and a 147-metre slide! There's also a bedroom section. Yes, you can spend the night in the salt mine in both Bochnia and Wieliczka!

www.kopalnia.pl
www.kopalnia-bochnia.pl

The Bochnia Salt Mine tourist route with its underground multimedia exhibition and the overnight stays at the Bochnia Salt Mine have been awarded Polish Tourism Organization Certificates.



Bania Thermal and Ski Resort

Is a trip that EVERYONE in the family will enjoy possible? Many have tried to create the perfect place, few have succeeded. In Białka Tatrzańska, youngsters and their parents have a wonderful time. Some revel in skiing, others go wild on the water slides. Then they switch places, because adults also want to have fun like kids sometimes.

The Terma Bania complex is not just a swimming pool or water park. The water comes from a depth of 2,500 m. Its initial temperature is 72 degrees Celsius, dropping to 34-38 degrees by the time it reaches the surface. The water contains sulphides, silica, potassium, calcium, magnesium and iron, so bathing in it is not only enjoyable but also very healthy. The crowds in Białka don't just come here for the thermal water but mainly for all the other great attractions.

The complex is divided into zones: relaxation, fun, summer, and saunarium. Kids love the water slides totalling over 300 m (a family slide and a dinghy slide, the Anaconda and Turbo slides). Very young kids can enjoy a paddling pool and a water playground with equipment adjusted to their age. After fooling around in the water to your heart's content In summer, you can relax in a deckchair in the sunbathing zone, and throughout the year – in the relaxation zone with hydromassage equipment.

Terma Bania is designed to deliver fun for the whole family, all year round. It's not certain what is more exciting: bathing in thermal water after a whole day of schussing down the slopes or after hours of hiking along mountain trails. All this comes with breathtaking views of the Tatra Mountains.



www.termabania.pl



Bieszczady Bicycle Trolleys

Cycling, only on rails? Along a track meant for trains, but using only leg muscle power? Whose idea was it anyway? And where can you go on this contraption? A ride on a Bieszczady Bicycle Trolley means gorgeous landscapes and a guide as your guide to describe the passing sights. Something for the body and for the mind.

Podkarpackie province is full of original attractions, and the Bieszczady Bicycle Trolley is definitely one of them. Although the beginnings of line 108 date back to 1872, it was not used for tourism purposes until 2015. That was when, after unprofitable passenger railway transport was closed down, trolleys propelled by muscle power started reigning supreme along the section from Zagórze to Krościenko. The base and main stop on this 47-kilometre section of the tracks is the station in Uherce Mineralne, roughly halfway along the route. The stylized platform has been converted into a gallery, so there is some fun to be had even before you set off for Ustrzyki Dolne or Zagórze. There are 4 routes to choose from (8.5 km, 12 km, 14 km and 18 km).

Tourists ride the trolleys through the Beavers in Uherce nature reserve and along the River Olszanica, drive through the old Kostrzyń railway tunnel, reach a small delta between the San and Oślawa rivers, and get to see the remains of the Molotov Line – Soviet fortifications from World War II. The trolleys offer a completely different view of the Bieszczady landscape than is visible from mountain pastures or the Solina riverbank.

www.drezynyrowerowe.pl

