

FOR TRAVELLERS

Explore the beauty of Mazovian nature and architecture

Mazovia Weekend tourism

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MAZOVIA IN A NUTSHELL

This guide presents the most beautiful places in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. We present both the known and unknown sights, rich culture and nature. This is the place where one can admire the ruins of medieval castles, once inhabited by the dukes of Mazovia, churches from different periods, including those built in the Vistula Gothic style characteristic of this part of the country. The monuments of Płock are among the most valuable ones in Poland. Anyone who had a chance to experience the charm of Pułtusk will certainly come back here. Numerous exhibits, gathered in regional museums, tell the history of these lands. Folk traditions are cultivated in open-air museums.

Wonderful exhibits of the Art Nouveau era are gathered in the Museum of Płock. A doctor's office, which can be seen in the Museum of The Small Town In Biezuń, will certainly be remembered by everybody. Sochaczew is where a true paradise for lovers of narrow gauge railways is located. Wonderful nature is what also constitutes the wealth of Mazovia. The Kampinos National Park, located just outside the capital, is a rarity in Europe. The famous Mazovian plains featuring weeping willows and unregulated rivers are also a charming scenery.

THE MAZOWIECKIE VOIVODESHIP IN NUMBERS

Area – 35.6 thousand km²

Population - 5.2 million people

The capital of the region - Warsaw

Larger cities – Radom, Płock, Siedlce,

Ciechanów, Ostrołęka

Land poviats – 37

City poviats – 5

Gminas – 309

Forest areas – 779.3 thousand ha

Protected areas - 29.6% of the total area

National parks – 1

Natural landscape parks – 9

Larger rivers – Vistula, Bug, Narew, Pilica



IN THE LAND OF WORSHIP AND A GLORIOUS PAST

GÓRA KALWARIA AND CZERSK

Góra Kalwaria and Czersk are located about 40 miles south of Warsaw. One can get here by route no. 79, leading to Sandomierz. First, it is worth stopping at Góra Kalwaria. The urban layout of the city is very unique. It was established in the Baroque period. The basis of the spatial plan was the Latin cross. The longer arm of the cross is formed by Kalwaryjska and Rynek, while the shorter one by Dominikańska and Pijarska streets. At the ends of the arms were - similarly to the layout of Jerusalem - three monasteries, which symbolized the entrance gates to the Holy City. Located at the intersection of the axis is a chapel called the House of Pilate, today it is the church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The chapel was built in 1680 and rebuilt in 1791. Under the altar is a crypt with the remains of Bishop Stefan Wierzbowski, the founder of the city. On the other side of the square is a town hall, and nineteenth-century market halls and stalls are located at the bus stop.

Currently a parish church, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary church is located at ks. Sajna street. Historically, the church

belonged to the Bernardines. It was built in 1755-1759 in Baroque style, based on a design by Jakub Fontana. The interior is baroque and rococo. What draws particular attention is a beautiful rococo pulpit and the sarcophagus of St. Valerian (made of black marble). A chapel on the right side features a painting from the second half of the seventeenth century. Famous for its grace it is the image of Our Lady of the Mountains, called the Gracious Mother of Consolation. The founder of the church and the monastery, Franciszek Bieliński, is buried in the vaults. The courtyard was fenced off from the street by a cast iron fence with a gate, over which - on the pillars - are four stone baroque sculptures, depicting St. Francis of Assisi, Anthony of Padua, John of Capistrano and Bernard of Sienna. Next to the church are baroque monastery buildings of 1755. Opposite the church one can see the former palace of Bishop Wierzbowski from the second half of the seventeenth century. Today it houses the National Archives branch.

In order to get to the Baroque chapel of St. Anthony of Padua one should



Church of the Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary in Góra Kalwaria

go along St. Anthony street, which is behind the parish church and leads towards the Vistula river. A Baroque statue of St. Anthony and a hand-shaped reliquary of the Saint from the eighteenth century are placed in the Baroque altar from 1903.

When entering the city from Warsaw one can see the former Piarist College, founded in 1675 by Bishop Wierzbowski. One can get here by walking from the chapel along ks. Sajna street. A bust of Piłsudski, reconstructed in 1989, is what you can see in Marshal Józef Piłsudski square. The obelisk was founded by officers of the Polish Army field artillery and unveiled on August 3rd 1931. The obelisk commemorates the decoration of the field artillery

with the Virtuti Militari Cross by Marshal Piłsudski for their service in the war of 1920. It was destroyed at the request of the Municipal Communist Party Committee and Chairman of the National Council of the City. As we continue along ks. Sajna street we get to Szpitalna street. Today, the former Piarist College houses the Social Welfare Home.

We head back towards the center, this time down Pijarska street. It was at Pijarska 5 and 10/12 where a synagogue and a zaddik courtyard were once located. Today only cast-iron columns remain. One of the most important centers of Polish Hasidism was established in Kalwaria in the nineteenth century. Icchaak Meir Alter, the founder of the whole zaddik dy-



The castle in Czersk

nasty, settled here in 1859. The zaddik community drew pilgrims from Poland and all over Europe. Even a narrow-gauge railway line was opened in the nineteenth century to bring pilgrims from Warsaw. A zaddik was a shareholder in the railway. Before World War II the courtyard of zaddik Abraham Mordechai Alter, a Member of Parliament and a senator, was one of the strongest centers of Jewish religion in Poland. Alter managed to go to Jerusalem at the beginning of the occupation, where he died in 1948. A brick house of worship from the early twentieth century, located in the yard of Pijarska street (at no. 10), currently serves as a home of religious studies of the Alter family. Dating back to the mid-nineteenth century

is, located nearby, a former courtyard of zaddik, who was the founder of the dynasty. Close to the Catholic cemetery, at Zakalwaryjska street, is a Jewish cemetery with several surviving gravestones and a newly built ohel (grave), i.e. a brick building, which is the resting place of the zaddik. We can get there through Piłsudski, Kalwaryjska and Zakalwaryjska streets.

We return to the town hall and follow the green trail to get to a church from 1674 located outside the town, dedicated to the Divine Providence in Marianki; it was one of the elements of the Calvary, called the Cenacle. It is managed by Marists. The original building was largely rebuilt. The interior features a sarcophagus of the founder of the Marian Order - Father



The knights' tournament at the castle in Czersk

Stanisław Papczyński. The Stations of the Cross, composed of fifteen carved chapels, are located in the surrounding park.

Next, as we follow the green trail through the Vistula valley, we get to the historic Great Track surrounded by orchards. Having walked for 8 kilometers we finally reach a castle in Czersk, which serves as a milestone all throughout our journey through the area.

Drivers can get here by car. As you follow route no. 79 towards Sandomierz, just outside Góra Kalwaria, behind a gas station, turn left. The picturesque ruins of the Czersk castle will emerge just after a few minutes of the drive. You can park your car in the market.

We can reach the castle through the church area. The church was built in the years 1805-1806, the tower was erected in 1868, but the current shape of the temple owes its neo-Baroque character to rebuilding carried out in 1900. The interior of the church dates back to the first half of the nineteenth century.

We get to the castle area by a brick bridge, built in 1762 by Francis Bieliński. The castle can be visited daily, the longest opening hours are from May to August between 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m., and the shortest - from November to February between 8.00 a.m. and 3 p.m. A guide to the castle and other publications are available at the cash desk.

The castle boasts a rich history. The construction of a stone castle in place of wooden buildings commenced in the fourteenth century. The construction probably extended into the fifteenth century. The southern tower apparently served as a prison. It was here that Konrad Mazowiecki kept Henry I the Bearded and several years old Bolesław (later called the Chaste). After the annexation of the Czerski Duchy to the Crown in 1526 the castle became a royal property. Its last rebuilding took place in the sixteenth century. Queen Bona, who founded the local vineyards and gardens, lived here.

The castle was the seat of the dukes of Mazovia. As we enter through the gate, we can stop at a plaque describing the history of the facility. A square tower and two cylindrical towers are preserved to this day. It is worth climbing to the top to admire the Gothic walls, narrow windows and the view of the Vistula valley.

The ruins make a fantastic impression, and the view stretching from here shows the beauty of the land of Mazovia. Today they are the only traces of the splendor of the former city. Czersk became the most important political and religious center of southern Mazovia in the mid-thirteenth century. The capital of archdeaconry was moved here from Grójec before the year 1252, the city became the seat of the castellan, and

then the capital of the independent Czerski Duchy. Its fall, which began in the fifteenth century, was caused by a freak of nature: the Vistula River changed its course and drifted away from Czersk, reducing the commercial and defensive importance of the city. It lost municipal rights in 1869.

But that's ancient history. The castle was blown up by Swedes. A part of the Swedish division, defeated at Warka on April 7, took refuge here and burnt down the town and destroyed the castle after a three-day stay. The destruction was completed by Cossacks and Rakoczy troops several years later. In 1904, the ruins became the property of the Society for Protection of Monuments and restoration works were carried out several years later.

Today the castle courtyard is a place of picnics for tourists, who can admire the traces of the former glory of Mazovian dukes. Additionally, this is the site of various events, such as the 'Knights Tournament at Konrad Mazowiecki's Courtyard' (held in May). There are plenty of legends and mysterious stories, for instance about flickering lights at the foot of the castle, related to this place. There is also a story about a treasure hidden in the long dungeon.

Next we go to the Vistula river, which deprived Czersk of its former glory. We go through the river valley along an old track cutting through

fields and orchards. The winding road takes us to the place. Walking on concrete slabs we reach the main stream, where we can admire anglers' success. Sitting by the broad one can enjoy the sounds of nature. One can also stroll along the Vistula embankment.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Góra Kalwaria – Czersk – access to the Vistula river: 50 km in total. The entire journey is 100 km long.
- Visiting Góra Kalwaria - 3 hours, the castle in Czersk - 1 hour, a walk from Góra Kalwaria to Czersk about 3 hours, a walk on the Vistula river embankments 1.5 hours.

Accommodation:

- Hotel and bar Nad Wisłą, Góra Kalwaria, al. Wyzwolenia 1, phone (22) 727 16 29
- Euro-Motel, Baniocha, Solec 157, phone (22) 727 50 49, (22) 727 52 67
- Euro-Motel 2, Góra Kalwaria, ul. Rybie 4, phone (22) 727 49 91, (22) 717 93 93
- Agritourism farms: www.gorakalwaria.pl, www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Pizzeria Omega, Góra Kalwaria, ul. Dominikańska 32, phone (22) 717 85 03
- Złoty Róg restaurant, Góra Kalwaria, ul. Wojska Polskiego 37, phone (22) 727 41 36
- 'Villa Czersk' restaurant, Czersk, ul. Kraszewska 23, phone (22) 736 21 88



WELCOME TO THE SZYDŁOWIECKI FAMILY

SZYDŁOWIEC – CHLEWISKA – OROŃSKO

This is a trip that will take us to the southern end of the voivodeship. Szydłowiec is approximately 130 km away from Warsaw. One can get here by route no. 7, leading towards Cracow.

Szydłowiec is located at the edge of the Radom Plain, in fact almost at the very foot of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, between Radom and Kielce. Today it is still a small town with rich history and beautiful monuments.

The town enjoys a deserved reputation among tourists. It is recommended to start sightseeing at the Grand Market. What catches one's eye immediately is a beautiful town hall. It is one of the most valuable monuments of late-Renaissance secular architecture in Poland. It was the seat of municipal authorities and the place where ceremonious meetings of the Council and the commoners were held. Today it is also the seat of the self-government administration. What draws attention is a six-storey tower with a pseudo-Renaissance cupola and a clock, a pretty, high attic and four towers in the corners that spring up from the round slopes. The vaults house the Piwnica Szydłowiecka restaurant. One should

take a walk around the whole building. A historic city pillory is located in front of the City Hall. It comes from the first half of the seventeenth century. It is decorated with gargoyles with metal handles. The construction of the City Hall was completed in 1626, when Szydłowiec belonged to the Radziwiłł family. They were not the only known family whose history is connected with that of the town.

Since the beginning of the thirteenth century the place had been the seat of the Odrowąż family, who later assumed the name Szydłowieccy. South of the market, on a small hill, stands a late Gothic stone church of St. Sigismund, founded by the Szydłowiecki family. Its construction was completed between 1509 and 1525. For a short time the temple served as a Calvinist church, owing to Mikołaj Radziwiłł the 'Black'. What is also noteworthy are the soaring roofs and slopes with solar clocks. Despite numerous transformations in the eighteenth century, the church retains most of the original elements: window frames and the furnishings. The nave features an unusual larch ceiling with colorful polychromies, depicting St. King Sigismund.



The Town Hall in Szydłowiec



The Museum of Folk Musical Instruments

A square starry-vaulted chapel and the coat of arms of the Odrowąż family was added to the eastern side of the nave facing the south. The walls of the church are covered with a Renaissance polychromy. The main altar - of late Renaissance - was built between 1618-1627. It is richly carved and painted. It is one of the most valuable monuments of its type from this part of Poland. The chancel features the tomb-

stone of Mikołaj Szydłowiecki. It was made of red Hungarian marble in the sixteenth century. What is worth seeing is also a stone, Gothic baptismal font and a late Gothic polyptych located in the chancel, made in the years 1507-1510. Located below the choir is an extremely interesting early-Renaissance coffered ceiling, filled with painted rosettes. The tombstone of Mikołaj Radziwiłł and his wife Maria

comes from 1805 and it shows a figure of a woman resting on an urn. Peculiarities of the church include inscriptions carved on the outside wall of the chancel and the southern wall of the nave. These are inscriptions and drawings with names and dates from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Northwest of the market, which is opposite the church, is a Gothic-Renaissance castle surrounded by water. It was built on an artificial island (1470-1530) by Mikołaj Szydłowiecki, the castellan of Sandomierz and the undertreasurer of the Crown. Mikołaj's brother - Krzysztof - was a great crown chancellor, the castellan of Cracow; he was in charge of foreign affairs during the reign of King Sigismund I the Old. He fought with Queen Bona and initiated the breach of the truce with Albrecht Hohenzollern, which led to the Prussian Homage.

At that time the magnificence of the castle equaled that of other magnate residences. It was a tall, two-story stone building, rectangular in shape, with three chambers on the ground and first floors, and a ceremonial hall on the second floor. The interiors were equipped with rich portals made of local stone, polychrome coffered ceilings, stoves with colorful tiles and decorative floors. Access to the gate tower was through a standing bridge and a drawbridge.

Owing to the marriage of Elżbieta - a daughter of Krzysztof Szydłowiecki - with Mikołaj Radziwiłł the 'Black'

the castle passed into the possession of the Radziwiłł family and remained in their hands until 1802. It was constantly expanded. It fell into disrepair in the nineteenth century and was rebuilt after World War II.

Currently, the castle houses the Szydłowiec Culture Center and an interesting Museum of Folk Musical Instruments, featuring 2000 exhibits. The instruments were made by folk artists. The permanent exhibition includes about 300 exhibits. One may see both the simplest instruments, which can be made by everybody (leaves, bark for playing, whistles made of straw and feathers), as well as highly sophisticated instruments: a violin, a harmony, bagpipes. The exhibition is divided into two parts. The first presents bands from different parts of Poland, while the other shows different instruments. The museum has a rich collection of different types of harmonies, a large collection of glockenspiels, violins, clay instruments, and pipes. Apart from instruments used until today - one can see reconstructions of old ones. During the tour one can hear sounds of individual exhibits.

The town also boasts a recreation centre 'Zalew', with water equipment, which is open in the summer. One can get there through a road that runs behind the church. Szydłowiec has three quarries, which have been inactive for years: Pikiel and Podkowiński located in the south-



west of the city, and a third called Na Polankach quarry - in the south-east. The Podkowiński quarry has been added to the list of monuments of material culture. Quarries are now partially filled with water.

Now we return to the vicinity of the castle and take route no. 727 for about 10 km to get to Chlewiska. It is the oldest town in the Szydłowiec powiat. The town of Chlewiska dates back to 1121. Its first owner was Piotr Dunin ze Skrzyżna. He built a church in 1121, while in 1135 - the western part of the castle. The subsequent owners of Chlewiska were the Odrowąż family, who assumed the name Chlewicy. They extended the local church and added the eastern part of the castle. Mikołaj Chlewicki, who lived in the seventeenth century, was a commander of the escort of King John Casimir during the Swedish invasion (during his expedition to Silesia). In the second half of the eighteenth century Chlewiska passed into the hands of the Podkański family. In 1801, it became the property of Stanisław Sołtyka, a deputy to the Four-Year Sejm, one of the founders of the Society of Friends of Science, and his son Roman, a general, and a member of the Napoleonic campaigns and the November Uprising. A plate rolling mill and a nail factory were established in Chlewiska in the years 1811-1825. In 1831 Sołtyk's property was confiscated for their participation in the November Upris-

ing. In the years 1895-1912 Chlewiska was the property of count Ludwik Plater and his sons. During the Second World War the Chlewiska gmina was the area of the activities of major Henryk Dobrzański 'Hubal'.

