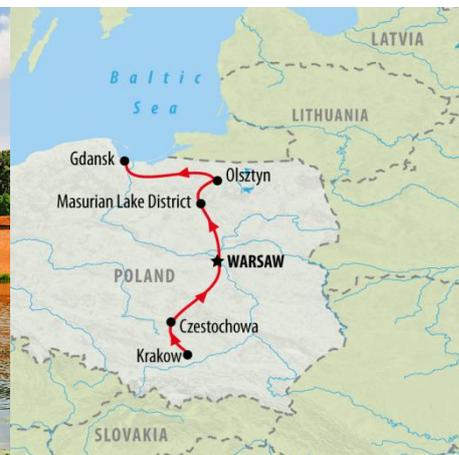


Highlights of Poland

8 Days | Krakow to Gdansk



Travel from south to north Poland on this 8 day tour. From the charming city of Krakow to the bustling capital of Warsaw, travel through the picturesque lake region before reaching the Baltic sea port of Gdansk. Discover the highlights of a country steeped in history.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Krakow - Explore the former royal capital. Visit St Mary's Church, the Jagiellonian University and Wawel Castle & Cathedral
- Czestochowa - Pay a visit to the Jasna Gora Monastery, home of the Black Madonna painting
- Warsaw - Stroll through the reconstructed Old Town, visit the Royal Castle, St John's Cathedral and the Old Town Market Square
- Masurian Lake District - Discover the picture postcard villages of Mragowo and Gizycko
- Gdansk - Visit the highlights of the old town, enter the Artus court and soak up the history of this Baltic sea port

What's Included

- 7 nights in 4 star hotels

- Entrances to Wawel Castle, Jasna Gora Monastery, St John's Cathedral in Warsaw, Malbork Castle and Artus Court in Gdansk
- 7 breakfasts
- Escorted by an English speaking tour leader
- One arrival transfer on Day 1 and One departure transfer on Day 8 included per booking
- Note: This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers from different operators, not solely On The Go. The group can vary in size from 15 - 40 persons. Guiding may be in other languages in addition to English
- All relevant transportation in private modern vehicles

What's Not Included

- International flights to/from our tour start/end points and visas
- Items of a personal nature and additional meals

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Krakow

Welcome to Poland and the beautiful city of Krakow. Upon arrival at Krakow airport you'll be met and transferred to your hotel in the heart of the city. The rest of the day is at

leisure. A welcome meeting will be held this evening, in the lobby. **Overnight - Krakow**

Day 2 : Krakow



For half a millennium Krakow was the royal capital of Poland and for centuries the city walls have guarded its traditions and secrets. The morning sightseeing tour takes us to the Old Town with the St. Mary's Church, the Jagiellonian University, the Cloth Halls and Wawel with the Wawel Castle and the Wawel Cathedral.

The afternoon offers an optional excursion to the famous Wieliczka Salt Mine, an amazing labyrinth of tunnels going down as far as 327 meters. The evening offers an optional Polish dinner at Restaurant Hawelka.

Optional Activities: Wieliczka Salt Mine - €60.00 per person | Polish Dinner - €40.00 per person. **Overnight - Krakow (B)**

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Day 3 : Warsaw

Krakow - Czestochowa - Warsaw. We leave for Czestochowa, the spiritual heart of Poland, where we visit the Jasna Gora Monastery with the Black Madonna. Through the flat low-lying plain of Central Poland we reach Warsaw in the early afternoon. **Overnight - Warsaw (B)**

Day 4 : Warsaw



Warsaw is essentially a post-war city with a meticulously reconstructed Old Town. The morning sightseeing tour includes the Royal Route and the Old Town with the Royal Castle, St John's Cathedral, the Old Town Market Square and the Barbican.

In the afternoon is offered an optional excursion to the Royal Lazienki Park with the Palace on the Water. The evening offers an optional Polish dinner at Restaurant Dawne Smaki.

