

The best MARCO POLO Insider Tips

Our top 15 Insider Tips

INSIDER TIP Modest beauty

Although it is often overshadowed by its more famous sisters, the Baroque *Church of St Anne*, with its elaborate decoration, is one of the most magnificent 18th-century buildings in Poland → p. 32

INSIDER TIP Queue up early

You should arrive at least 15 minutes before the *Veit Stoss altar* is opened – if not, you will probably not be able to see the most valuable treasure in St Mary's Church for the sea of heads in front of you → p. 32

INSIDER TIP Up for some opera?

You should pay at least one visit to the *Opera Krakowska*. To avoid disappointment, make sure you book tickets early → p. 73

INSIDER TIP Royal setting

The *Wawel Evenings* are very special: enjoy the summer concerts and opera in the castle's arcaded courtyard → p. 73

INSIDER TIP A journey back in time

The impressive photographs in the *Galician Museum* take visitors back to the long-forgotten world of the Galician Jews → p. 42

INSIDER TIP Seek and find

The *flea market on Plac Nowy* is a real treasure trove, regardless of whether you are looking for a Prada bag and other designer articles at reasonable prices or Jewish candlebrabs made of silver → p. 43

INSIDER TIP Where extras are all part of the service

Hotel Royal at the foot of Wawel Hill offers beautiful and affordable accommodation just a stroll away from the castle and the cathedral → p. 81

INSIDER TIP Artist with a green thumb

The garden of the *Józef Mehoffer House* is a tranquil refuge in the big city → p. 46

INSIDER TIP Japan in Krakow

Tea time on the terrace of *Café Manggha in the Japanese Museum* gives a real Far Eastern feel to your view of Wawel Hill → p. 54

INSIDER TIP Mother's cooking

No matter whether they are filled with meat, potato, mushrooms or strawberries: countless varieties of *pierogi*, Poland's traditional stuffed dumplings, are waiting to be savoured at *Pierożki u Vincenta* (photo below) → p. 57

INSIDER TIP Wooden children's world

Ecological, handmade and produced in Krakow in every conceivable size: *Bajo* sells wonderful wooden toys for children → p. 63

INSIDER TIP The beauty of nature

The *striped flint at S&A* is rare and quite unique, as is the great variety of imaginative and eye-catching amber jewellery → p. 64

INSIDER TIP Time machine

The rooms overlooking Ulica Kanonicza at the *Hotel Copernicus* banish all thoughts of the 21st century. They're so authentic, you could just imagine Copernicus himself staying here (photo left) → p. 76

INSIDER TIP Otherworldly

Death and art – the *exhibition of Baroque funeral customs* in the *Erazm Ciolek Museum* is pleasantly spooky → p. 38

INSIDER TIP Tasty cult snack

Line up at *U Endziora*, a snack bar in the *Okraglak* on *Plac Nowy*, to try the delicious *zapiekanka*, a kind of Polish pizza with various toppings on crispy white bread → p. 43

INSIDER TIP One for the lot

The *National Museum* consists of a number of interesting branches. The *combined ticket* for 35 Pln at the *Cloth Hall* gets you into all of them → p. 47



BEST OF...

GREAT PLACES FOR FREE

Discover new places and save money

● Visit the oldest synagogue in Poland

Normally you have to pay to visit the 15th-century *Synagoga Stara* but no admission is charged if you go to the oldest Jewish temple and its museum on Mondays → p. 44

● A treat for your ears

Enjoy a concert of classical music in perfect surroundings free of charge: these impressive musical events are held in many *Krakow churches* and you will not have to pay a penny → p. 33

● History lesson in the Coronation Church

The *cathedral* on Wawel Hill is one of Poland's most significant sights – though large parts of the sumptuously decorated interior are open to visitors free of charge (photo) → p. 36

● Art under a canopy of leaves

It is hard to imagine a more beautiful site for a sculpture exhibition: stroll through the *Planty*, the strip of parkland surrounding the Old Town, and admire one of the largest collections of monuments from the 19th and 20th centuries → p. 33