We move on to go to the parish church, which although rebuilt several times, preserved its gothic shape. Erected on a hill it is clearly visible from the road. The present building was built between 1511-1512 on the foundations of a previous one. Note the numerous fragments of late Gothic stonework - portals and keystones decorated with coats of arms. The interior features interesting epitaphs and tombstones from the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Road no. 727 leads to a palace called the Manor House, where a center of leisure and recreation is located today. The palace consists of two buildings, adjacent to each other at the right angle. One of the walls features a plaque commemorating the reconstruction (in 1605) made by Wawrzyniec Odrowąż-Chlewicki. The palace partly stands on an artificial hill. It is surrounded by a beautiful landscape park. Apart from getting accommodation in the palace interiors one can go horseback riding or rent a bicycle, and above all enjoy the wide range of services offered at the SPA. A stylish inn located in a restored nineteenth century stable serves Polish cuisine.



The Odrowąż Palace in Chlewiska

Chlewiska is a seat of a branch of the Museum of Technology in Warsaw. We can reach the place through a street running in front of the entrance to the palace complex. It is a steel mill with a large furnace complex built by the French Metallurgical Society in the years 1882-1892, which includes a blast furnace (it produced 13 tons of pig-iron per day), three ore roasters and a mechanical workshop. The furnace operated until 1940. A local guide tells the story of how the entire complex operated. Then we can enter a tower with a water tank and a spectacular view of the countryside. One can see a reservoir with exceptionally clear water, owing to the fact that it flows down the Świętokrzyskie Mountains.

As we leave Chlewiska we get on the road (no. 727) to Szydłowiec again, then onto route no. 7 towards Warsaw. We make a stop in Orońsk. It boasts a famous Contemporary Sculpture Center. The cultural traditions of Orońsk date back to the 30s of the nineteenth century, when the estate was acquired by Franciszek Ksawery Christiani, the Director-General of the Directorate of Roads and Bridges of the Kingdom of Poland. He was the author of numerous publications, collected rare books and manuscripts, as well as specimens of birds and domestic animals. He also had an impressive collection of minerals. Christiani wanted to give the grange the character of a farmhouse with a landscaped park and a chapel in the

style of a Greek temple. He partly succeeded, the work was continued by his inheritors: his wife and daughter. In the times of Amelia Pruszkowa (the daughter) music events were held here. Arts people also visited the place, especially painters. A friend of Amelia's son, Aleksander, Józef Brandt, also stayed here. Then he married Helena, the widow of his friend and settled in Orońsko. Brandt led a painting colony in Munich. However, he spent the summer months in Orońsko, and his disciples and friends followed him. These summers meetings were called the Free Orońsko Academy.

The last heir of the property was Andrzej Daszewski, the painter's grandson. Germans deported his family in 1942, taking over the administration of the estate. This marked the beginning of a gradual destruction of the buildings and the park. It was only in the mid 60s that the artistic tradition of Orońsko returned. The concept arose in the Sculpture Section of the Board of the Polish Artists (ZPAP), the primary idea the revival and popularization of Polish sculpture. In 1965, a nationwide outdoor sculptural exhibition took place

in Kielce, which ended with an open-air exhibition the Oroński park. The exhibition attracted considerable interest, and it gave rise to a permanent establishment of a sculptural center in Orońsko. A year later, a palace and park was transferred to the Main Board of ZPAP. In 1981 a state institution called the Museum - Center of Polish Sculpture in Orońsko was created, which, after another reorganization in 1985 changed its name to the Centre of Polish Sculpture. Today it practically serves the entire sculptors' community - it is an international sculpture center, affiliated with the Res Artis network.

Currently, the collection has 621 art works. The largest group are sculptures, objects and installations, but there are also drawings, paintings and fabric art. You can see them in the Main Gallery, located in a modern building, as well as in galleries located in the park: the Chapel and the Orangery and a small Coach House. The area of the center also features Józef Brandt palace with a permanent exhibition of nineteenth-century court interiors. Sculptures can also be admired in the old landscape park.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Szydłowiec – Chlewiska: 140 km. The entire journey is 280 km long.
- Visiting Szydłowiec – 3 hours, Museum of Folk Instruments – 1 hour, Chlewiska, Manor House – 2 hours, Museum of Steel Industry – 1 hour, Orońsko – 2,5 hours.

Accommodation:

- www.eholiday.pl
- 'Skalka' Youth Hostel, Szydłowiec, ul. Kościuszki 39 a, phone (48) 617 43 11, schronisko.szydlowiec@wp.pl
- O'key Inn, Barak (at route E 77) k. Szydłowca, phone (48) 617 49 58
- Oleńka Hotel, Barak 1A k. Szydłowca, phone (48) 617 49 59, www.hotelolenka.pl
- Iguś Hotel, Szydłowiec, ul. Kościuszki 263, phone (48) 617 45 51
- 'Mexicana' Recreational Center, Chlewiska, ul. Leśna 1, phone (48) 628 72 43, 604 439 743
- Odrowąż Palace 'Manor House', Chlewiska, ul. Czachowskiego 56, phone 607 195 366, www.manorhouse.pl, reception: phone (48) 628 70 61, marketing and group reservations department: phone (48) 682 12 21
- Polish Sculpture Center Hotel, 'Dom Rzeźbiarza', Orońsko, ul. Topolowa 1, phone (48) 618 40 27
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystryka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Szydłowiecka Basement Restaurant, Szydłowiec, Rynek Wielki 1, phone (48) 617 02 24, entered into the Golden Book of Polish Restaurants
- Nova Pizza House, Szydłowiec, ul. Wschodnia 41, (48) 617 58 30
- LECHMAR – a restaurant, a motel at a gas station, Szydłowiec, ul. Kościuszki 263, phone (48) 617 44 93
- Dom Rzeźbiarza Coffee Shop, Polish Sculpture Center, Orońsko, ul. Topolowa 1, phone (48) 618 40 27
- Primagor Restaurant, Szydłowiec, ul. Spółdzielcza 2c, www.primagor.eu, phone (48) 617 45 60, 602 301 236
- Starowiejska Inn, Orońsko, ul. Starowiejska 2, phone 693 423 360



KURPIE, THAT IS ABOUT RESPECT FOR OLD CUSTOMS

OSTROŁĘKA – KADZIDŁO – ŁYSE – CZARNIA – MYSZYNIC

Located in the extreme north-east part of the voivodeship the Ostrołęka powiat is still alive with the culture of Kurpie. Its name dates back to the eighteenth century, when the 'people of the forest' came to be known as Kurp due to the name of their clogs woven from bast fiber. The area is famous for its large number of forests. The region is crossed by many rivers, with the Narew river as the main one in this part of the country. Ever since the beginning of the state this area had been owned by the dukes of Mazovia, and then by Polish kings.

The culture of Kurpie developed for economic reasons. Due to the poor quality of soil the population was unable to make a living out of agriculture. Numerous crafts and rural crafts became the additional sources of income. Carpentry, woodwork, basketwork, weaving, and amber works developed in the Kurpie region. Products associated with the rituals are produced in this area until today. Cutouts, bouquets adorning houses, Christmas toys, Easter eggs and Easter palms are the commonly known products of from the area.

Some of the folk customs are presented in individual gminas at folk events. The town of Czarnia is a place worth visiting on the first Sunday of June. The place features a 'Let's go hunting' show, demonstrating old hunting customs. A 'Kurpie Wedding' takes place in Kadzidło on every third Sunday of June. It is the most famous spectacle, taking place throughout the village. Tourists become authentic wedding guests. In turn, in September during the Kadzidlańska Sunday a presentation of old farm activities, a review of singing and dance groups, and a folk art fair are held. A colorful procession of palms, taking place around a wooden church, is held in the village of Łyse on Palm Sunday. A competition for the most beautiful and the highest palm is held there every year. In turn, honey collecting is the feature event at a clearing in Zawodzie, near Myszyniec, taking place on the last Sunday of August. It refers to the end of the beekeeping season.

Our tour of the Kurpie region begins in Ostrołęka. It is located about 100 km from Warsaw. One can get here by route no. 61, leading towards



The Town Hall in Ostrołęka

Augustów. The best time to be here is late May, as this is when the staging of a battle that took place in Ostrołęka on 26 May 1831 is performed. The staging involves troops of historical and uniformed groups. One can watch scenes from the life of a soldier's camp: campfire cooking and or casting lead bullets. Those interested in participating in the battle also come from abroad. The battle takes place according to a specific scenario.

The most precious monument in the town is a Baroque style church and the former Bernardine monastery erected in the seventeenth century. It features a courtyard surrounded by cloisters. What one can admire inside are the Baroque main altar with classicistic elements, eight side altars and a polychromy from the eight-

eenth century depicting the miracles and scenes from the life of the patron of the church - St. Anthony of Padua. The other church is closer to the river, it was founded in 1399 by Prince Janusz I the Elder. It assumed its present baroque appearance in the eighteenth century. Gothic elements are preserved only in the chancel.

It is nice to take a walk down Bartosz Głowacki street, which now serves as the city promenade. It can take you to General Józef Bem square. The statue of the General stands at its center. It was during the aforementioned battle of Ostrołęka, the largest one of the November Uprising, that the general prevented the total defeat of the army with the help of the cavalry charge, which he was in command. The inter-



Interior tradicional de la casa rural de Kurpie, el museo al aire libre en Kadzidło

esting element in the square is a classic town hall. Located on the other side is the Museum of Kurpie Culture in Ostrołęka, which is worth visiting for it devotes one chamber to the Kurpie culture. It includes elements of clothing, mainly from the White Wilderness. One can learn that nowadays the original costumes are not worn any more as they used to be very heavy. The chamber also features clay pots and cutouts typical of the region.

The next room is where we can admire paintings. Then we can visit the office of Wiktor Gomulicki, a writer born in Ostrołęka, which features the writer's desk, a few letters and books. Another room presents a model of the battle of Ostrołęka.

As we leave the city we move on to the village of Kadzidło. One can

get here by route no. 53, leading towards Szczytno. As we exit Ostrołęka we come across Zagroda Kurpiowska open-air museum. The Museum presents a cottage, a barn with a coach house, a woodshed and a granary. The buildings are equipped with everyday objects. The wooden house is a typical Kurpie house, made of solid logs in the nineteenth century. We get inside through a hall with a clay floor and farm utensils: a trough for pigs, a honey centrifuge, a washboard. A large chamber features a corner with holy images. Next to the wall is a bench, a painted chest and a bed; plates and cups hang on the wall, yet the most surprising object is a wooden baby walker. A kitchen and a bread oven are also located in the large chamber. A loom is located in the bower, once inhabited by the

elderly. A kitchen with a hearth is also located in the small chamber. The interior of the cottage is decorated with cut-outs and paper flowers. The cottage is thatched; one should also pay attention to the dripstones, so typical of the Kurpie building style. The granary is equipped with farming and agricultural tools and utensils to store different products. When visiting the barn one can see both vehicles once used in Kurpie, as well as the agricultural machinery and equipment. The enclosure also features a well with a crane and log hives. A cabin, fulfilling administrative tasks, and a round manege right next to it are located at the entrance. The open-air museum organizes workshops and museum lessons with folk artists and bonfire events with traditional Kurpie food served.

After leaving the museum it is a must to go to the center of the village and see the neo-Baroque church. An attraction of the church are stoups made from real, large Adriatic shells.

Now we continue our tour to the town of Czarnia. We follow route no. 53 to Myszyniec, and then route no. 614, where we exit to Czarnia. It boasts a nature reserve of the same name. In order to get there one should, once near the church, follow the green signs. First, the road leads through fields, then we get to a magnificent lodge, and finally enter the forest. The reserve protects a spruce-pine forest. Its peculiarity are Bartne pines, found only here.



Traditional Kurpie palms

As we leave Czarnia heading east, we go through the village of Brzozowy Kąt and come across a wooden sculpture from the early twentieth century depicting St. Jan Nepomucen located by the road. Our destination is Myszyniec, a town situated on the Rozoga river, a commercial and cultural center of the Kurpie region. The settlement dates back to the beginning of the seventeenth century; it was established as a Jesuit missionary settlement at the place connecting Mazovia with Prussia. The only trace of the Jesuits is a stone gate-belfry from the second half of the eighteenth century, although it is partly of a late Gothic style. It is located next to a neo-Gothic church dating from the early twentieth century. What draws atten-

tion inside are two altars from the beginning of the eighteenth century and Baroque sculptures. Located at the entrance are two iron collars, which were used for the public punishment of criminals, although it was apparently mainly women who were locked there for breaching the rules of morality at the time.

Another village, which is well worth seeing, is Łyse. One can get here from Myszyniec by route no. 645, leading to Nowogród and Łomża. Łyse is famous throughout Poland for the aforementioned Easter palm trees. The town already existed

in the eighteenth century. An important event was the discovery of amber deposits in 1808, which had been mined for many years. Note the preserved traditional wooden cottages, traditionally set with their sides facing the road. Another interesting object is a wooden church (from 1882) in the style of Kurpie. It is the work of local masters. It was decorated with folk wall paintings. An attraction by the Rudna - Łyse road is a century-old pillar chapel with a statue of St. Florian.

We return to Warsaw through Myszyniec and Ostrołęka.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Ostrołęka – Kadzidło – Myszyniec – Czarnia – Łyse: 160 km. The entire journey is 320 km long.
- Visiting Ostrołęka – 2 hours, Museum – 1 hour, Museum in Kadzidło – 1 hour, Czarnia, a walk – 3 hours, Myszyniec – 1 hour, Łyse – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Energetyk Hotel, Ostrołęka, ul. I Armii WP 30, phone (29) 769 10 99, 760 49 74
- Inter Hotel, Ostrołęka, ul. Partyzantów 1, phone (29) 769 10 12, www.interhotel.pl
- Relaks Hotel, Ostrołęka, ul. Szpitalna 15, phone (29) 760 44 40
- MOSiR Hotel, Ostrołęka, ul. Witosza 1, phone (29) 760 68 89, 769 68 68, 760 69 45
- Borowik Inn, Łodziska 1 (droga 53), phone (29) 760 52 31
- 'Deptuła' guest rooms, at the gas station, Kadzidło, ul. Trasa Mazurska 56, phone (29) 761 81 86 ext. 23
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- 'Marco Polo' Italian restaurant, Ostrołęka, ul. Prądzyńskiego 4, phone (29) 764 65 33, www.marcopolo.ostroleka.pl
- Zabytkowa restaurant, Ostrołęka, ul. Głowackiego 42, phone (29) 764 49 28, www.restauracjazabytkowa.pl
- 'Ostoja' Kurpie Tavern, Ostrołęka, ul. Stacha Konwy 3, phone (29) 760 26 27, www.ostoja.strefa.pl

AMONG THE GHOSTS AND THE INHABITANTS OF THE CASTLE IN CIECHANÓW

GOŁOTCZYŻNA – CIECHANÓW – OPINOGÓRA – KRASNE

Our tour begins in the Museum of Positivism in Gołotczyzna. We take the Gdańsk route E-77 from Warsaw, and then turn right into road no. 50 as we leave Płońsk; Gołotczyzna is almost a suburb of Ciechanów.

It is difficult to find one's way to the Museum of Positivism in Gołotczyzna. The first signpost is in the very village. However, if we manage to get there we will certainly spend a nice time admiring how it once felt for people to do social work. Gołotczyzna was the place where Aleksander Świętochowski lived and worked. A villa called 'Krzewnia' houses a museum devoted to him. The writer's wife Maria kept the exhibits which are now found there. We can see the office, a library, a dining room, a hall which was the center of the life of its inhabitants, a kitchen and the room of the lady of the house. Świętochowski spent 27 years here. In front of 'Krzewnia' is a monument Świętochowski, founded on the 30th anniversary of the writer's death.

The park features yet another building with memorabilia of Aleksandra Bąkowska, the founder of the household school for rural girls. In 1912, an agricultural school for boys was founded owing to a joint foundation of Świętochowski and Bąkowska. The activities of the school were interrupted during the First World War, and after the war ended the founders donated the school buildings to the state, which continued teaching there. Świętochowski established the Consumers' Cooperative here called 'Wiara' ('Faith').

Now we go from Gołotczyzna to Ciechanów. The castle in Ciechanów is hard to find. One should keep going straight until one reaches the downtown, the town hall will be to the right. You will get to the castle by taking a right turn behind the town hall. Opposite the building, on the left side of the road is a small turnaround, where you can leave your car.

The castle is not a dominant feature of the town. It was built on wetlands, in one of the bends of the



Łydynia river. Beautiful towers are preserved until today. Currently, it is in the process of revitalization and it is closed to visitors, but open-air events and concerts are still held on its meadows. It is a particularly vivid place on the first Saturday of September, when 'Meetings with the Middle Ages' are organized here.

According to a legend, the castle is haunted by a ghost of castellan's wife, as her jealous husband had her beheaded on suspicion of her infidelity. And all of this is just because of jewels and a magpie. The castellan used to buy his wife expensive rings. When the first one got lost he was slightly angry, when the second one disappeared - he was convinced that his wife betrayed him, that she sold the jewels and gave the money to one of the courtiers. When the third ring disappeared, the castellan sentenced his wife to death. Soon afterwards the servants found the jewels in the bird's nest. Having heard the news the castellan jumped off the tower. It is to this day that some people hear the footsteps the crying of castellan's wife looking for the jewels.

The building was built in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, causing a lot of trouble to its builders from the very beginning. For security reasons it was erected on marshy ground. Water accumulation, which was a result of the construction, caused the dampness and partial

flooding of the building. It was then that the gate was moved to the present location and another floor was built.