Optional Activities: Royal Lazienki Park Excursion - €40.00 per person | Polish Dinner - €40.00 per person. **Overnight - Warsaw (B)**

Day 5 : Masurian Lake District



Warsaw - Gizycko - Olsztyn. We continue through the well forested North Poland into the Masurian Lakeland, a myriad of post-glacial lakes representing some of the most beautiful nature in the whole of Poland. The afternoon excursion of the Masurian Lakeland

takes us to the town of Gizycko, surrounded to all sides by the lakes, further to the beautiful Baroque church in Swieta Lipka and to picture-postcard town Mragowo. Finally we reach Olsztyn **Overnight - Olsztyn (B)**

Day 6 : Malbork Castle

Olsztyn - Elblag - Gdansk. Leaving the Masurian Lakeland behind us we travel further North. Our first stop is at Elblag, a town with a bitter-sweet past and a seemingly bright future. After a short visit of the Old Town with the red bricked St. Nicolas Cathedral we continue to pay a visit to Malbork Castle – a massive fortress founded by the Teutonic knights in the 13th century and beautifully sat on the banks of the sluggish Nogat River. From Malbork we reach Gdansk where the evening is at leisure. **Overnight - Gdansk (B)**

Day 7 : Gdansk City Tour



Like a mini-state all to itself, Gdansk has a unique feel, cultured, wealthy and cosmopolitan, that sets it apart from all other cities in Poland. During morning old town walking tour we see Dlugi Targ, or Long Market, St. Mary's Church, St. Bridget's Church, Artus Court and Gdansk Town Hall. In the afternoon is offered an optional tour of the so-called Tri-City – a conurbation uniting Gdansk with the lively coastal towns of Sopot and Gdynia. The tour along the 35 km gulf of Gdansk includes a visit to the famous pier in Sopot and a lovely organ concert at the Oliwa Church. In the evening is offered an optional farewell dinner at the prestigious Restaurant Pod Lososiem.

Optional Activities: Tri-City Excursion - €45.00 per person | Pod Lososiem Dinner - €50.00 per person. **Overnight - Gdansk (B)**

Day 8 : Gdansk

Today marks the end of your fantastic trip through Poland. A departure transfer will be provided to take you to Gdansk airport. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Novotel Krakow Centrum

Set in the heart of Krakow, Novotel Krakow Centrum is within walking distance of the city's main Market Square and the Wawel Royal Castle. Its guestrooms are spacious and feature contemporary décor, with many offering an additional seating area and views of the meandering River Vistula. The Novo Square Lounge Bar serves a variety of Polish and international food, with 24-hour room service available if you'd prefer to dine in the comfort of your room. The hotel also boasts an indoor pool, fitness centre and sauna, offering ample opportunities for you to unwind.



Hotel Mecure Warsaw Centrum

Just a short walk from the Palace of Culture and Science as well as the Zlote Tarasy entertainment complex, the Mecure Warsaw Centrum boasts a fantastic location. With bright & spacious rooms, en-suite bathrooms and air conditioning throughout the hotel provides for a comfortable experience. The fine dining Winestone restaurant serves up a choice of local and international dishes as well as an impressive selection of wines from around the world.

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Hotel Przystan

Set on the shores of beautiful Lake Ukiel, Hotel Przystan is distinguished by its modern architecture and stunning setting. Most guestrooms offer views of the lake, alongside amenities such as air conditioning and a satellite TV. Boasting one of the best restaurants in Poland, guests can enjoy fresh fish and high quality wines. There's also a spa and wellness centre where you can indulge in a treatment or two, as well as a magnificent sky terrace on the hotel's roof.



Hotel Mercure Gdansk

Located close to the Old Town Square and Gdansk's main monuments, Hotel Mercure Gdansk is the highest building in the city. Boasting picturesque views over the famous Gdansk Shipyard, it offers comfortable guestrooms with individually controlled air-conditioning and WiFi access. The Winestone restaurant serves European cuisine and a choice of wines for you to enjoy, while the lobby bar is the hub of the hotel. A well-equipped fitness centre completes the list of amenities.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Travel Style

This is a coach Tour, you will visit a number of exciting destinations from the comfort of a

private and well maintained coach. The group size will vary from tour to tour and guiding may be in another language in addition to English.

Dinner Supplement

On a selection of our tours of the Baltics you may wish to purchase a dinner supplement. This supplements includes a 3 course dinner at your hotel for each night of the tour. Please ask your reservation consultant for more information and pricing.