● Feel free to visit the museum on Sunday or Monday

No matter whether it is the *Mehoffer House*, the *National Museum* or the *Archaeological Museum on the Wawel*: you can visit many permanent exhibitions on Sunday or Monday without having to pay → p. 33

● Party – without limits

For all those who want to dance the Krakow night away and also have sufficient stamina: most of the clubs do not charge an admission fee after around 1 o'clock in the morning → p. 72

● Gratis to the Museum of Modern Art

On Tuesday, you can experience the fascination of modern art for nothing – that is the day the *MOCAK* does not charge an admission fee. But, come early – the free tickets are in great demand → p. 47

● ● ● ● Dots in guidebook refer to 'Best of...' tips



ONLY IN KRAKOW

Unique experiences

● The dancing, fire-breathing dragon

The legend lives on: the dragon from the medieval saga can be seen everywhere in the city and is at the heart of the annual *Dragon Parade* in June, a celebration with many concerts and family picnics on the Vistula river → p. 96

● In the astronomer's study

Poland's oldest university had already been operating for 130 years when Nicolaus Copernicus started his studies at the *Collegium Maius*. A tour of the magnificent chambers is like a journey back through time → p. 30

● In the heart of town

The *Rynek Główny* is not only the largest Gothic square in Europe but also one of the most beautiful. Climb up the *Town Hall Tower* and be charmed by the unique expanse and architecture of the Market Square down below → p. 33, 35

● Hear international jazz musicians live

Krakow is a jazz city and the stars perform in the fabulous brick-wall setting of an old cellar in *Harris Piano Jazz Bar* – you can recharge your batteries with the good music and drinks served there! (photo) → p. 70

● Royal carpets that tell a tale

Monarchs know how to decorate in style: in the *Royal Castle Museum* on Wawel Hill, you can admire the precious tapestries that King Zygmunt August had produced in Brussels in the 16th century → p. 41

● The sunken world of Medieval Krakow

You can really delve deep into the history of the city in the *Rynek Podziemny (Rynek Underground)*. The museum is a mysteriously illuminated, detailed reconstruction of the world of Medieval Krakow awaiting visitors beneath the Cloth Hall → p. 34

● Synagogues and the sound of klezmer

You will get an intense taste of Jewish history and culture in Kazimierz: in the evening, swinging klezmer music, which combines a large number of individual styles, is served with Jewish food in the *Klezmer Hais* → p. 58



ONLY IN



DISCOVERY TOURS

1

KRAKOW AT A GLANCE



START: ① Rynek Główny (Market Square)

END: ⑮ Plac Nowy (New Square)

Distance:

→ 10 km/6.2 mi

1 day

Actual walking time
2.5 hours



COSTS: Admission fees, ⑨ carriage ride and ⑩ water tram: 170 Pln, food and drink: 200 Pln

IMPORTANT TIPS: Large crowds at the opening of the Veit Stoss Altarpiece (11.50am): queue up in good time!

This tour introduces you to the historic heart of Krakow and its most important sights and lets you immerse yourself in the everyday life in the city. Mostly on foot, but also by horse-drawn carriage and water tram, the tour takes you on to Kazimierz, where you explore the Jewish part of the city and discover some beautiful places to relax and shop.

Cities have many faces. If you want to get behind the scenes to explore their unique charm and head off the beaten track or find your way to green oases, handpicked restaurants or the best local activities, then these tailored Discovery Tours are just the right thing. Choose the best route for the day and follow in the footsteps of the MARCO POLO authors – well-prepared to navigate your way to all the many highlights that await you along the tour.

08:00am First off, start proceedings with breakfast on ① **Rynek Główny** → p. 33 at the **Kawiarnia Noworolski** → p. 54 café which harks back to Krakow's imperial and royal past. From here, stroll later on along Ulica Sienna and then turn right into the eastern part of the ② **Planty** → p. 33 with its many sculptures. In around 15 minutes you reach the Wawel.

09:00am In front of you now is ③ **Wawel Hill** → p. 40, which used to be the seat of the Polish kings. Pay a visit