The first inhabitant of the castle was the Duke of Mazovia, Janusz Starszy (Janusz the Elder). Historians who study Mazovia emphasize his contribution to the development of this land. Duke Janusz was a long-living man, he died in Czersk at the age of over 80. It was perhaps his active and full of journeys life that gave him strength and resilience. He used to manage the duchy by himself. Thus he visited his estates, making stops in Nowe Miasto, Ciechanów, Liw, Warszawa and Czersk. The appearance of the ducal court in the town always stirred immediate commotion. The duke and his entourage generally stayed in castles.

Ciechanów lies on the northern edge of this region. In the Middle Ages it was thus exposed to the incursions of the Prussians, Yotvingians, Lithuanians and the Teutonic Knights. Hence, probably the idea to build a brick defensive castle emerged. After entering the courtyard we see the ruins of the residential part and the preserved two round towers. The main architect was Niklos, who once served his apprenticeship with the Teutonic Knights, and hence the resemblance to the castles of the Order of St. Mary's Hospital comes as no surprise. What is par-



The Castle of the Dukes of Mazovia in Ciechanów

ticularly noteworthy is the rhomboid decoration of the façade, visible on the tower to the right.

In 1472 or 1473 the city and the castle were destroyed by fire. Soon, however, it was rebuilt. It was called Mazovian Wawel then. It enjoyed the second period of its glory owing to Queen Bona. It was after the extinction of the princes of Mazovia and the incorporation of the region into the Crown. Ciechanów became a part of Bona's dowry. The Queen stayed here for ten years, giving the building Renaissance furnishings. She lived in the Grand House, of which only ruins remain today.

The eastern tower housed a court, while the jail was located in the west-

ern basement. The upper floors were designated as the castle armory. Unfortunately, after Queen Bona left the castle its story became the story of downfall. After the combat methods changed it lost its defensive functions. A story has it that even Marie Louise Gonzaga, the wife of Władysław IV, stopped here overnight in 1647. Apparently, however, she failed to stay until the morning: some say it was because of the rats, and others that it was because of the ghosts.

Swedes destroyed the castle twice. It was first destroyed during the Swedish Deluge in 1657, and then during the Northern War in 1708. In 1920 the castle suffered

during the artillery battle with Bolshevik forces. During the Second World War a selection of Polish and Jewish population was made in the courtyard. It was not until after the war that archaeological research and conservation works were conducted in Ciechanów.

A neoclassical town hall downtown, located in the vicinity of the castle, is still the seat of the local authorities.

Warszawską street takes us to Farska Góra. An old stronghold used to be located here. A park stretches at the foot of the mountain, and there is an interesting parish church nearby. Despite the destruction and rebuilding it has retained its Gothic character. This is obviously Mazovian Gothic. The interior features twentieth-century furnishings. A Renaissance tombstone of Stanisław Szczerzyński is also located here.

Across the street is a post-Augustinian church. The main altar dates back to the late eighteenth century and it is in Baroque style, just as the pulpit and the baptismal font. A commemorative photo of Father Popiełuszko is worth a notice.

While in the area one should visit the local Museum of Mazovian Gentry. The top floor features a room with miniature objects of everyday use (from Mazovian villages of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries). Watching these items gives great joy,

especially to children. Another room features stuffed animals that can be found in the area.

We can also admire the art Ciechanów artists. The archeological section is located downstairs. The medieval jewelry is of particular interest.

We follow route no. 60 from Ciechanów towards Maków Mazowiecki and then we exit the road to get to Opinogóra.

An exceptional neo-Gothic castle, overlooking Mazovian fields, can be seen from a distance. It is Opinogóra, a wedding gift given to Zygmunt Krasieński by his father. Eliza Branicka was not the poet's dream lover, he agreed to marry her after strenuous efforts to convince him made by Wincent Krasieński. The ailing poet was probably not very happy in this charming castle.

Today the castle houses the Museum of Romanticism. Right next to the entrance is the Krasieński family tree (unfortunately the poet's genealogical line is missing). Although very impressive from the outside, the castle is, in fact, very small. Only several rooms are available to visitors. We can watch a lounge from Krasieński's times, numerous portraits of the poet and of his closest family. Surprisingly, the lounge is occupied by two individuals, dressed in costumes from the nineteenth century. Only upon a closer inspection one can see that they are dummies.



The Museum of Mazovian Gentry in Ciechanów

Exhibits from Napoleonic times are also worth seeing. They are to remind of General Wincent Krasieński's participation in the Napoleonic campaign. It was for his merits in those battles that Krasieński received Opinogóra, along with the title of a Count; the estate remained with him when he went into service to the Tsar.

The castle is surrounded by a large park; there is a stone table, where the poet apparently used to sit. Lovers can sit on a bench nearby as it is supposed to bring them happiness. The only monument of Zygmunt Krasieński was erected in the park in 1989. Next to the old manor house outbuilding one can see the light cavalryman's house, the gar-

dener's house, and a stone cross commemorating the death of the Duke of Masovia Bolesław IV, which was erected in Opinogóra 400 years later by Wincent Krasieński. An exhibition devoted to Polish Romanticism is located in a mansion built in 2008 based on a design by Józef Gałęzowski.

Opinogóra previously belonged to the dukes of Mazovia. A wooden stronghold once stood in the place of today's castle. A legend has it that Bolesław IV died after a lonely hunt; a boar attacked him, inflicting wounds that proved fatal.

Park paths lead to the church and the cemetery. The church features the tomb of Maria z Radziwiłłów



Museum of Romanticism in Opinogóra

Kraśńska, the mother of the poet. The tombstone of the poet sons, Władysław and Zygmunt, was placed in the chancel. The vaults house the

crypts of the Kraśński family, including that of the poet.

Just behind the church is a cemetery, which the bard used to visit.

This is where Napoleonic soldiers, who he was familiar with, are buried. It is also a burial site of bona Helena de la Haye. She was the link between Krasieński and the philosopher August Cieszkowski. She raised the two boys. During Cieszkowski's stay in Opinogóra they both visited her grave, which is mentioned in the rich correspondence between the two thinkers.

Opinogóra is not a place of Krasieński's happiest memories. He spent his time here shortly after his marriage to the unwanted Eliza Branicka, longing for his beloved Delfina Potocka. In time, the relations between spouses improved, although he never gave up on meetings with Potocka.

After the death of the poet Opinogóra was inherited by his descendants. The last landowner was Edward Krasieński, who died in Dachau in 1940. The turmoil of war did not spare the castle in Opinogóra. It was damaged by German artillery during World War I and it survived, half-ruined, through the interwar period.

It was rebuilt after the Second World War, and the Museum of Romanticism was established here in 1961.

Following the traces of the Krasieński family we get to Krasne. The Krasieński family has its roots here and they had been associated with the place for seven centuries. The parish church dates back to 1575. It was built in the late Renaissance style. The interiors feature tombstones of the Krasieński family. What is also noteworthy is the tombstone of Jan Kazimierz Krasieński and his two wives. Another interesting tombstone is that of Jan Dobrogost Krasieński's two wives (from the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), made of silver and gilded sheet. The walls of the church are covered with frescoes from 1747.

The remains of the park are neglected. It is the place where Krasieński's palace once stood, but it was destroyed by the Nazis. They built a villa in its place, but they blew it up before the end of the war. The water tower houses a community center. A stud farm is right behind the gate.





Practical information

- Warszawa – Gołotczyzna – Ciechanów – Opinogóra – Krasne: 130 km.

The total distance is 260 km.

- Visiting Gołotczyzna – 2 hours, Ciechanów – 1 hour, the castle in Ciechanów – 1 hour, Museum of Mazovian Gentry – 1 hour, Opinogóra – 1,5 hours, Krasne – 1,5 hours

Accommodation:

- Olimpijski Hotel (MOSiR), Ciechanów, ul. 17 Stycznia 60, phone (23) 672 20 12, 673 24 84
- Zacisze Hotel, Ciechanów, ul. Mikołajczyka 8 a, phone (23) 672 20 46, www.hotelzacisze.pl
- Baron Hotel, Ciechanów, ul. Śląska 11, phone (23) 672 82 86, www.hotel-baron.pl
- Zagłoba Inn, Ciechanów, ul. Niechodzka 6, phone (23) 672 25 42, 695 589 119
- Panderoza Inn, Ciechanów, Pęczcin 40a, phone (23) 672 81 37, 600 367 254, and also: Horseback Agricultural Farm, www.panderoza-zajazd.pl
- Parkowa restaurant – with accommodation, Opinogóra Górna, ul. Krasieńskiego 5, phone (23) 671 72 31
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Panorama restaurant, Ciechanów, ul. Powstańców Wielkopolskich 2 a, phone (23) 673 25 41

IN A DEFENSIVE FORTRESS AND THE VISTULA CASTLES

NOWY DWÓR MAZOWIECKI – TWIERDZA MODLIN – ZAKROCZYM – CZERWIŃSK – WYSZOGRÓD

Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki is an unappreciated excursion base for Warsaw residents seeking water and wildlife. Access to the place is extremely easy, simply pull off the Gdańsk road no. 7. As you pass Modlin to your right, cross the bridge over the Narew river and then turn left right behind it. This will take you to a small market place where you can park your car.

The town itself is worth a visit as it features a rather unusual, as for Poland, church built in the empire style. It is located near the market. It was consecrated in 1792. It is a single nave church, with a ceiling lined with reeds. It has three altars, with paintings from the Stanisław era.

The Church is just off the street; to be able to admire its charm, one has to go to the other side, to a small park.

Nowy Dwór settlement received municipal rights as early as 1474 at the hands of the Duke of Mazovia Siemowit III. The city had been in private hands for nearly six centuries. Under Russian rule (1830) Nowy

Dwór became a government city. The expansion of the Modlin Fortress and the related construction of railways and bridges on the Narew and the Vistula rivers helped revive the city. The city has been plagued by floods for centuries. It was significantly damaged during the fighting in September 1939.

If you want to see at least a fragment of the Modlin Fortress on your own, you have to go to the gate and continue straight along the Narew river. One has to remember though that much of the area is not available to tourists. The fortress was built at the initiative of Napoleon in the years 1806-1812, but the first fortification was built in Modlin by Swedes in 1655. When Napoleon was defeated in 1812 and the Duchy of Warsaw ceased to exist, works were stopped. Poles captured the fortress during the November Uprising, however it was recaptured by Russians in 1831. It was then that the period of expansion and modernization began. Russians enlarged the Napoleonic ring and added a (second) external fortifi-





The Modlin Fortress – ruins of the granary

ation. Then they created a third ring, that is forts located a few kilometers before the fortress, which surround the citadel in the form of a ring. It was called Nowogeorgiewsk until 1918. It is the facilities from that time that survived to this day. The fortress has always been critical in the defense of Warsaw. Russians defended themselves here against German attacks during the First World War. The information board also tells us that it was here on December 23 1918 that the first naval base of the Vistula Flotilla of II Republic of Poland was opened. In August 1920 its soldiers defended the crossings over the Vistula and the Bug-Narew and transported the injured in a medical

vessel 'Łokietek'. In September 1939 Polish soldiers resisted the Nazi attacks for fifteen days. General Thommée surrendered the fortress only after the defeat of Warsaw.

We keep walking along the high bank of the river, which shines through the trees. A strange, old building can be seen on the other side. It is a granary from the nineteenth century, or rather its ruins to be precise, located at the confluence of the Vistula and Narew rivers. It was built in a neo-Renaissance style. As we come to the scenic spot along the way we find out something of a surprise. We are told that in order to get inside the present garrison we need to get

to the other side to Modlin to ask for a pass and a guide.

We can see the Napoleon Redoubt, that is the ruins of a square-plan artillery tower a square built in the years 1811-1812 according to the instructions of Napoleon himself.

The tower of St. Michael is made of brick. The circle-plan tower was built in the nineteenth century and it features an inner courtyard.

The Garrison Club dates back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The exterior has neo-Gothic features, while the interiors are eclectic. An interesting element is the ballroom with polychrome floral motifs and stucco. The stucco in the concert hall is located on the walls and the ceiling.

The Tower of Tatarstan is part of the barracks building, whose length is more than 2 km. It is from here that one can enjoy beautiful views of the panorama of Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. Since 2001 it has been the seat of the Society of Friends of the Modlin Fortress.

As we leave Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki we get to the other side of the Gdańsk road, and then continue along route 62 towards Płock, until we take a turn to Zakroczym. This is one of the oldest towns in Mazovia. A medieval castle guarding the crossing and the ford on the Vistula river gave rise to the emergence of the city. In 1374 Zakroczym

became the capital of the Zakroczymska Land and this state of affairs continued until the Third Partition of Poland. The town was the center of numerous conventions. The town was burnt by the Swedes and since then it has been hard for Zakroczym to regain its former glory. The years 1709-1712 mark a period of depopulation of Zakroczym due to the plague. Fortifications were built during the period of the Duchy of Warsaw, which were supposed to constitute an important strategic point along with the Modlin Fortress. The town organized insurgent troops during the November Uprising. Then, after the re-occupation of Warsaw by Tsarist troops, Zakroczym was the seat of the parliament and the government. The town also supplied troops during the January Uprising.

Let's go the market. Opposite and a little to the right is the parish church of the Exaltation of the Cross. It looks quite original. It was built in a rare style: it is the late Vistula Gothic style. It was rebuilt, hence the Renaissance attic and Baroque towers. The well-preserved chapel of St. Barbara features an altar that probably dates back to the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Swedish bullets are clearly visible in the walls (the northern and the southern ones). The church was burnt during the war and it owes its





The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Czerwińsk

present appearance to the reconstruction in 1949.

The market features an interesting monument, the so-called. Light-house in honor of the insurgents of 1831 and 1863, and those who died in the years 1939-45.

Located by the road towards the Płock route is the Capuchin church of the eighteenth century.

Taking a walk along the wild bank of the Vistula River is a must. Two nature reserves are located here: Smoszewskie Islands and Wikliny Wiślane. We continue the tour along route no. 62 in the direction of Płock. This time we pull off to Czerwińska. It was here that the soldiers, heading for Grunwald with Jagiełło, crossed the river and joined with the forces of Vytautas coming from Lithuania on 2 July 1410. We pass the church and a monastery.

Despite numerous subsequent modifications the Church still preserves its Romanesque character. Two proud towers are rising high towards the sky.

The origins of Czerwińsk date back to the roots of the Polish nation and the Polish state. The earliest mention of the town comes from 1065. The bull of Hadrian VI of 1155 tells us that the church of Virgin Mary and the monastery of canons regular already existed in Czerwińsk at that time. Owing to numerous donations from princes and Polish kings Czerwińsk

became the most stately and the richest center of political, economic and cultural development in Mazovia. Konrad II Mazowiecki was buried in the local church.

Convents, courts, and even open-air parliament sessions were held in Czerwińsk. In 1422 Władysław, the Duke of Płock and Bolesław, the Duke of Czersk debated here on the harmonization of legislation for the entire region of Mazovia. Earlier, in 1410 it was near Czerwińsk that Władysław Jagiełło built a bridge of boats, ferried his army and joined the troops of Vytautas on his way to Grunwald. After the victory at Grunwald Władysław Jagiełło placed his chainmail in the Czerwińsk church as a votive offering. Jagiełło and Vytautas used to return to Czerwińsk in the years 1422 and 1430 for parliamentary sessions. The Czerwińsk privileges and the restored Wiślicki Statute of Casimir the Great date back to this period. King Jan Kazimierz, a frequent visitor to Czerwińsk, hanged the banners captured after the battle of Beresteczko above the main altar.

Since times immemorial the monastery had been defensive in character. It resisted the attacks of Pomeranians, Prussians, Lithuanians, Yotvingians, and the Teutonic Knights. It was only after the invasion of the Swedes in the years 1655-1660, who destroyed and ravaged the city, that the town never returned to its former



glory. After the fall of the Republic of Poland the tsarist government dissolved the Order of Canons Regular. The monastery was looted, and the stolen goods included the valuable library and the helmet of Władysław Jagiełło. In 1923 the monastery and the church were transferred to the Salesian Congregation.

When we approach or climb the steep way up, we will see a building which is irregular in its architecture. This is the evidence of the rich and changeable history of this place. The Church is built of regular fieldstone granite. Before you ask for a guide tour of the monastery and the museum Salesian fathers, it is worth taking a tour of the church. It is already in the vestibule that we will see a beautiful Romanesque portal, discovered only in 1910. The portal features two smooth columns, which, according to a local legend, Jagiełło knights used to sharpen their swords. The nave - located on the north side - leads to the chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows. The level of the chapel floor corresponds to the level of the floor of the original church. A church treasury was located here in the sixteenth century. The wall of the northern nave features Gothic frescoes. What was unveiled even later, that is in 1951, were frescoes of the thirteenth century found in the chapel of the Crucifixion, in the southern nave. It is the largest collection of Ro-

manesque frescos in Poland. They are the work of a local artist.

The southern nave features paintings and epitaphs, and also a partly revealed Romanesque column made of granite boulders. Stalls of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are located on both sides of the main altar. Particular attention should be drawn to votive offerings located over the stalls and by the altar. These are plaques of different sizes wrought in silver. The main altar, made of wood, was brought from Krakow (by the Vistula river) in 1630. Placed in the middle is the image of Our Lady of Czerwińsk, announced as miraculous as early as 1648.