Please note that should you wish to partake in any other optional dinner that is offered during your tour this will not be included in this dinner supplement and will therefore need to be paid for separately.

Keeping in Touch

Your tour leader will be able to point out internet cafes in all major cities and towns and Wi-Fi may be available in some hotels.

If you intend to take your mobile phone you should find out in advance from your network provider if your phone is set up for international roaming and if there is coverage in your destination. You may also find it considerably more expensive to send texts and receive calls if you are on a non European or British Network. A much cheaper option would be to purchase a telephone card and use local pay phones.

Pre-Departure Meeting

When you arrive on day one of your trip, you should find some local information at the hotel lobby. Your tour leader will be staying in the hotel and should have put up a welcome note to let you know what room they are in. A pre-departure meeting is usually held in the afternoon or early evening of day one.

Missing the tour departure

If you miss the start of your tour, please ask at the reception of the hotel for a message from your tour leader which will give you instructions on how to catch up with the group. Any associated costs will be at your own expense (although, depending on the reason, you may be able to claim these from your travel insurance so ensure you keep all receipts).

If you know in advance that you are unlikely to arrive on time, please contact us immediately so we can inform the tour leader. On The Go Tours cannot be held responsible should your airline/boat/coach be delayed and we are unable to refund any unused portion of your tour.

Time Keeping

Punctuality is very important and throughout the tour your tour leader will give you the time to meet in reception. Tour leaders will often post notes at reception with meeting times, so remember to always look out for these.

Although rare, delays can occur and we therefore advise you not to arrange your onward travel too close to the end of the tour. We take no responsibility for any missed flights or additional expenses. If the group arrives late into the departure city at the end of the tour.

Money

For personal spending money you should bring Euros alongside the local currency (where applicable). Generally the most convenient way of carrying your spending money is by having at least a couple of credit or debit cards. The majority of cards (Visa, Diners Club, MasterCard, American Express and Maestro, Plus and Cirrus for debit cards) are accepted in most large cities and tourist areas. ATMs (cash machines) are widespread. It is always best to carry a mix of cards and cash with you, including notes in small denominations.

Working out your budget

Our Europe Pre-Departure Information includes a general list of all the things you should take into consideration when budgeting and an estimate of what you should allow per day for spending money. Generally speaking most entrance fees will be covered by the recommended spending money. There are, however, other sites and museums that are not part of the tour programme which you may wish to visit in your free time. If you have an International Student Card you will often be entitled to reduced entrance fees.

Your spending money should cover some meals, optional excursions, souvenirs, drinks,

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laundry, border and airport taxes and any visas obtained locally. We provide guideline prices for optional excursions in the itinerary to help you budget, but ultimately the amount you will need to budget for your trip very much depends on your individual requirements. We recommend bringing extra money to cover emergencies or unexpected situations.

Tipping

Tipping is a part of the life in Europe, but you should not feel obliged or pressured to tip if you have not received good service. A gratuity of 10% of the total bill is recommended in restaurants. Gratuities are usually expected for local guides on included and optional excursions. Tips are also appreciated by tour leaders at the end of your tour and we recommend an average of \$2-\$4 per person per day for the duration of your tour. This is only if you feel that their service was up to standard and tipping is always completely at your own discretion.

Electricity Supply

If bringing electrical equipment, make sure that you bring a two-pin/pronged, round-pin adapter/plug adapter.

Health, Fitness & Safety

Pack a Medical Kit

A medical kit is handy for minor wounds and ailments. In areas with limited or dubious medical facilities, an emergency medical kit containing sterile syringes is also advisable. By law our staff are not allowed to administer first aid or give drugs to travellers, so please be prepared with your own supplies.

If you are taking medication, please ensure you bring an adequate supply and a letter from your doctor to avoid potential issues at border crossings.

Fitness & Suitability

This is a coach based tour so it is essential that you be able to carry your bags between the bus and hotels. Disruptions happen and while your tour leader will make every effort to ensure your trip runs smoothly, patience, a sense of humour and willingness to get involved and help your tour leader are

essential ingredients for a successful and happy group.

If you have any pre-existing medical conditions please let us know at the time you book or as early before departure as possible. Depending on the severity of the condition, you may be asked to produce a medical certificate from your doctor approving your participation in this tour. While this would only happen in very exceptional circumstances, if we consider you incapable completing this tour or you have concealed an existing medical condition which is affecting your ability to participate in the tour of On The Go Tours reserve the right to turn you away without reimbursement.

Safety & Security

Europe is generally very safe, even more so in a group. Reasonable precaution is advised; do not bring valuable jewellery or watches (even fakes can catch the eye of a thief), do not bring your camera equipment in a flashy camera bag, be prudent and keep your valuables in a safe secure place whenever possible, wear a money belt and distribute your valuables throughout your luggage, heed your tour leader's advice and always keep an eye and a hand on your camera and bags in public places. On The Go Tours cannot accept responsibility for any valuables left in safe deposits in hotels or on public transport.

Age Restrictions

We have a minimum age on all our Baltic tours of 5 years old. Children aged between 5 and 18 must each be accompanied by a legal guardian or parent. While we do not have an upper age limit, the nature of our group tours can be very fast paced and travellers might be required to walk long distances, often in the heat.

Documents

Passport

Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after you have finished your tour with sufficient blank pages for visas and immigration stamps. Photocopy your passport, leaving one copy at home and taking one with you on tour. If you lose your passport while on tour, you will be responsible for any expenses incurred such as extra

accommodation and transport while replacing your passport and will not be entitled to a refund of any unused portion of your tour.

Tour Documents

Before you depart you will be issued with a voucher for your tour any extra services such as airport transfers and pre/post tour accommodation. Please print these out and bring them with you. These Trip Notes are updated regularly, so we recommend checking our website for the latest version just prior to the start of your tour.

Final Balance

The balance for your tour is due no later than 60 days prior to the start of your tour and no tour vouchers will be issued until this is received. In addition please send the following details at least 60 days before you depart:

- Passport number, date of issue, date of expiry, nationality and place of issue
- Your full name and date of birth
- Flight arrival details in your starting city
- Special requirements, e.g. special dietary requirements or allergies

Please let us know if you are travelling with another person on the tour but have made separate bookings and we will endeavour to make suitable rooming arrangements.

Visas

All countries have visa requirements that are subject to change at short notice. Please check with your local embassy or consulate for the very latest visa requirement information based on your nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have all necessary visas for your tour. If you would like help applying for visas, we have recommended visa agencies.

Important things to check when applying for visas:

- Does the validity of the visa cover the duration of your time spent in the country?
- Do you require a single or multiple entry visa(s) for your tour?
- Are you required to show additional documentation when you arrive in a country?

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(Examples include proof of onward travel and travel itinerary)

Some visas are only valid for entry within three months of the date of issue which means on some of our longer tours the visa would expire before you are scheduled to enter the country. In these cases you must obtain the relevant visa during your tour. If it is necessary for you to obtain any visas en-route, please contact On The Go Tours or your travel consultant and inform your tour leader at the start of the tour. If you do not have the appropriate visas, On The Go Tours will not reimburse any expenses incurred in acquiring visas or any unused portion of the tour.

It is best to apply for visas in your home country if possible. If applying for visas by post, please allow plenty of time before departure and send your application by registered mail. Postal applications tend to be given a lower priority than in person applications and can take longer to process.

Special Note: If you have dual nationality it is advised not to obtain different visas in different passports. Although this may sometimes be cheaper, you may encounter problems at border crossings if your exit stamps from one country are not the same as your visa for the next.

Travel Insurance Policy

Travel insurance is compulsory for all tours. You must be adequately insured for medical, hospital, baggage and personal expenses, any necessary extra travel (rejoining tour or repatriation) as well as curtailment and cancellation.

We strongly recommend that all clients carry a copy of their full policy document with them at all times, together with any certificate showing the policy number and emergency contact details. Your tour leader will also ask for a photocopy of your insurance document, so please take this to the pre-departure meeting at the start of your tour. You will not be able to commence your tour unless you can provide proof of insurance to your tour leader.

Document Checklist

- Passport (with photocopies of information pages and visas)

- Trip Notes
- Cash & credit/debit cards (best to take a mixture and more than one card in case one does not work)
- Travel Insurance Certificate and photocopy for tour leader
- Travel consultant's phone number and email address
- Proof of onward travel, ie airline ticket

Optional Excursions

Optional excursions are not operated by On The Go Tours and while every effort is made prices may not be up-to-date and are intended as a general guide to help you budget for your trip.