Now it is time to go to the monastery and ask for the tour of the museum, which was founded at the initiative of Father Zbigniew Malinowski. Salesians conduct missionary activities around the world and the museum features souvenirs from these trips. The collections are grouped and each new region has a separate showcase. Apart from spears, hats, animals hides one can find all kinds of ornaments here. Following our guide, we move to different regions of the world and admire the related items.

Once in the monastery it is worth entering the Gothic chapel. What catches the eye is the stellar-network vault above the altar, covered with frescoes of the sixteenth

century. It features the image of Our Lady of Ostra Brama.

Even after you leave the building it is still worthwhile to take a walk around it. A wonderful view of the river and the surrounding countryside stretches from the side of the Vistula River. Steep stairs lead to the church. The oldest part of the monastery was once located to the right. A statue of Christ is on the left. It was here, according to the local tradition, that a mass was celebrated on 2 July 1410. The first mention of the Kampinos Wilderness can be found in the writings by Długosz. Reporting Jagiełło's preparation for the war with the Teutonic Order, and then the organization of the 1410 expedition itself, Długosz mentions the choice of routes for the Lesser Poland and Greater Poland squadrons from Sochaczew through the western edge of the Wilderness, through Plecewice, Konary to Śladowo. It was here where the crossing of the Vistula to Czerwińsk took place.

The bell of the fifteenth century - from the bell tower of the Abbot - was melted into cannons during the last war by Germans. The Abbot's gate leads to the cemetery. Finally, you can stop once again in front of the church and reminisce about its past history, and then go down the stairs, go a few hundred meters and get to the Vistula river. You pass a small marketplace. It is here

that the life of the residents flourishes. By going straight ahead we get to the local amphitheater. If you want to eat something, do it right after you go off the road leading to Płock. Czerwińsk itself is a tiny place and tourists do not seem to be interested in this town. We're back on the road to Płock and go to another old Vistula town - Wyszogród. It enjoyed its biggest boom in the days of the Jagiellonian dynasty, as it was an important center of commerce on the Vistula.

A late-Baroque parish church, from the years 1773-1786, is located here. The furnishings are mostly Baroque (from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). We can admire a late-baroque gate of the eighteenth century and a parsonage from the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Franciscan church was built in the Gothic style in 1408, the chapel dates back to 1510, and the Baroque nave is from the years 1661-1675; the furnishings - mostly Baroque (from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Next is a Baroque monastery building of 1684.

One must go to the steep bank of the Vistula River to see the castle hill; once this was a site of a medieval settlement. Duke Konrad of Mazovia built the first castle at the beginning of the thirteenth century. During the reign of King Casimir the Great the

wooden castle was replaced with a stone one. It was pulled down by the Prussians in 1798. The second settlement on the banks of the Vistula River is located 2 km to the west.

As we move along ul. Wiślana we get to the remains of the longest wooden bridge in Europe, which

was partially burned in 1990, and finally demolished in 1999. A few years ago it served as an observation deck, nowadays it is under the threat of collapse.

We can go back across the Vistula following the beautiful Vistula route no. 575.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki – Zakroczym – Czerwińsk – Wyszogród: 85 km. The total distance is 170 km.
- Visiting Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki – 1 hour, Modlin – 3 hours, Zakroczym – 1,5 hours, Czerwińsk – 2,5 hours, Wyszogród – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Bartnik Hotel, ul. Bohaterów Modlina 39, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, phone (22) 775 83 02
- Top Hotel, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, ul. Paderewskiego 1c, phone (22) 788 41 44, www.tophotelndm.pl
- 'Złotopolska Dolina' Manor House, Zakroczym, Trębki Nowe 89, phone 601 691 399, www.zlotopolskadolina.pl
- 'Jaworowy Dwór', Trębki Nowe 100a, Zakroczym, www.jaworowydwor.pl, phone (22) 785 22 97

Catering:

- Metro Pizza restaurant, ul. Byłych Więźniów Twierdzy Zakroczym 41 (at the Statoil gas station), phone upon kind request (22) 785 24 46

IN SEARCH OF THE POLISH ROOTS

PŁOCK – ŁĄCK – JEZIORO LUCIEŃSKIE – BRUDZEŃSKI PARK KRAJOBRAZOWY – ROKICIE

Located in the western part of the voivodeship, on the Vistula River, about 120 km from Warsaw, Płock is one of the oldest cities in Poland. In order to get here first follow route no. 7 towards Gdańsk, and then pull off to route no. 62 towards Płock. The place was a permanent residence of Władysław Herman in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Magnificent monuments are preserved in the city. Two towers of the Renaissance cathedral can be seen from a distance. In 1530, after a fire the older building was demolished to its foundations and the present building was erected in its place. The porch features unusual doors made of bronze. Unfortunately, this is merely a copy of the Romanesque Płock Doors of 1154. To see the original one would have to go to the Council of Wisdom in Nowogród Wielki. Another feature of the cathedral which is worth attention is the Royal Chapel, which is home to the sarcophagi of Władysław Herman and Bolesław the Wry-mouthed.

Normally it is very dark here, but you can turn on the light switch, which is located next to the donation box. The interior features other tombstones and epitaphs from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Located in the vicinity of the cathedral is the Diocesan Museum. It is located in a building specially built for this purpose in 1903. It's most valuable historical monument is the Płock Bible of the twelfth century; it is kept in a showcase in the middle of the room, next to other manuscripts. The museum features antiques imported from all over the Diocese of Płock. The most valuable sculptures include: two Drobińskie Pietas, dated 1430 and 1440, and the Pensive Christ of Długosiodło (from the early sixteenth century). Kontusz sashes and monuments of the goldsmith art are bound to draw visitors' attention. The second part of the museum is located in a former post-Benedictine abbey (only a defensive wall, the clock tower and the tower are what is left of the fifteenth-cen-





The Tumskie Hill in Płock

tury duke's castle adjacent to the abbey). One can admire, for instance the cathedral treasury, collections of contemporary painting and the exhibition of Christ in art.

The tenement at Tumska 8 street houses the Mazovian Museum in Płock. Apart from presenting the history of Płock it also features an interesting collection of Art Nouveau. The interiors of the museum are arranged in such a way as to present the typical middle-class tenement apartments. The whole is complemented with details typical of the style, such as chandeliers and curtains. The walls feature paintings of the eminent artists of the era: Teodor Axentowicz, Józef

Mehoffer, Stanisław Wyspiański and others. The museum also presents sculptures, thus one can find works of Waclaw Szymanowski, the creator of the monument of Chopin in the Łazienki Park and those of Konstanty Laszczka. Other rooms present a collection of art from the turn of the century. The Art Deco style appeared between the two world wars. The Museum also has exhibits made in this style.

When we leave the museum, one should look around and walk among the trees of the park alleys. When we reach the very end of the park, we can see a breathtaking view. It is because we will get to an escarpment several meters high. Down below

we can admire the Vistula river and the green surroundings of the city. This escarpment is the famous Tumskie Hill. Once it was a center of pagan worship, and then Mieszko I established a wooden fortified manor house here. All of the previously visited buildings carry the traces of this former glory.

After a moment of reflection on the rich history of Płock we move on to look for its traces. We must go back to the Narutowicza square, and then to the market. It is the oldest market in town, though its buildings come mainly from the second half of the nineteenth century. The building of the old guard houses an information center. You can get a free plan for walking around the town - with the marking and description of places worthy of seeing and hiking trails located in the area of Płock.

The square was once called - owing to the buildings of the old canonries located here- the Canonical Market. The first of the buildings - a Gothic one (of the late fifteenth century) served as the residence of the canons until 1867, and since 1908 it has been the headquarters of the Scientific Society of Płock. The second canonry was built in the 20s of the nineteenth century and since 1878 it has been the seat of the bishops of Płock.

We follow Grodzka street, built-in with nineteenth-century tenements, to get to the Old Market.

For many years it served commercial, administrative and judicial functions. It was also a center of social life. A modern fountain and the town hall are noteworthy. The central part of the town hall dates back to the years 1824-1827. Later, a tower with a clock was added. Several tenements are worth our attention. The one on the corner of Grodzka street comes from the eighteenth century. The Guardian Angel House is famous due to the fact that it was here that Sister Faustyna Kowalska, canonized in 2000, had her first revelation. The building at Stary Rynek 8 is the former Berliński Hotel. Today it houses the House of Darmstadt which serves cultural and educational functions. The same building houses the Tourist Information Centre (phone 24 367 19 44, www.itplock.pl).

Located near the Market is the parish church of St. Bartholomew. It was built in Gothic style, and rebuilt in baroque style. What draws attention is the late Baroque facade of the temple. The interior features a baroque altar, moved from the liquidated abbey church in Płock.

We come to the edge of the escarpment again. We can see the remains of the defensive wall. Granaries, characteristic of the Vistula cities, are located further. One of them houses a branch of the Mazovian Museum in Płock with an interest-





Horse-riding competition in Łąck

ing exhibition Mazovian folk sculptures (Spichlerz, ul. Kazimierza Wielkiego 11b, phone 24 262 25 95).

Plock is also famous for one of the oldest schools in Poland. Marshal Stanislaw Małachowski High School is housed in a building erected by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century. It is adjacent to a Gothic tower. What is interesting in the vaults are the Romanesque and Gothic remains of the foundations of the old church of St. Michael. Historical documents indicate that there was a school at the collegiate church of the twelfth century.

Plock was a very old seat of the Jewish community, who had lived here since the first half of the thir-

teenth century. The Jewish quarter, turned into a ghetto by the Nazis during the occupation, was located between the Old Market Square, Bielska street and the defensive walls. In 1941 Germans deported 10 thousand people to extermination camps and destroyed the central part of the district. The Little Synagogue survived, and it was bought by the city authorities and turned into a gallery.

Located at Kazimierz Wielki street is the monastery and cathedral complex of the Mariavites. It was built entirely in the neo-Gothic style. This is the main temple of Old Catholic Church of the Mariavites. The tomb of its founder Feliksa Maria

Kozłowska is located in the vaults of the church.

Children will gladly visit the zoo, located on the Vistula. It is worth seeing as it features the biggest collection of reptiles and amphibians in Poland. Later, you can go down to the river bank.

Leaving Płock we embark on a tour to the nearby lakes - in the region of the Gostynińsko-Włocławski Landscape Park. You have to cross the Vistula River and follow route no. 60 in the direction of Gostynin. Łąck is located 12 km from the city. It is a tourist destination, located on Lake Łąckie, and it is famous for the National Stallion Stud. In 1923, the former estate of the Furhman family was transformed into a stud. The pride of the stud are thoroughbred sport horses. Horse-riding holidays and other recreational events are organized here.

The Gostynin-Włocławek Landscape Park is one of the largest parks in Poland. It preserves the postglacial landscape with numerous finger lakes, hills and sand dunes covered

with forests. Towns located on Lake Lucieńskie are well-known water resorts. One should return to Płock following the route leading along the Vistula river.

After crossing the bridge in Płock we get to the Brudzeński Landscape Park. It comprises the valley of the lower Skrwa Prawa river with the adjacent forest complexes. The local scenery is extremely picturesque, the river meanders in deep ravines. One can see badgers, beavers, otters, and numerous species of rare birds in here. Canoeing is an event organized here too.

Once on this side of the Vistula River, it is a must to go to the town of Rokita (20 km from Płock), which features a brick church of St. Peter and Paul located on the high bank of the river. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it was built in the thirteenth century in the late-Romanic style and is one of the oldest and best preserved buildings in Mazovia. The main altar dates back to the eighteenth century.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Płock – Łąck – Rokicie – Brudzeński Park Krajobrazowy: 150 km. The total distance is 300 km.
- Sightseeing Płock – 2 hours, Diocesan Museum – 2 hours, Museum of Mazovia – 1,5 hours, Łąck – 1 hour, Rokicie – 1 hour, Brudzeński Landscape Park – 3 hours.



Accommodation:

- Czardasz Hotel, Płock, ul. Dobrzyńska 62b, phone (24) 367 20 47, www.hotelczardasz.pl
- Herman Hotel, Płock, ul. Sienkiewicza 32, phone (24) 367 00 00, www.hotelherman.pl
- Petrochemia Hotel, Płock, ul. 3 Maja 33, phone (24) 365 60 01, www.hotelpetrochemia.pl
- Płock Hotel, Płock, al. Jachowicza 38, phone (24) 262 93 93, www.hotelplock.eu
- Starzyński Hotel, Płock, ul. Piekarska 1, phone (24) 366 02 00, www.starzynski.com.pl
- 'Martus' guest rooms, Płock, ul. Lubuska 15, phone (24) 264 83 10,
- Rybaki Tavern, Płock, ul. Mostowa 5/7, phone (24) 264 56 58, www.zajazd-rybacki.plo.pl
- 'Dom Darmstadt' House of Darmstadt, Płock, Stary Rynek 8, phone (24) 367 19 22, www.dd.pokis.pl
- 'Gościniec Płock', Płock, al. Jachowicza 8a, phone (24) 264 74 97
- Dębowa Góra Hotel, Nowe Rumunki, gm. Łąck, phone (24) 384 21 00, www.debowagora.plock.com
- Rusalka Hotel, Łąck, ul. Amazonki 3, phone (24) 384 18 00, www.rusalka.plock.com
- 'Biały Dworek' Stallion Stud, Łąck, ul. Płocka 12, phone (24) 262 98 97
- Biały Dom Motel, Grabina 28/1 gm. Łąck, phone (24) 264 40 28
- Zacisze Recreational Center, Koszelówka, gm. Łąck, phone (24) 277 54 83, www.owzacisze.pl
- Zacisze BIS Recreational Center, Koszelówka, gm. Łąck, phone (24) 277 10 81, www.zaciszebis.pl
- 'Jagoda' Agritourist Farm, G. i T. Konarscy, Łązniewek 10, gm. Błonie, phone (22) 725 23 55
- Sports and Recreation Center (Ośrodek Rekreacyjno-Szkoleniowy), Cierszewo 8, Brudzeń Duży, phone (24) 260 94 65, www.cierszewo.com.pl
- 'Nad Skrwą' accommodation, Brudzeń Duży 110, gm. Brudzeń Duży, phone (24) 260 40 95
- Agritourism farms and other numerous seasonal recreational centers: www.itplock.pl, www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- 'Art-Deco' Pizza House, Płock, Stary Rynek 17, phone (24) 268 57 51, www.artdeco.plock.pl
- Corner Pizza House, Płock, ul. Kolegialna 39, phone (24) 262 69 74
- Corner Pizza House, Płock, ul. Kwiatka 27, phone (24) 262 74 90
- Killer Pizza House, ul. Grodzka 3, Płock, (24) 268 81 25
- Napoli Pizza House, ul. Armii Krajowej 14, Płock, (24) 266 89 74
- Roma Pizza House, ul. Grodzka 13, Płock, phone (24) 268 38 60
- Zacisze Recreational Center Bar, Koszelówka, gm. Łąck, phone (24) 277 14 61

THE BUG RIVER RECREATIONAL SPORTS

KAMIEŃCZYK – WYSZKÓW – BROK – ZUZELA

We start our tour in Kamieńczyk. First we take route no. 8, leading towards Białystok. Before the bridge in Wyszków turn to road no. 62 in the direction of Sokołów Podlaski. All you need to do once on this route is to take a left turn to Kamieńczyk. We get to the town center, which makes a very nice impression. Once it was an important fortified city and it was called Kamieniec Mazowiecki. Dukes going for a hunt in the Kamieniec Forest used to stop here. Kamieńczyk (formerly known as Kamieniec) received municipal rights as early as the fifteenth century, much earlier than the adjoining Wyszków, but lost it in 1869, probably due to reprisals after the January uprising. The medieval urban layout of the market, from which many streets depart, is the trace of the distant past. The wooden buildings are partially preserved. The Church, in a style characteristic of many Mazovian towns, was designed by Józef Pius Dziekański.

A route junction is located in the market. We follow the yellow signs, all the way to the river. One can really have a good time in the lovely valley

of the Bug river. We reach the road and it is from here that the Liwiec river stretches its waters. Summer cottages stretch along the sandy shore.

We go to Wyszków, which makes the impression of a huge intersection. The city has always been located on a trade route. It received municipal rights in 1502. Wyszków experienced a golden period in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Swedish wars hindered the development of the city, and the two world wars have contributed to its significant destruction.

Overlooking the town is the church of St. Idzi. A tunnel was built under a busy road. Ramps located next to the stairs were constructed with the disabled visitors in mind. The church was built in 1793 in classicistic style. A painting of Our Lady (in a silver dress) of the second half of the seventeenth century hangs in the side altar of the south chapel. It was in the building of the parsonage during the Polish-Soviet war that Feliks Dzierżyński, Feliks Kon and Julian Marchlewski awaited the victory of the invaders.





The Bug River

An obelisk of the Vasa dynasty is located at 3 Maja street, next to the park. It was erected after 1655 (probably with the funds of Jan Kazimierz foundation) to commemorate the death of Jan Ferdynand Waza in Wyszaków. A bundle - the coat of arms of the Vasa - is located at the base of the obelisk.