Excursions are run by a local operator or third party with both On The Go Tours and the Tour Leader acting as a booking agent only. Optional activities are not part of the tour and our booking conditions do not apply to them. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct travel insurance for the excursions you intend to take part in and On The Go Tours is not liable for any injuries incurred.

Extras

On many of our Group Tours, we spend one night in our arrival and departure cities. If you want to explore these cities more we can book pre and post tour accommodation and airport transfers for you. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour.

Illegal Drugs

The possession or use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our tours. When overseas you are subject to local laws and the penalties for breaking these laws can be harsh. In order to safeguard the interests of the group as a whole, our tour leaders have been instructed to insist that any person found with illegal drugs leave the tour immediately – without refund. The tour leader's decision on this matter is final. If you need to carry certain drugs with you for purposes of medication, please inform your tour leader and ensure that you carry a copy of your prescription or letter from your doctor.

Poland Country Guide

Poland: Fact File

Official Name: Republic of Poland

Capital: Warsaw

Population: 39 million

Total Area: 312,677 square kilometres

Official Language: Polish. German and English are spoken in some places.

Religions: 95% Roman Catholic; other religions include Polish Autocephalous Orthodox, Russian and Greek Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim.

Voltage: 220 volts / 50 Hz. European-style two-pin plugs are in use.

Dialling Code: +48

Time Difference: GMT/UTC +2. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com

Poland: Brief history

Poland was one of the largest states in Europe throughout much of its history.

By the 18th century, Poland was reduced to a territory which was argued over by Austria, Prussia and Russia. The country was eventually divided between the three leaving a small area around Warsaw to remain independent. Poland did not regain its independence until 1918 but by 1926 it was again divided by its powerful neighbours, Germany and the Soviet Union, followed by occupation during both world wars.

In 1948, the Polish Workers' Party merged with the Polish Socialist Party to form Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers' Party, PZPR). Opposition to the regime was led by elements of the industrial work force, Solidarnosc. During this period there were also movements elsewhere in Eastern Europe which were led by intellectuals, such as Charter 77 – and supported by the Catholic Church, a major political force in Poland that the communists had never been able to fully suppress. In 1981 Solidarnosc was banned and its senior figures detained, including its leader, shipyard electrician Lech Walesa.

In 1988, following collapse of the economy, the PZPR government resigned and opened negotiations with Solidarnosc. Elections were held in favour of Solidarnosc. Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the first non-communist

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prime minister. This signified a change in the tide and over the following years the whole of Eastern Europe shed its communist governments, directly resulting in the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Throughout the 1990s Poland was politically stable, securing entry into both NATO and the European Union. As the largest of the former Eastern European states, Poland's position is crucial. Poland joined NATO in July 1997 and the European Union in May 2004.

Poland: Geography and weather

Our tours mostly operate from late spring (April/May) to early Autumn (in Eastern Europe) when the weather is generally at its best. Temperatures will vary but will still be cool in April/May and again in October. The warmest months tend to be July/August. The further south you are the higher the average temperatures. You can expect snow from December to late March.

Poland: Visas

Make sure your passport is valid for at least three months after your tour begins.

Visa regulations change frequently so it is important you consult with the embassy prior to travelling to ensure you have the correct visas. In some cases you will be crossing the borders on overnight trains. Visas are not required by British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and US citizens for a stay of up to 90 days.

IMPORTANT: All visitors entering Poland must possess travel or medical insurance to cover possible medical expenses for at least €30,000 and Z100 per day for accommodation and sustenance.

Poland: Money

ALL prices stated in this dossier are given as a guide only and are subject to change.

Local currency

The monetary unit in Poland is the zloty, z#. Notes are in denominations of z# 200, 100, 50, 20 and 10. The new coins are in denominations of z# 5, 2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 groszys. For up to date

exchange rates with your own currency visit www.oanda.com or www.xe.com.

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

ATMs are widely available. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are accepted in larger establishments. Cash can be obtained from Visa credit cards at banks. Travellers cheques can be readily exchanged. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travellers are advised to take traveller's cheques in pounds sterling.