We leave Wyszaków and follow route no. 8 for another 32 km towards Białystok, and then turn right - into route no. 694 to Brok. Today it is a small town on the Bug River. The local parish church was built in 1560 by John Baptiste from Venice in the Gothic-Renaissance style. The interior features a valuable Renaissance polychromy.

Very little is left of the bishop's palace. It used to be a summer residence of the bishops of Płock. It was built at the confluence of the Bug River and its tributary the Turki river. It was built between 1617-1624 for bishop Henry Firlej. It was a Renaissance villa. It has been deteriorating ever since the invasion of the Swedes. To this day, virtually nothing has survived. Brok is changing its character, it is becoming a summer resort, which is evidenced by numerous cottages inhabited seasonally. There are several places where you can get to the river, but a walk along its banks is hampered due to the lack of a proper path. A road to the municipal swimming pool leads from

a square with a monument dedicated to Józef Piłsudski. The sandy shore and the river with a lazy current encourage visitors to spend their time here or take a swim. The surrounding forests are also a nice walking area.

Next - following route no. 694 through Małkonia Górna - we go to Zuzela, which houses the Museum of Childhood Years of the Primate of the Millennium Stefan Wyszyński. One should get to the church. The museum is on the other side of the street. In order to access and see the exhibition one should ask non-habituated nuns who live nearby for permission to enter. The museum houses a classroom from the school years of the primate. It features desks with inkpots, a map of Russia, and a por-

trait of the Tsar and his wife. Sister tell stories about the school under the partitions, as well as about Stefan Wyszyński, who, as it turns out, was not at all polite. The showcases present numerous pictures of the Wyszyński family and of the primate visiting Zuzela.

The Wyszyński family lived in Zuzela at the time when Stefan was born. He was baptized in the local church, which unfortunately did not survive to this day. Only the baptismal font survived. It can be seen in the church across the street. Stefan's father was an organist. The future primate had five siblings, except that the two youngest ones died in infancy. After moving from Zuzeli - shortly after his birth - his mother died.



Museum of the Childhood Years of the Primate of the Millennium
Stefan Wyszyński in Zuzela

The next room features a kitchen with items specific to the early twentieth century. The exhibits include a cupboard adorned with cut-outs, a churn, a flat iron, a cradle and many other everyday objects.

What attracts attention in the living room is a harmonium, an altar and numerous paintings. The images of Madonna and the Lady of Ostro Brama were particularly important for the family. The Primate's father went on pilgrimages to Częstochowa, and his mother went on pilgrimages to Vilnius.

Having signed in the guestbook and placed our donation to help maintain the museum we go to the church. It was built in neo-Gothic style, yet it was severely damaged during the Second World War. The interior features an old wooden baptismal font and the image of the Virgin Mary in the side altar. Both items have been moved from the old wooden church.

What is worth seeing outside is the belfry with three bells and a chapel modeled after a cave in Lourdes.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Kamieńczyk – Wyszków – Brok – Zuzela: 110 km. The total distance is 220 km.
- Kamieńczyk – 2 hours, Wyszków – 1 hour, Brok – 1,5 hours, Zuzela – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- 'Meliorant' Recreational Center, Brok, ul. Brzostowa 52, phone (29) 745 70 25
- 'Rzemieślnik' Recreational Center, Brok, ul. Brzostowa 28, phone (29) 745 70 39, 608 888 405, www.rzemieslnik.net
- 'Nadrzeczce' Resort, K. Józwik, Brok, ul. Brzostowa 5, www.nadrzeczce.pl, phone (29) 745 70 11
- 'Pod Sosnami Inn, Małkinia Górna, ul. Nurska 23, phone (29) 745 55 65
- 'Agritourism farms: www.brok.pl, www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Kufelek Bar, ul. Parkingowa 1, Brok, phone (29) 745 75 22
- Kormoran Inn, ul. Szosowa 2, Brok, phone (29) 745 75 68

IN THE KOZIENICKA WILDERNESS AND FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF JAN KOCHANOWSKI

KOZIENICE – AUGUSTÓW – CZARNOLAS – ZWOLEŃ – GARBATKA LETNISKO

Kozienice is located about 80 km south of Warsaw. One can get there by route no. 79, leading towards Sandomierz. An industrial district with the famous plant is located at the entrance from Warsaw. The city is surrounded by forests of the Koziennicka Wilderness from all sides.

The origins of Kozenice date back to medieval times. At the royal command in 1409 a wooden boat bridge was built near Kozenice, which was then rafted to Czerwińsk. It was used in 1410 by the royal troops to cross the Vistula River (prior to the battle with the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald). A great hunt was held in the years 1409-1410 in the forest surrounding Kozenice, which would ensure food to royal troops, marching to war with the Teutonic Knights.

In 1429 Władysław Jagiełło officially incorporated Kozenice into the royal administration, there was a royal hunting manor here. In November 1466, King Casimir IV, fleeing from the plague, took refuge with his family in Kozenice. Future Sigismund the Old was born here

on January 1, 1467. In 1537, a monument to commemorate this event was erected, and we can still admire it today. The monument has been restored, but it is worth remembering that it is the oldest monument in Poland.

Since the beginning of the reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski Kozenice had been surrounded by his special care. In the years 1776-1791 a palace complex was built again. The palace with a guest annex and a kitchen resembled Baroque solutions, but the decorations of the building were classicistic.

In the 80s of the eighteenth century industrial development began in Kozenice - a rolling mill, a copper forge and a factory of firearms were established.

Today the most interesting facility is the old palace; it houses the seat of the town authorities. After the November Uprising the builder of the Dęblin fortress, General Iwan Dehn, lived in the palace; he ordered the building to be adapted to the needs of his family. The final shape





The palace and park complex in Koziienice - the seat of the Regional Museum

was given to the palace in the years 1896-1900. In September 1939, after the bombing by the Luftwaffe, only the left annex, which houses the Regional Museum today, was preserved. In the 50s the palace was rebuilt. A four-leaved swimming pool is located in front of the palace.

The Regional Museum features old hives and objects resembling the ancient beekeeping traditions and the old professions of the local inhabitants. The furnishings resemble an open-air museum, which is a little surprising for a palace.

The buildings are surrounded by a landscape park. What remained are the alleys, stairs in front of the garden facade of the palace, two stone pedestals of the eighteenth century, and - at the entrance -

the above-mentioned obelisk, commemorating the birth of Sigismund the Old.

Koziienice are a good place for a trip with children. Opposite the palace is a Jordan Garden with a playground for children, including an artificial basketball pitch.

If you like sports you will certainly not complain about boredom, because Koziienice also has a swimming pool, a horse riding stud, a water reservoir, and many hiking trails located close to the city in the Koziienicka Wilderness.

The town of Augustów is an excellent place to go hiking in the wilderness. We take route no. 737 from Koziienice towards Radom. Augustów boasts the Didactic and Museum Chamber of the Koziienicka Wil-

derness. It is the seat of: a botanical garden and an exhibition of forestry tools, as well as exhibitions on flora and fauna of the Koziennicka Wilderness. Signs of the black trail are located to the left of the museum buildings. These will take us to the Źródło Królewskie reserve. We have to go 4.8 km one way. First we go through fields, then the trail turns into the forest. As many as 218 bird species have been observed in the Koziennicki Landscape Park, including rare lesser spotted eagles, black storks, cranes and European rollers. However, we are most likely to spot only a hare crossing the road. Our trail (after a hike through the forest) leads to a broad vista; one has to be careful as cars drive through here. This can also be an alter-

native route for the less active ones: all you need to do is enter the forest from the road towards Radom and you will see a signpost to the Czerwona Leśniczówka. We come to a clearnig with a lodge. There are benches and tables here, so you can eat. The didactic path 'Królewskie Źródło' begins here. The name comes from the forest sacred place - a reserve neighbored by crystal clear springs centuries ago. According to the local tradition Władysław Jagiełło himself drank from them. The path length is 3 km. A lodge is located at its beginning. Once there was a house of a former narrow-gauge railway gateman here. We come across the first information board, dedicated to the railway running here in the years 1915-1989. We will



The Koziennicka Wilderness

come across several such boards throughout the trail. First we can admire the natural character of the forest. Then we can watch the picturesque gorge of the river Zagożdżanka from a bridge. Wooden bridges take us to the river where we can watch beaver lodges, to finally arrive at the Królewskie Źródło reserve. We return to the parking lot or to Augustów.

The next goal of our expedition is in the Museum of Jan Kochanowski in Czarnolas. We're back towards Kozienice and we turn into the road no. 79 in the direction of Sandomierz at the roundabout before the town. The extremely picturesque route leads through the Kozienska Wilderness. We take a turn in the Policzna village, there is a signpost showing the way to Czarnolas and the museum that is visited by crowds. It is no wonder, for although it does not have valuable exhibits from the life of Kochanowski and this is not a true manor house of the poet, it has been very nicely arranged. Six different halls present various periods from the life of Kochanowski and the poems assigned to these periods. Individual rooms feature quotations from these poems. Each of the rooms has its own motto: „Kształtowanie”, „Renesansowy manifest poety”, „Poeta Czarnoleski”, „Poeta i obywatel”, „Pisarz przy pracy”, „Poeta nieśmiertelny” (‘Formative Years’, ‘The Renaissance poet’s manifesto’, ‘Czarnoleski Poet’, ‘A Poet and a citizen’,

‘Poet at work’, ‘Poet immortal’). The only monument, which is associated with Kochanowski, are the iron doors. The manor house preserved until today, which houses the museum, was built in the early nineteenth century and has nothing to do with the house of Kochanowski. It is believed that Kochanowski’s house was located in the place where the chapel stands now. The park surrounding the museum, where once the famous linden tree grew, features an obelisk with a symbolic sarcophagus of Urszulka.

The poet’s statue stands in front of the museum. One may have an impression that Kochanowski has just walked in front of the court to greet the guests.

The museum is the place where one can buy memorabilia and works of the poet Kochanowski. A souvenirs shop is also located next to the parking lot.

In order to stay within the circle of Jan Kochanowski we go to Zwoleń. One should cut through the road leading to Sandomierz. Another statue of Kochanowski can be seen in the marketplace in Zwoleń. We have to go through the main road and continue straight on towards the church. On our way we pass a monument dedicated to soldiers of the AK. At Kościelna street there is yet another statue of Kochanowski, this time holding Urszulka in his arms.



Statue of Jan Kochanowski in Czarnolas

The church of the Holy Cross was built in stages, first - before the year 1570 - the presbytery was built, while the nave was built before 1585. Around 1610 owing to the foundation of Adam Kochanowski (a judge the Lublin) the so called Kochanowski chapel was added, followed by the addition of the Owadowski chapel in the years 1620-1630. The church was enlarged by adding side naves and a tower in the 20s of the twentieth century. In 1979 a fire destroyed part of the interior, which was later rebuilt.

The Kochanowski chapel is built on a square and topped with an octagonal cupola with a lantern. The interior features a bas-relief of the poet in an Italian outfit. Centuries ago, members of the Kochanowski family were buried in this chapel. After the flood the remains were first transferred to the cemetery, then under the morgue floor, until finally in 1984 - on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the birth of the poet - the remains of the Kochanowski family were once again placed in the underground chapel.

We leave Zwoleń and go back to Warsaw. We only make a stop in Garbatka Letnisko. In the inter-war period cottages were established on plots leased from the Directorate of State Forests. The out-

break of the war prevented the registration of Garbatka as a spa. Currently, the summer resort traditions of the town begin to re-emerge. The town boasts a resort with a swimming pool.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Kozenice – Czarnolas – Zwoleń – Garbatka Letnisko: 120 km. The total distance is 240 km.
- Kozenice – 1,5 hours, Czarnolas – 1,5 hours, Zwoleń – 1 hour, a walk through the wilderness – 4 hours, Garbatka Letnisko – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- A boardinghouse, KCKRiS Recreational Center, ul. Boh. Studzianek 30, Kozenice, phone (48) 614 67 26, 614 60 91
- Energetyk Hotel, ul. Warszawska 20, Kozenice, phone (48) 614 32 11
- PTTK Branch – provides information on accommodation, al. 1 Maja 5, Kozenice, phone (48) 614 26 94
- 'Polanka' Recreational Center, Garbatka Letnisko, phone 510 382 960, www.mojagarbatka.pl
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Jowita Restaurant, Kozenice, ul. Warszawska 20, phone (48) 614 23 13
- Pod Sosną Bar, Kozenice, ul. Boh. Studzianek, phone (48) 614 66 23
- Brawo Restaurant, Kozenice, ul. Batalionów Chłopskich 45, phone (48) 614 21 31
- Pizza Planet Pizza House, Kozenice, ul. Warszawska 29/7, phone (48) 382 01 31
- Cafe Bar Mors, Kozenice, ul. Legionów 4, phone (48) 611 72 22
- Karczma u Chłopa restaurant, Garbatka Letnisko, ul. Kochanowskiego 4, phone (48) 621 00 58
- 'Zajazd przy Gościńcu', Garbatka Letnisko, ul. Zwoleńska 17, phone (48) 621 02 84

IN THE LAND OF BLOSSOMING APPLE TREES

WARKA – PETRYKOZY – LEWICZYN – MAŁA WIEŚ

Warka is located about 40 km south of Warsaw. The easiest way to get there is first to follow road no. 79 towards Sandomierz, and then - route no. 731. A trip in spring takes place among picturesquely blooming apple orchards. This area is the largest fruit basin in Europe.

We begin our tour by exploring the town of Warka. The city's history dates back to medieval times. As early as in 1321 the Duke of Czersk and Mazovia Trojden confirmed the municipal rights, probably granted earlier. The convenient location by the Pilica river provided Warka with the opportunity for development. A defeat came during the Swedish invasion. Although Stefan Czarniecki defeated the Swedes nearby the city, Warka was completely destroyed. The next period of prosperity began in the nineteenth century.

What is worth visiting today are the local churches. A post-Franciscan Baroque church dates back to the seventeenth century. The ashes of the dukes of Mazovia are placed in the vaults. The building of the former monastery was turned into a parsonage and flats. The baroque church of St. Mikołaj,

built in the seventeenth century witnessed the turbulent history of the city. Repeatedly rebuilt from the ruins, it lost its original character. The interior attracts with its main altar, dating back to 1610, and built in the late Renaissance style. A baptismal font and a stoup made of sandstone, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are also of interest.

An interesting historic building is a neoclassical town hall, built in 1821.

The next stage of our tour is the museum dedicated to General Kazimierz Pułaski. It is situated in a manor house in Winiary, which was home to the Pułaski family.

The exhibition presents the life of Kazimierz Pułaski. It features episodes of the Confederation of Bar, the American stage in the general's life, culminating in a heroic death at the Battle of Savannah, and paintings by Chełmoński and Brandt. Another part of the exhibition is devoted to the Polish-American relations. One of the rooms refers to the American experience of Tadeusz Kościuszko, the other part of the exhibition presents the fate of Helena





Church of St. Mikołaj in Warka

Modrzejewska, Henryk Sienkiewicz and other Poles, who spent some of their lives in the country across the Ocean.

Warka is also the birthplace and hometown of Piotr Wysocki, one of the heroes of the November night. During the January Uprising a guerilla troop led by Colonel Władysław Kononowicz fought in the area. Captured by the Russians, the Colonel was executed along with his aide-camps in the meadows on the Pillica river. The heroic fight and the death of the soldiers is commemorated by a mound in the meadows.

Nowadays, the history of Warka is connected with the brewery operating here. Warka beer was famous not only in Poland but also far beyond its borders. Often quoted is the

story of Pope Clement VIII, who lived in the sixteenth century. Even when he was the papal nuncio in Poland he was known as a lover of beer from Warka. When the pope fell ill, he sighed: 'Piva di Warka'. Those gathered at his bedside thought that it was about some saint so they began to repeat: 'Holy beer from Warka - pray for us.' Upon hearing this the patient began to laugh, which caused a rupture of the ulcer causing the disease. The Pope recovered.

After sightseeing - time for a walk. The area around Warka, just like the entire Grójec district - is a good place for scenic hiking and canoeing. It is worth kayaking, beginning the journey at the water campsite in Warka. Particularly picturesque are the ravines near Old Warka overgrown with

blackthorn and wild roses. The Pilica river, washing under the high escarpment, forms river meanders and makes you admire the scenery of the nearby Kozienska Wilderness.

Those who do not want to use the kayaks, may choose an alternative trip along the scenic shores of the Pilica river.

A place worth going after leaving Warka is the village of Petrykozy. The local courtyard was once frequented by Jan Chełmoński. The village seems as if it had been taken out of his paintings. Over the years, the manor house fell into disrepair, until Wojciech Siemion saved it from total ruin. One can admire interesting sculpture exhibitions in the park. Since his death the manor house has been under the supervision of his family. You should also see the charming windmills - examples of wooden architecture.

The next stop is Lewiczyn. The place features the shrine of Our Lady of Consolation of the Afflicted and the miraculous painting. The church maintains 'The Book of miracles and graces through the intercession of Our Lady's image in the church in Lewiczyn' which contains descriptions of extraordinary physical and spiritual healing. The present church was built in the early seventeenth century. The sanctuary was so famous that Sigismund Vasa himself donated monstrances to the church, while John III Sobieski, after the Battle of Vienna, presented a chasuble made from the tent of the Vizier; it was also here that Tadeusz Kościuszko was making plans to defend the capital in 1794. The eighteenth-century image of Madonna was supposed to be - according to the oldest tradition - one



Grojec orchards

of the 13 images that came from the hand of Luke the Evangelist.

One should also visit Mała Wieś boasting a palace complex, built between 1783-1786. The palace, built originally for Voivode Bazyli Walicki, repeatedly changed owners. This was the place where the hero of Somosierra - Kozielowski, spent his last years. Finally, after the Second World War the owners of the facility included the Potato Institute, and then the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister's Office. Today the palace returned to the

descendants of its builder. Repair and maintenance works continue, but it is already possible to organize commemorative events here and spend the night in a historic setting, also for individual guests. If you succeed, we must also experience the charm of the old rail travel. The Grójecka Narrow-Gauge Commuter Railway- nowadays known as the Piaseczyńska Narrow-Gauge Railway, is entered into the register of monuments. Trips from Piaseczno – Grójec – Mała Wieś – Mogielnica – Nowe Miasto are organized every Sunday. The length of the line is 72 km.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Warka – Petrykozy – Lewiczyn – Mała Wieś: 100 km. The total distance is 200 km.
- Sightseeing Warka – 2 hours, a walk by the Pilica river – 3 hours, Petrykozy – 1,5 hours, Lewiczyn 1 hour, Mała Wieś – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Sielanka nad Pilicą Hotel, Warka, ul. Łąkowa 1, phone (48) 666 16 00, www.sielanka.pl
- Dom Gościnny (Guest house), Warka, ul. Puławska 39d, phone (48) 670 26 70, www.hotel-warka.oit.pl
- Winiary Inn, Warka, ul. Turystyczna 3, phone (48) 667 26 76, 667 50 43, www.zajazdnawiniarach.pl
- Palace in Kociszew, Conference and Didactics Center with agritourism, Kociszew k. Grójca, www.kociszew.pl, phone (48) 664 50 19, 501 128 168
- 'Biały Pałac Palczew', Palczew – Parcela 19, koło Warki, phone (48) 667 14 71, www.palacpalczew.pl,

Restaurants:

- Small gastronomy (Mała gastronomia), Warka, ul. Polna 26, phone (48) 667 38 40

IN A SMALL TOWN AND IN A VILLAGE

BIEŻUŃ – SIERPC – DROBIN

Bieżeń and Sierpc lie in the north-western part of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. The area is full of forests and lakes that have not been fully discovered yet. The area is bordered by two voivodeships: Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship and Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship. One should come on a trip here if only to see two unusual museums.

To get to Bieżeń from Warsaw one must take route no. 7 towards Gdańsk, and then route no. 10 to Bydgoszcz and finally route no. 561 to Żuromin.

It's a little over 100 km from the capital. Bieżeń is a very old city. The first mention of it comes from the foundation act of 1406. It had been private property for many years. It belonged, inter alia, to the Great Crown Chancellor Andrzej Zamoyski, who settled here in 1767. In 1776 the Parliament ordered Zamoyski to draft a code of legal rights. It was in Bieżeń where he worked on it. After the second partition of Poland the town became part of the so-called South Prussia. Since then it had continu-



Museum of the Mazovian Countryside in Sierpc

ously changed owners and had been subject to lotting.

Today the main attraction is the local museum. It is open for a very short time, on weekdays (except Mondays and days following holidays) from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m., on Saturdays and Sundays from 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

The Museum is housed in a restored former hospital, which was founded by Konstancja Zamoyaska in the late eighteenth century. The exhibits show the life of a small town in the second half of the nineteenth century. The tours starts with the doctor's surgery. The original furniture comes from the office of Piotr Wincenty Gluszkiewicz. What draws attention is the gynecological couch and a table from the interwar period, and a full set of obstetric instruments. Interesting x-rays pictures also survive. Dr. Antoni Wolski's prescription book is of interest, as he had written down ingredients of different medicines for various diseases for the period of half a century. The bookcase features medical books.

The next room is a bedroom (from the late 20's and 30's of XX century) with a set of furniture and hygienic instruments. We move from the bedroom to the salon/drawing-room.

The first floor features a very interesting exhibition: 'Biezuń and its inhabitants in the past'. Old documents and photographs are gath-

ered here. They are souvenirs from national uprisings, the Second World War, including all of its front lines. Before the Second World War Jews constituted 50% of the Biezuń population. The museum presents the Torah, candlesticks and other Judaica. The exhibitions are presented by the museum staff, who vividly describe the history of the city and the stories connected with some exhibits.

After leaving the museum one should go to the old mansion. The road located just around the corner of the museum building will take you there. A private owner began repairs, but the work was interrupted. One can still see the great block of the palace, two outbuildings and a park with moats.

The second destination of our trip - the Mazovian Village Museum - is located just outside Sierpc, on the road towards Bydgoszcz. The journey from Biezuń will take us only about half an hour. First we take route no. 541, then just a short distance along route no. 10 towards Bydgoszcz. The place, which is a rare case in Poland, is well marked. The open-air museum occupies quite a large area. Both entire rural farmsteads and individual buildings were moved here. It features cottages of the village dwellers. In order to better secure the old rural households guests are only allowed into the first chamber of the cottages, whereas the other rooms can



The interior of one of the cottages in the Museum of the Mazovian Countryside

only be viewed through plastic door. The museum also houses a former school with a preserved teacher's apartment.

The building of the noble's manor features the typical interior of the former manor estate of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One enters a spacious hall with an impressive chest used as decoration to move on to see comfortable and beautiful living room furniture. The old manor kitchen, with copper and brass vessels, is located in close proximity to the dining room, which features cupboards with carved faience dinner sets. The center of the bedroom is occupied by a huge double bed, while the office located behind the cabinet is equipped with a desk - the workplace for the master of the house. The modern, yet appropriately styled museum and exhibition complex, boasts rich ethnographic, ethnological and historical collections. The permanent exhibitions also include a collection of sculptures of folk artists and an exhibition presenting means of transport, i.e. court carriages, carriages and landaus from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Additionally, the complex includes a conference room. Very tired travelers can make use of the accommodation (26 places in 10 comfortable and modern rooms).

Near the buildings are orchards, vegetable gardens, flower gardens

and cultivated fields. Animals are also raised here. Each object has its own guardian, who eagerly tells stories of the former residents. Rural sets represent the types of rural villages typical of Mazovia. It is a hamlet, wick and a roadside village.

The exhibitions held in the museum vary depending on the season. In different months the interiors of the houses feature presentations of the daily rural activities, connected with the house and the farm: honey collection and centrifugation, collecting and drying herbs, wreaths on the octave of Corpus Christi, Pentecost, baking bread, or cottage cheese production. Special exhibitions taking place from December to February present Mazovian folk customs, rituals associated with Christmas. Presentations of ornaments and decorations associated with Easter begin on Palm Sunday and last until the end of May.

Various outdoor events are held at the open-air museum. A series of 'Sunday in the museum' lasts from 1 May until late September. One can view the exhibitions in the farmsteads, listen to a folk band, look at the demonstrations of traditional crafts and folk crafts (blacksmithing, weaving, pottery, braiding, embroidery and sculpture), ride a horse-drawn carriage or go on horseback. Themed Sunday events are also organized. Harvest takes place on the



The tombstone of Wojciech Kryski in the church in Drobin

first Sunday of August. The event features a demonstration of the various stages of processing traditional crops: mowing with a scythe, sickle pick-up, binding sheaves, transport to the barn, threshing (threshing with flails and flue). There is also a bread fair and folk performances from Poland and

other countries.

A separate part of the museum features the buildings where the movie 'With Fire and Sword' was shot.

On the way back we can use a site prepared for a bonfire, but one should rather go to the inn aptly named Pohlanka. We have a choice of żurek

(a soup made of fermented rye flour) and a mushroom soup, a variety of dumplings and an impressive size of a slice of bread with lard. The wonderful, very tasty bread can also be taken home. The same building as the inn houses a gift shop with folk art products.

Upon return from the museum one can also visit Sierpc itself. One can find interesting churches here: a late Gothic Benedictine church, a Gothic parish church and the church of St. Spir-

it. A trip to Biezuń or Sierpc can be combined with a stay at the lake. If we go towards Rypin from Sierpc the lake is just a few kilometers away. The route towards Bydgoszcz will also take us to the lake.

Drobin - a town passed by on the way to Warsaw - boasts a parish church with beautiful tombs of the Kryski family, probably made by the Italian sculptor Santi Gucci.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Biezuń – Sierpc – Drobin: 150 km. The total distance is 300 km.
- Sightseeing Biezuń – 1,5 hours, Sierpc – 1 hour, the open-air museum – 2 hours, Drobin – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Delfin Hotel, ul. Sucharskiego 2, Sierpc, phone (24) 275 74 72
- Conference and Recreational Center (Museum of the Mazovian Countryside), Sierpc, ul. G. Narutowicza 64, phone (24) 275 28 83, www.mwmskansen.pl
- Maxim Bar, Borkowo Kościelne, gm. Sierpc, ul. Warszawska 1, phone (24) 275 63 95
- U Wojciecha Motel, Golezszyn, gm. Sierpc, ul. Sierpecka 3, phone (24) 276 11 28
- 'Kasztelan' Inn, Białasy 55, gm. Szczutowo, by the voivodeship road no. 560, phone (24) 275 61 63, www.zajazdkasztelan.pl
- Oaza J. M. Obczyńscy Inn, gm. Szczutowo, Całownia 10 B, by the state road no. 10, phone (24) 274 14 70, 602 106 070, www.zajazd-sierpc.pl
- Mini-Relax Recreational Center, W. Gajowniczek, ul. Modrzewiowa 1, Słupia, gm. Szczutowo, phone 605 050 975

Restaurants:

- Przystań restaurant, Biezuń, ul. Mławska 11, phone (23) 657 80 12
- Pohulanka Inn, Sierpc, ul. G. Narutowicza 64 (Museum of the Mazovian Countryside), phone (24) 275 28 83 ext. 42, www.mwmskansen.pl

WALKING THROUGH THE KAMPINOS WILDERNESS

GRANICA – THE KAMPINOS WILDERNESS

Just outside the gates of the lively capital lies the Kampinos National Park, established on 16 January 1959. It is the second largest national park in Poland. It was established to protect the best preserved complexes of European inland dunes, natural forests and swamps. More than three thousand species of animals inhabit the park, including the moose, beaver, lynx, lesser spotted eagle, black stork, the crane. There are many places of national remembrance from the years 1863, 1939, 1944 in here. The Kampinos Wilderness is located north-west of Warsaw in the Vistula proglacial stream valley. The forest landscape is dominated by sand dunes and marshes. This area was formed during the glacier period by waters from a melting glacier flowing into the sea through a 18 km wide river bed of the Old Vistula. The sandy shoals are currently dune areas, mostly covered with pine wood. The old areas where water used to flow now make up swamps with alder-birch forests, sedge areas and meadows.

The world of animals in the forest is very rich. Apart from elk, which rep-

resents the fauna of the Kampinos (its image appears on the emblem of the park), the forests and meadows of the park are full of large mammals such as deer, wild boars, foxes, deer and badgers. Noteworthy are the numerous anthills, while marshy areas trouble tourists with mosquitoes, that is why one should not forget to take some deterrent measures. One should also look under his feet, so as not to step on a viper.

We go to the town of Granica, where we will start our tour of the forest trails. We can here from Warsaw by route no. 580 towards Sochaczew. After about 40 km we stop at the town of Kampinos to see a wooden church. It is clearly visible from the road, therefore no one should have problems getting there. It was built of fine-ringed Kampinos pine in 1783. The facade resembles stone churches built in the Baroque-Classical style. Across the street is a parsonage. The cemetery is the burial place of insurgents from 1863 and the soldiers of 1939. Next to the church is a classical mansion. In 1863, the rebel headquarters of Zygmunt





Graves of the fallen soldiers of the Polish Army

Padlewski stationed here. During the last war there was a border police outpost here. The frontier between the Reich and the General Government ran through the Kampinos Wilderness.

We enter the Kampinos National Park right outside Kampinos. We get to a parking lot in the town of Granica. The parking lot is well maintained. It features a catering spot, camping, playground, fireplace, toilets and a ticket kiosk where you can buy guide books. There is also a possibility of horse-drawn carriage rides through the wilderness. Prices are negotiated individually. Next to the lodge is the Kampinos Museum, one of the many facilities under the supervision of the

Didactics and Museum Center - an educational entity of the Kampinos National Park founded in 1990.

The museum consists of two rooms, one showing plants growing in the forest, and the other the world of animals. A special place is devoted to historical events which took place in the wilderness and to memorabilia associated with these events, mainly from the period of the January Uprising and World War II. Opposite the museum is an open-air exhibition presenting all Polish national parks. In the vicinity of the museum you will see an open-air museum of the forest building- three old peasant farmsteads, with thatched and shingled cottages.

To take a longer walk through the forest we initially follow yellow signs, but only for a short while, then we move along a common blue and green trail. We pass the oldest area of strict natural preservation called 'Granica', established in 1936. It comprises a fragment of the southern part of the dune belt bordering on the southern belt of marshes. The area features pine forest mixed with oaks. Wetlands also boast hornbeam, dark (black) birch dark and aspen. The undergrowth is lush and the underbrush is varied. The predominant species are those typical of forests. As we continue into the forest we encounter a grave of a soldier from 1939, which reminds of the bloody events, which took place in mid-September 1939. After the Battle of Bzura the Polish army withdrew to the east and northeast. Part of the army 'Łódź', which was commanded by General Thommée, passed the Kampinos Wilderness from the side of Leszno and Zaborowo to the north - to Modlin. At the same time, after the battle of Bzura, the Greater Poland Cavalry Brigade under the command of General W. Abraham, with the surviving remnants of the Army 'Poznań' (Gen. W. Bortnowski) forced their way through the woods, sands and marshes to the east - to Warsaw. The enemy attacked from the south, north and the air.

The trail runs close to the edge of the strict protection area. We get

to the old town of Narty. We approach the reserve 'Nart' established in 1940, which is now a strictly protected area. Exceptionally beautiful, noble and simple mast pines, as well as oaks and hornbeams grow here. In May, one can smell the wonderfully fragrant lilies of the valley, and Turk's cap lilies add to the diversity of the landscape. When the trails split we continue to follow the blue signs.

We reach the area of strict protection called 'Zamczysko', where a medieval stronghold of the thirteenth century is located. One should come closer and see a tall, cylindrical hill, surrounded by two belts of ramparts and moats. The wooden stairs lead us to the place where there was a castle centuries ago. All we can see today is the landscaped changed by the old moats. The stronghold is covered by over a hundred years old mixed forest. All species of trees and shrubs, that one can expect to see in a forest, can be found here. There is a grave of an AK's soldier from 1944 on the rampart of the stronghold.

During the occupation (1939-1944) many centers of resistance emerged in the Kampinos Wilderness. Warsaw troops drills and cadet training took place in the forests. Armed clashes often occurred.

In the summer of 1944, in the eastern part of the Kampinos, AK troops gathered in the number of 1300 people. In time, the group grew



to over 2500 people. Major 'Szymon' (Józef Krzyczkowski) took command. On August 2, a troop consisting of about 1,000 soldiers under the command of 'Szymon' was supposed to take over the Bielany airport. The attack failed as a result of overwhelming enemy fire. Later, the 'Kampinos' group took part in the insurgent fighting in Żoliborz, particularly in the bloody assault on the Gdańsk Station. After the withdrawal of the remaining group to the woods there was a period of fighting in the vicinity of Sowia Wola, Brzozówka, Pociecha, Sieraków, Truskaw. The insurgents were in control of the area between Wiersze, Roztoka, Cybulica and Malocice. This area, entirely free of the occupiers, then came to be called the 'Independent Republic of Kampinos'. In late September, under pressure of the predominating enemy forces the 'Kampinos' group, commanded by Major 'Okoń' (Alfons Kotowski) withdrew from the Kampinos into the Świętokrzyskie Mountains. Most of this group was defeated when crossing the Błońska highway and the railway line at the battle of Jaktorów.

After leaving the stronghold area we get to the trail junction again, which is exactly to the same place where we left off to get to Zamczysko. This time we will follow the red signs. The trail passes through the wetland area. After the rain one

must have suitable footwear, whereas in the spring and summer - an insect repellent. A more dry area is located near the Pine of Insurgents of 1863. In 1984 it fell due to age; very little fragments of the tree survived, but it is an important historic monument. It is located on the outskirts of Górki. This pine tree was used by the tsarist soldiers to hang insurgents members of the troop participating in the Battle of Zaborów Leśny. In spring 1863, Jarosław Dąbrowski, who was imprisoned at the Warsaw Citadel, put forward a plan to take control over the fortress during the Easter period (according to Old-Rite Church). The attack was to be carried out by an insurgent group from the Kampinos Wilderness led by Walery Remiszewski. The insurgents arrived to the outskirts of Warsaw, but the enemy - forewarned - increased vigilance, reinforced posts, and Remiszewski was ordered to withdraw into the forest. The troop marched from Babice through Lipków and Truskaw to the Zaborów forests. They were closely followed by Tsarist troops. On 24th April, near the village of Zaborowska Gać (now the 'Zaborów Forest' Strict Protection Area) a battle with the overwhelming forces of the enemy took place. It killed 72 insurgents along with the commander Walery Remiszewski. Dead bodies were buried in a common grave on the top of a dune located in the vicinity of the



An elk in the Kampinos Wilderness

forester's lodge (now the 'Zaborów Forest' Strict Protection Area). The remains of the Remiszewski troop were defeated in the skirmishes near Górki and Stara Dąbrowa. Survivors wandered in the forests for long time. They were caught by the Cossacks and hanged or shot without a trial. It was the pine tree on the edge of Górki which served as a gallows. More and more numerous graves appeared on the roadside dunes. Local people buried the dead at night in the cemetery in Kampinos.