Working out your budget

Our Europe pre-departure information includes a general list of all the things you should take into consideration when budgeting and an estimate of what you should allow per day for spending money. Below are some specific notes relevant to our tours in Poland.

Entrance fees

Generally speaking most entrance fees will be covered by the recommended spending money. There are, however, other sites and museums that are not part of the tour programme which you may wish to visit in your free time. If you have an International Student Card you will often be entitled to reduced entrance fees.

Tipping

Restaurant bills usually include a tip. It is customary to give a little extra for good service.

You do not need to tip taxi drivers, etc but you should tip people who assist you with your luggage at hotels (don't over-tip, your tour leader will advise a suitable amount). Tipping guides at the end of excursions and treks etc is always appreciated and your tour leader will advise you on the amount for this.

Poland: Optional excursions

A full list of the main excursions available on each tour can be found on daily itinerary on these trip notes. All prices given are approximate and are subject to change due to local inflation or exchange rates.

Poland: Local transport

In Warsaw, the Municipal Transport Board (ZTM) is responsible for the bus, metro and tram services. ZTM tickets are valid for all services and can be purchased as a single ride or as a day pass. Some buses allow the purchase of tickets on board, but it is best to buy them before you use any transport.

In Krakow: The MPK is the transport board responsible for public buses and trams however there is no metro system. Public transport tickets are available in all towns at green Ruch kiosks, hotels and post offices.

Most public transport operates from 5.30am to 11pm; night buses, in the major cities, run from 11pm to 5am.

One of the most popular and reliable ways of getting around on your own in large cities is by taxi. Try to find out what the going rate for journeys is before you hop into a taxi to ensure you are not being overcharged. Your tour leader will be able to provide advice on this when you stop in major cities.

Poland: Security

Generally people find Eastern Europe to be safe and feel confident wandering alone during the day. However if you are unfamiliar with an area it is recommended that you exercise more caution at night and taxi taxis rather than walk, especially if you are a lone female traveller. In some cities bag snatching can occur so always keep a firm hand/eye on your personal items.

If there is a safe available in your hotel it is recommended you use it.

Poland: Local food and drink

Some breakfasts are included in your tour. Breakfasts can be basic so if you tend to get hungry it may be a good idea to buy some fruit or snacks to eat during the day. All other meals, extra snacks and drinks on the tour are at your own expense.

Ask your tour leader if they can recommend any restaurants in the area to suit your taste or budget or have fun exploring independently.

Food

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Poland has a distinctive cuisine, with typical ingredients being dill, marjoram, caraway seeds, wild mushrooms and sour cream, which is frequently added to soups, sauces and braised meats. Soups play an important part at mealtimes and are usually rich and very thick. Barszcz (beetroot soup), however, runs thin and clear and is often served in cups with small hot pasties stuffed with meat or cabbage. There are several salt- and fresh-water fish dishes using trout, carp and herring. Pastries, such as szarlotka (apple cake), packi (jelly doughnuts) and makowiec (poppy seed cake) can be bought at a cukiernia. Note that big cities offer a selection of other world cuisines.

Keep a look out for national specialities such as salted and rolled herring fillets with pickles and onions, Kabanos (long, thick sausages), Kasza (buckwheat). Bigos – sauerkraut with a variety of meats, Pierogi – dumplings stuffed with cottage cheese, minced meat, cabbage or wild mushrooms.

You can also expect dumpling and potatoes, potato pancakes are in abundance.

Drink

Of course being Poland's national drink you can expect to find vodka in a multitude of varieties and strengths. Beer is also popular and widely served.

All drinks such as bottled water or soft drinks are at your own expense at all times and are fairly inexpensive. Alcoholic drinks vary in price, with wine and beer generally being the cheapest options. The legal drinking age is 18.

Poland: National holidays

1 January - New Year's Day.

13 April - Easter Monday.

30 April - Queen's Day.

1 May - Labour Day.

5 May - Liberation Day.

21 May - Ascension.

11 June - Corpus Christi.

15 August - Assumption.

1 November - All Saints' Day.

11 November - Independence Day.

25-26 December - Christmas Day.

Highlights of Poland - 8 Days

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