Apart from the pine tree one can see crosses and a shrine on the edge of the village. There are also shelters and benches. After a short rest one can begin the way back.

At the Insurgent Pine the trail has to be changed again; this time the green signs are to be followed - first along the path, then through a narrow path in the woods, and after some time we find ourselves on the road again. We finally come to the known 'Nart' area of strict protection. We continue along the trail route common to both the green and blue trails. Just before the Granica village we enter the yellow trail and come to the parking lot.

If we decide to stay in the forest at night, we can leave Granica the next day for another trip.

Leaving the parking lot, turn left. On our way we pass a military cemetery in the shape of a stylized



The Kampinos Wilderness

eagle with the graves of 800 soldiers, including the regimen of the 7th Greater Poland Mounted Riflemen, who died on 16-17 September 1939. Cemeteries in Babice, Borzęcin, Kampinos, Kielpin on the Vistula, Laski, Leszno, Pocięsze, Wiersze, Wiktorów, Zaborów - hide the graves of many thousands of those who died in the Kampinos Wilderness during the September cam-

paign, the occupation and the Warsaw Uprising.

The trails behind the cemetery lead in two directions; we choose the one going west. Initially, it is also a walking path we can meet some persistent tourists, but after a distance of about 1 km it is getting empty. We go towards the Insurgents Oak. The route passes through a beautiful mixed forest. You can hear the sounds of many birds

every. We come to the oak, on which Tsarist Cossacks hanged the participants of the January Uprising.

Just behind the oak the route leads along the edge of the forest. We see a great clearing, with a solitary clump of trees. These are the extensive mud bogs of Bieliny. It is worth to stop here for a moment to admire the vast expanse. Forests were cut here in the second half of the nineteenth century.

After a short contemplation we enter the forest again. This is perhaps the prettiest stretch of the

trail. Signposts lead us through a varied terrain, we pass the dunes. We have to either climb or descend the hill all the time. That brings us to the purpose of our journey, that is, to the oak of St. Therese. The name of the oak and of the dunes comes from a shrine hanging on the tree with the image of St. Therese. There is a shelter here and - unfortunately - a forest road used by cars and motorcycles. After a short rest we return along the same route. The whole trip takes more than three hours. The route is about 12 km.



Practical information

- Warsaw - Kampinos: 50 km. A total of 100 km.
- Visiting the museum in Granica - 1 hour, a guided tour of the wilderness - 8 hours.

Accommodation:

- Agritourist farm, Krystyna Perkowska, Kampinos, ul. Dolna 8 a, phone: (22) 725 02 64
- Agritourist farm, Halina Brzezińska and Zofia Gawlak, Kampinos, ul. Chopina 16, phone: (22) 725 03 73, www.centrum.agroturystyka.pl
- Other agritourist farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Czyścic Bar, ul. Chopina 17, Kampinos
- Niebo Cafe, ul. Chopina 11a, Kampinos



SANCTUARIES, PALACES AND MANOR HOUSES, NAMELY AREAS AROUND SOCHACZEW

PAPROTNIA – NIEPOKALANÓW – SZYMANÓW – GUZÓW – SOCHACZEW – GIŻYCK

Shrines, palaces and manor houses, old churches and interesting museums - all of this is awaiting us near Sochaczew.

To get here from Warsaw we get on route no. 2 towards Poznań. The first stop we make is in Paprotnia. We can see an old inn and a smithy from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Currently, the building of the smithy houses a restaurant, and further there are buildings with a hotel and a swimming pool.

To get to Zajazd Napoleoński Inn one must leave the Poznań highway to get on the route to Niepokalanów. We follow it to visit the Sanctuary of Our Lady. From the road you will see a modernist church, which was completed in 1954. Two mosaics show the baptism of Poland and the martyrdom of St. Maksymilian. Next to the church is a museum of St. Maksymilian Kolbe, who had been associated with Niepokalanów for several years. It is very easy to reach, because signs pointing to the buildings are located everywhere. The museum pavilion features memorabil-

ia devoted to the Saint and the history of the monastery. A lot of photos and documents are presented here. It is interesting what great emphasis St. Maksymilian attached to the press and publications. Kolbe created a great Catholic media center in Niepokalanów, unparalleled throughout the world. It included: a publishing, press, radio and its own printing house. A special room features missionary memorabilia of the monks.

The wooden chapel features a cell where the Saint lived. It is surprising in its simplicity and modesty: a metal bed, a bowl, a desk, a chair - and that's all.

The sanctuary has a bookstore with the publication of Franciscan fathers, who attach great importance to the mass media even today. Niepokalanów TV is the evidence of this fact. Following the same road we reach Szymanów, which boasts the shrine of Our Lady Jazłowiecka. The neo-Renaissance palace and the park is owned by the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. It was built in 1902 for Prince Konstanty Lubomirski. To



Sanctuary of Our Lady Immaculate and of St. Maksymilian Kolbe

this day the nuns conduct a female boarding school here. The Pope declared Mother Marcelina Darowska, the co-founder of the Order, blessed in 1996. The headquarters of the Order were in Jazłowiec near Buczacz. The sisters had to flee from this place in 1945. They brought the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary Jazłowieckiej with them. Nowadays it is located in the main altar, which was added to the palace

chapel. The very successful combination of the old palace with modern chapel seems surprising. The interior impresses with modernity and a huge sense of taste at the same time. A park and very well-kept garden surrounds the buildings. Right behind the wall, across the street, is baroque parish church built in 1667.

The next goal of our journey is Guzów. Leaving Szymanów first



Palace in Guzów

go towards Bolimowo, and after reaching road no. 50 - towards Żyrardów. Guzów is situated before Żyrardów. We can admire a magnificent palace here, reminiscent of those found in the Loire. One cannot see it from the road as it is covered by the sugar plant buildings. The first wooden mansion was built here as early as 1599. In 1765 a composer Michał Ogiński was born in the local manor house. In 1797 Feliks Lubieński purchased the estate; he was the future Minister of Justice of the Duchy of Warsaw. In 1827 Łubieński founded a factory, and in 1880 rebuilt the palace based on the design by W. Hirschel. The park was established in 1894. A chapel was built at the

same time. The palace in its present form was established in 1895. Today, only the chapel is renewed, the palace is falling into disrepair.

We go along road no. 50 to Sochaczew, where we can see the ruins of the castle and visit two museums.

Sochaczew is one of the oldest towns of western Mazovia. It originated as a trade settlement, situated at the intersection of trade routes, running from the west to the east and from the north to the south. The stronghold was an important defensive bastion of this region. In 1286, the attack of Lithuanian-Ruthenian troops was resisted here. In 1377 the Duke of Siemowit III convened the meeting of the dukes of Mazo-

via here, during which they established a new set of rights for Mazovia, called 'Mazovian statute' or 'Sochaczew statutes'. In 1410 Sochaczew witnessed the army of Jagiełło on its way to Grunwald. The city experienced the biggest boom in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1563, 211 craftsmen worked here. Sochaczew was stunted in the seventeenth century, but its total collapse took place during the Swedish invasion. Until the partitions it was merely a small trade center and a place where sejmiks (local assemblies) of the nobles were held. Then the Jewish population began pouring massively into the city. The city and the castle was again destroyed during the Kościuszko Uprising. During the First World War, from December 1914 to July 1915, Sochaczew was a scene of fierce fighting; the line of Russian-German front, passed along the rivers of Rawka and Bzura. In September 1939 it became the object of bombing, and between 13 and 16 September fierce battles took place in the area. These were a part of the battle of the Bzura. After the town was occupied, Germans murdered all the Jews, who constituted one quarter of the population. The headquarters of AK of the 'Skowronek' district were located in Sochaczew, which covered the entire powiat. The soldiers fought in the Kampinos Wilderness and in the Warsaw Uprising.

The old town hall located at the Kościuszko square houses the Museum of the Sochaczew Land and of the battle of the Bzura River. It features exhibits related to the Second World War. One can see primarily the weapons, equipment, uniforms, and documents of soldiers fighting at the Bzura in September 1939. You can also see documents and photographs showing the history of Sochaczew and the surrounding area during the Nazi occupation. The courtyard features a museum of the militaria and the fighting equipment of the Polish army. The ground floor is a space for temporary exhibitions.

Only ruins remain of the castle located behind the park across the street. Built in the days of Duke Siemowit III in the fourteenth century - in place of the old wooden castle - it was destroyed during the invasion of Lithuanian-Ruthenian troops. Since 1476 it had been the seat of Sochaczew starostes. Before 1630 it had been completely rebuilt by staroste Stanisław Radziejowski. Soon afterwards it was destroyed by the Swedes. Restored in the years 1789-1790 it was soon afterwards destroyed again during the Kościuszko Uprising by the Prussians. It has been deteriorating since then. Only walls of the western elevation with window openings, fragments of southern and eastern façade and remains of the





Narrow Gauge Railway Museum in Sochaczew

partition walls survived. An amphitheater with a concert bowl is located at the foot of the castle hill.

Lovers of narrow gauge railways will certainly spend much time in the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum. The largest collection of narrow gauge vehicles in Poland is gathered here. It has over one hundred steam engines, locomotives, trolleys and wagons. The most interesting ones include the so called Piłsudski coach, a horse railway wagon, a 'Warsaw' trolley, a platform for the transport of ammunition, and a military parlor car, and the oldest narrow-gauge locomotives in Poland from the years

1882-1883. From June to September on Saturdays - no matter what the weather is like - the 'Retro' train operates. Additionally, in July and August, the train also runs on Wednesdays. The train leaves exactly at 10.00 a.m., and it gets to Wilcze Tułowskie at about 11.15. Until 11.45, tourists have the time to walk along the Kampinos paths. Then the train to Tułowice departs and we get to our destination after nine minutes. Nearly two hours are devoted to a bonfire. The train from Tułowice to Sochaczew departs at 13.44. The arrival is scheduled for 14.50. It is also possible to run the train upon request.

Leaving Sochaczew we get on road no. 577 towards Łącko to get to Giżyce. This is where a Gothic church from 1440 and a palace of the second half of the nineteenth cen-

tury are located. The church is nicely renovated. In the years 1945-1951 the Palace housed the People's University, and since 1951 it has been home to an Orphanage.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Paprotnia – Niepokalanów – Szymanów – Guzów – Sochaczew: 75 km. A total of 150 km.
- Niepokalanów - 2 hours, Szymanów - 1 hour, Guzów - 1 hour, Sochaczew (museums) - 3 hours, a trip by train to Tułowice - 5 hours.

Accommodation:

- Kuźnia Napoleońska Hotel, Paprotnia, ul. Sochaczewska 5, phone: (46) 861 52 13, www.kuzniahotel.pl
- Dom Pielgrzyma, monastery in Niepokalanów, Teresin Commune, phone: (46) 864 21 31
- Chopin Hotel, Sochaczew, ul. Traugutta 21, phone: (46) 862 59 99, www.hotelchopin.pl
- Sonata Hotel, Chrzczany 34, Sochaczew, www.hotel.sonata.oit.pl, phone: (46) 862 31 92

Restaurants:

- Wiktoria Restaurant, Sochaczew, ul. Reymonta 16, phone: (46) 862 12 39
- Zajazd Jubilatka Inn, Paprotnia, ul. O. Kolbego 38, phone: (46) 861 38 31
- Bar Fryderyk, Kożuszki-Parcel, gm. Sochaczew, phone: 501-658-698, www.restauracja-bonvoyage.pl



CHOPIN'S MAZOVIA

ŻELAZOWA WOLA – BROCHÓW – SANNIKI

These sites are associated with the childhood and youth of Frederic Chopin. It is worth to visit them and feel their atmosphere, which corresponds to the mood of the composer's music.

The trip starts with Żelazowa Wola. We go there by road no. 580 to-

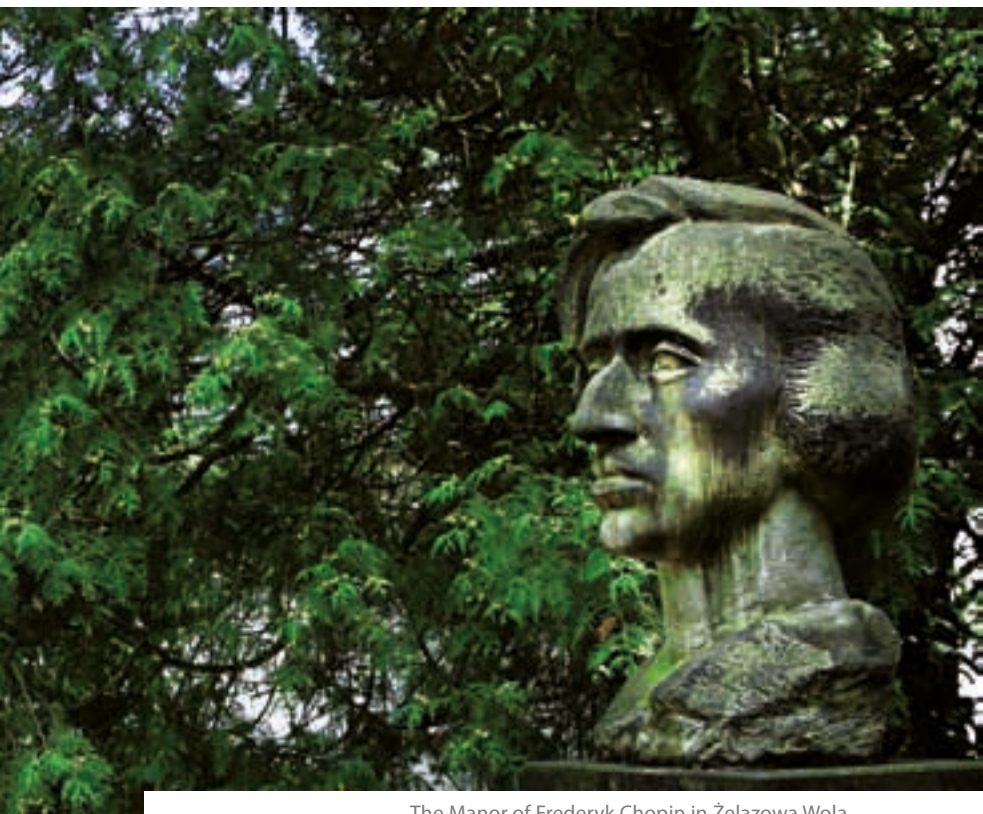
wards Sochaczew. The Frederic Chopin Museum in Żelazowa Wola is actually located on the outskirts of Sochaczew. It is situated in the old wing of the Skarbek manor, built in the early nineteenth century. It was here, on February 22 1810 that the famous composer was born. It was by a lucky



coincidence that it was that annex of the Skarbek family estate that survived. Frederick's father was the count's children tutor. It is in Żelazowa Wola where he met his future wife, Justyna Krzyżanowska, a cousin of the Skarbek family. Chopin's family moved to Warsaw shortly after the birth of the future composer, but he often spent his vacation here. The last time he visited the village was in August 1830. Four years later the Skarbek family lost Żelazowa Wola. Since then, the estate owners often changed. At

the end of the nineteenth century a social committee was established to buy the property from private hands and to create a museum. The annex was bought in 1928. In the years 1930-1931 the devastated building was restored and a museum was created there.

The form of Żelazowa Wola had strongly evolved since Chopin left the area. The exhibition consists of a number of court rooms with poor equipment, but the interiors evoke the atmosphere of a few centu-



The Manor of Fryderyk Chopin in Żelazowa Wola

ries ago. The importance of this place is only sentimental and historical. It features stylish furniture, copies of portraits of the artist, facsimile of the notes and documents. The music of Chopin makes the sightseeing of the place more enjoyable. Concerts performed by outstanding Polish and foreign pianists are held here.

The manor house is surrounded by a beautiful park with rare species of trees that were planted in the years 1933-1935. It is very well maintained, a walk through the alleys is a pleasure. It is even more pleasurable given the fact that the music of Chopin can be heard from the speakers. The only other concert that can be heard is that of the birds.

The work of revitalizing the park and the construction of new facilities made this place even more enjoyable to visit. The modern Prelude houses cashier's desks, audio books stands, cafe and souvenir shops, where one can buy records or Sochaczew guides. The Etude is a showcase and a welcoming building with a multi-function cinema room ('Chopin's Mazovia' is played here) for 80 people and with a stylish restaurant.

Next we go to Brochów. First, we have to go through some trouble, because finding the right way is not easy. When entering Sochaczew you need to find the road no. 705 leading to the north, towards Śladowo. In Brochów we can find a very rare

type of a building - a defensive church. It has three towers, it is surrounded by a wall with five-sided bastions at the corners and loopholes. The parish church of St. Roch and of John the Baptist was built in the years 1551-1561 in the Gothic-Renaissance style. It was severely destroyed during the two world wars. It was in this church that Chopin's parents got married in 1806, and the composer was baptized on 23 April 1810.

Owing to the turbulent history the antique furnishings did not survive. The only decoration is a characteristic geometric decoration the ceiling - with the motif of a circle and a rectangle. There is also a memorial plaque dedicated to Chopin here. Before the church stands a sculpture (from the nineteenth century) of St. Roch, the patron of the temple.

A dirt road located behind the church is worth following. As we turn right it takes us to the bridge on the Bzura river in Witkowice (or to the right to Bzura). You can get a magnificent view of the church from the road. There is a plaque in Witkowice which commemorates the soldiers killed in the battle of Bzura in September 1939. A scenic bicycle route passes through the meadows.

We will visit one more village associated with F. Chopin - the village of Sanniki, but we will first go over to the Vistula river. We will initially follow road no. 705 to Tułowice,



The Utrata river in Żelazowa Wola



A manor in Żelazowa Wola

and then left to Śladowo; the road will take us along the river afterwards. Faunal nature reserves were created at this section of the Vistula: Kępa Rakowiecka, Kępa Antonińska and Zakrzewskie Islands. The islands are a nesting place for some 100 species of birds. This is where you can find, for instance, a little ringed plover, terns (river, black, normal), gulls (black-headed, common, silver). Binoculars and a bird atlas will also prove useful for the trip. A walk on the embankment is a great pleasure for a city-dweller.

Sanniki are the last place of our tour. We get here by road no. 575 leading through picturesque Ilów and Słubice. Sanniki boast F. Chopin palace and park, built in 1910, with a neoclassi-

cal palace, designed by Władysław Marconi. The palace is surrounded by a several-hectare park. In 1828 eighteen years old Chopin spent holidays in Sanniki with the Pruszkowie family, the owners of the land at the time. This is where he composed Rondo C-dur. Young Pruszkowie maintained lifelong contact with Chopin. The palace houses the Chopin Center. Currently, however, the whole palace and the park are in the process of revitalization. They will not be available to the public until mid-2012. Opposite the palace is the nineteenth-century church of St. Trinity.

We finish our trip in Sanniki. The return to Warsaw takes just over an hour. The best return route is through Sochaczew, and then by road no. 2.

Practical information

- Warszawa – Żelazowa Wola – Brochów – Sanniki: 85 km. The total distance is 170 km.
- Żelazowa Wola – 1,5 hours, Brochów – 1 hour, Sanniki – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Chopin Hotel, Sochaczew, ul. Traugutta 21, phone (46) 862 59 99, www.hotelchopin.pl
- Dom Noclegowy (Lodging House), Sochaczew, ul. Żeromskiego 4, phone (46) 862 25 73
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Wiktoria restaurant, ul. Reymonta 16, Sochaczew, phone (46) 862 12 39
- 'Polka' restaurant Magda Gessler, Żelazowa Wola 14, tel. (46) 863 21 68, www.restauracjapolka.pl



AT THE LIWIEC RIVER

SUCHA – WYSZKÓW – LIW – WĘGRÓW – STARA WIEŚ

Beautiful green areas east of Warsaw. Accompanied by trucks we follow road no. 2 towards terespol, and then get on road no. 697 towards Liw. We take a right turn in Grębkowo. We will visit a private open-air museum visit in Sucha. It's hard to find it as there is no signpost anywhere, yet the buildings can be seen when going by the road. Its owner - Professor Marek Kwiatkowski - gathered antique wooden buildings here. Works on the reconstruction of other buildings are still in progress. Built in Sucha in 1743, the large, larch mansion of the Cieszkowski family was the first one to be restored to its former glory. It is a baroque, one floor building, with corner alcoves at the side of entry. Stanisław August Poniatowski visited the manor in 1787. It was also the birthplace of a known philosopher August Cieszkowski, who was born here in 1814. The facility has been completely renovated. The interior features a variety of Biedermeier and eclectic furniture of the nineteenth century, paintings, trinkets from the era, which reproduce the climate of the Polish nobleman manor.

A beautiful Dutch stove draws particular attention. The museum features two other manors, which are planned to be used for conference purposes. Other elements of the museum include village cottages, an organist house, a presbytery, a mill and an inn. One can peek into those buildings through windows. The interior features various old objects.

Then we go to Wyszaków on Liwiec, which boasts the parish church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, founded in 1788 by the former owner of the village Aleksander Maciej Ossoliński, the Great Lithuanian sword-bearer. It is a late-baroque church. Its facade features a foundation plaque and the Ossolinski family coat of arms - an ax. The church was built in such a way that it closes the entire space. The interior is maintained in the Baroque-Classical style. Other interesting elements include brick roadside shrines with statues of saints, from the late eighteenth century.

As we leave Wyszaków we go to Liw. Hard to believe as it may seem today it was once the capital of the Liw land. The earliest mention of Liw goes back to 1279. It was



Cieszkowski Manor in Sucha

at that time that the Liw castle was attacked by the Yotvingians. Archaeological studies have demonstrated that the old settlement was located 5 km up the Liwiec river in the place of the present-day town of Grodzisk. The construction of the present castle in Liw was initiated before the year 1429 by Niklos, a bricklayer, at the initiative of the Mazovian Duke Janusz I the Elder. It was built on an artificial island, among the swamps and the Liwiec river flood waters, at the border of the duchy at the time. Since 1526 the castle had been ruled by Duchess Anna Mazowiecka, the last representative of the ruling Piast dynasty. She ordered the building of the gate tower and raising the defensive walls. Further expansion

was conducted under the supervision of Queen Bona, who took to power in 1536. The building was destroyed as a consequence of the Swedish wars. The castle is practically invisible from the road. Moreover, a signpost leading to it was placed exactly at the turn, so one has to be careful not to miss it. What one needs to do is to turn into a field road. All that is left of the defensive building (built in the fifteenth century) are the gate tower, the vaults and part of the walls. It looks pretty amazing, since the staroste of Liw Tadeusz Grabianka added a Baroque house to the ruins in 1782, which burnt down around 1850. In the years 1942-1944 the building was reconstructed by the occupiers.



The castle in Liw

E. Gramss, the German governor of the Sokolowsko-Węgrowski district intended to dismantle the castle ruins for its brick to build the extermination camp at Treblinka. He was prevented by Otto Warpechowski, who convinced the staroste about the Teutonic origins of the castle and led to its reconstruction.

A museum-armory is located inside. It features a collection of Sarmatian portraits from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of militaria from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries and of battle painting. The collection of weapons includes such exhibits as: firearms and a collection of 105 bayonets.

Knights' tournaments, held in front of the castle, have recently become very popular. The most fa-

mous one is, of course, the August tournament 'For the Ring of Duchess Anna Mazowiecka'. If you manage to stay up until midnight you may see the Yellow Lady. It is the specter of the innocent Ludwika Kuczyńska, who was accused of treason and beheaded.

While in the castle, you might want to go down to the nearby Liwiec river. It winds among the meadows.

Liw is four kilometers away from Węgrów. Węgrów received municipal rights in 1441, and these were granted by the Mazovian Duke Bolesław IV. Between 1444-1569 the city was part of Lithuania, after 1569 it was incorporated into the Crown. Since 1593 it had been a possession of the Radziwiłł family (their coat of arms was the Trumpet). Known from



Lesser Basilica in Węgrów

the movie 'Swedish Deluge', Duke Bogusław developed the weaving industry here by bringing Scottish clothiers. The city was sacked and burned during the Swedish invasion. In 1664 Węgrów went into the hands of the Krasieński family. Later on, the owners changed frequently. One of the major battles of the Janu-

ary Uprising took place here on February 3rd 1863.

Now we're approaching the Market. This is where a baroque Lesser Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints Peter and Paul is located. The temple was rebuilt in the early eighteenth century, probably based

on the design by Tylman z Gameren. The entire building is adorned with two Gothic towers from the earlier church. One can admire interesting frescoes of the Italian painter Michelangelo Palloni.

If the basilica is closed - we can go to the parish priest - as though frescoes can be watched through glass doors it is only in the sacristy that we can see the famous mirror of Twardowski and the Sarmatian portraits. A legend has it that it was the sorcerer Twardowski himself who owned the mirror. The sorcerer evoked the ghost of Barbara Radziwiłłówna for Zygmunt August in the mirror, and Napoleon saw his defeat at Moscow there as well.

Another object of interest to be seen in Węgrów is the Reformed brick church, from the years 1693-1715. It is a late Baroque building, built by the team of Carl Ceroni. Inside one can admire the frescoes by M.A. Palloni. The furnishings dates back to the eighteenth century. The temple is located at Kościuszko street, which departs from the Market.

Let us now go to Starawieś. The settlement had different names: in 1473–Jakimowicze, and in the eighteenth century– Krasny Dwór. It belonged to the Radziwiłł, Krasieński, Świdziński, Ossoliński, and Jezierski families. A Russian duke Sergiusz Golicyn acquired the estate along with the hand of Maria Jezierska in 1840. Since 1879 it had once again become the property of the Krasieński family. In the years 1912-1944 it belonged to the Radziwiłł family.

The palace is located in the middle of the village. It was originally Baroque and surrounded by bastion fortifications. Duke Golicyn rebuilt it in the English neo-Gothic style. It is from this period that park in the English style comes - with an irregular system of avenues, romantic bridges, canals and two ponds. Today it is owned by the Polish National Bank, but it is made available for training purposes to other institutions, organizations and businesses. The gate is closed for security reasons. However, you can ring the bell as there is always a chance to visit the palace complex.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Sucha – Wyszaków – Liw – Węgrów – Starawieś: 110 km. The total distance is 220 km.
- The open-air museum in Sucha – 1,5 hours, Wyszaków – 1 hour, Liw – 1 hour, Węgrów – 1,5 hours, Starawieś – 1 hour.

Accommodation:

- Everest Hotel, Węgrów, ul. Żeromskiego 21, phone (25) 792 66 16, 535 921 711, www.everest-ikar.pl
- Krasnodębski Hotel, Węgrów, ul. Gdańska 80, phone (25) 792 27 27, www.hotel-krasnodebski.pl
- 'Nad Liwcem' camping, Węgrów, ul. Żeromskiego 24, phone (25) 792 26 68
- Agritourism farms: www.agroturystyka-modr.mazowsze.pl

Restaurants:

- Kameralna restaurant, ul. Rzemieślnicza 1, Węgrów, phone (25) 792 53 95
- Zajazd na Mostach Liwskich Inn, Węgrów, Al. Solidarności 44, phone (25) 792 31 57
- 'Domek' restaurant bar, ul. Mickiewicza 4, Węgrów, phone (25) 792 02 02
- Zosia Pizza House, ul. Rynkowa 4, Węgrów, phone (25) 792 54 84
- Liwia restaurant, ul. Nowomiejska 48, Liw, phone (25) 792 57 32



RADOM TRIPS

IŁŻA – RADOM

Iłża is one of the oldest and most picturesque cities in Poland. It lies in the valley of the river Iłżanki, on the border of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains and the Mazovian Plains. To get there one should take road no. 7 from Warsaw to Radom, and then follow road no. 9 towards Rzeszów.

One can omit Grójec by pulling off in Głuchów to route S7, then follow road no. 7 to Radom, and then continue through Żólkiewskiego street straight along road no. 9. The beginnings of settlement in this area date back to the eleventh century B.C. Remains of early medieval and medieval settlements were discovered on the right bank of the Iłżanka river. A wooden and earth defensive stronghold existed here in the eleventh century. A settlement developed around the stronghold which, known as Iłża received municipal rights in the first half of the thirteenth century. This old settlement was either completely destroyed or it gradually fell into disrepair.

Since the beginning of the fourteenth century documents already apply the name Iłża to the new, left-bank settlement. It had a rectangular market. The parish church ded-

icated to Virgin Mary was located in the north-west corner. Perpendicular streets departed from the marketplace. The entire complex was surrounded by city fortifications with four gates in the 70s of the fourteenth century. City walls were coupled with the castle fortifications. The castle housed the administrative center of the episcopal estates.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Iłża continued its tradition of metallurgy. A forge began to operate here after 1333. The city boasted several mills, two annual and one weekly fair. Pottery developed in the fourteenth century. Iłża was also known for brand beer brewing.

In the seventeenth century - after the Swedish deluge - the period of the decline of the town began. As Swedes retreated after a year-long occupation, they destroyed it almost completely. The destruction was completed by the marches of troops and the plague.

During the November Uprising in August 1831 a Polish-Russian battle took place in the market in Iłża. The Polish army was successful, but the city was destroyed. During the January Uprising there were also



The tower of the castle in Iłża

fightings in the local market. The Tsarist authorities deprived the city of its municipal rights. It regained them only in 1926.

We can start the tour of the place at the castle tower which is still preserved. It is located behind the market, not far away from the road to Rzeszów. One has to enter a dirt road and stop at a parking lot under the tower.

It is believed that the bishop of Cracow Jan Grot castle built the castle around 1340 on the site of a wooden building. The castle was built on the plan of a triangle with rounded corners. It had a very de-

defensive character, and until the early sixteenth century its walls were not connected with the city fortifications. The castle was expanded twice: in the third quarter of the fourteenth century by the bishop Florian from Morsk and about 1520 by Bishop Jan Konarski.

Around 1560 Bishop Filip Padniewski started rebuilding the castle into a Renaissance defensive structure. After the Swedish wars the fortress was rebuilt by Bishop Andrzej Trzebnicki. In the early nineteenth century Austrians set up a hospital here for a short period of time, and

a few years later the still surviving fragments of the castle were completely burnt. Since then, the remains of the buildings have become a source of building stone.

Leaving the parking lot we go up the hill. After several minutes we get to a vast meadow. We are taking a walk along a dirt road. A magnificent view over the area, including the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, stretches from here. Now we get back and approach the ruins. One can enter the remaining tower (Monday to Friday 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays: 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.). It is worth the effort as one can see the entire Iłża with its surroundings.

Iłża has a historic urban layout in the oldest of its parts, it is best visible in the vicinity of the market. The preserved medieval city tower serves as the parish church belfry.

The present church dates back to the mid-seventeenth century. The interiors feature the stucco decoration and the early Baroque altar from 1629. The marble side altar was moved from the Wawel Cathedral. Epitaphs come from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

The historic building of the former shelter for the poor - the hospital of St. Spirit (1754) - houses the Regional Museum. At the entrance is a foundation plaque with the coat of arms of Junosz (for Bishop

Andrzej Kałuski). The museum has an extensive collection of folk pottery. They are presented in a permanent exhibition. The Museum co-organizes a folklore event called the Kupała Night. A folklore feast is held at the time. The guests (ethnographers, folk artists) tell stories about the Sobótka customs. A competition for the most beautiful wreath is held. Performances of folklore groups, campfire and letting wreaths are among the attractions of the event.

As we leave Iłża following road no. 9 we are heading for Radom. We follow the signs to the center of the city.

Slavic tribes arrived here at the turn of the eighth and ninth centuries, but the city developed during the time of Casimir the Great. The church of St. John the Baptist, the castle - the residence of kings and governors - and the town hall were built at that time. The city was surrounded by a defensive wall, a moat, and it had a market.

It was in Radom in 1401 that a declaration of the Polish-Lithuanian union was made. It is also here that Czech deputies offered the crown to the elder son of King Casimir the Jagiellonian - Władysław. In 1489 the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order Johann von Tieffen paid homage to the King of Poland. In 1505 a constitution of the Radom parliament (*nihil novi*) and the Łaski Statute were passed here. From 1613 to 1763 Ra-



Museum of the Radom Countyside

dom was the seat of the meetings of the Crown Revenue Court.

The city was destroyed during the Swedish invasion. The radom castle burned then. During partitions the church and Bernardine monastery were very important centers of conspiracy. It was here that military meetings and patriotic demonstrations were held. Finally, the monastery was dissolved.

In the mid-nineteenth century Radom began to become an industrial and a commercial center. The tanning, food and mineral industry developed here. It also developed

dynamically after the First World War. It became a part of the Central Industrial District. In the recent history of Poland Radom became famous for the events of 1976. Strikes, which were caused by significant price increases, were pacified by the militia.

In the valley of the Mleczna river lies the Piętrówka settlement - the remains of a fortified settlement from the late tenth century. It was probably surrounded by a moat and a double ring of wood and earthen embankments. Currently the hill is 135 meters high and rises about eight meters above the valley.





Museum of the Radom Countryside

The oldest architectural monument of Radom is the church of St. Waclaw, which was founded by Duke Leszek the White in 1216. After several modifications it has recently been restored. At the rear of Jacek Malczewski Museum we can admire the remains of one of the gates, along with a fragment of the fortifications from the times of Casimir the Great. The former royal castle now houses the parsonage of the parish of St. John the Baptist. What draws attention in the church are the Kochanowski chapel of the early seventeenth century, the painting 'Crucifixion' of around 1600, the baptismal font of the fifteenth century, and in the nearby cemetery - the sculpture of St. Jan Nepomucen.

The Market attracts tourists with two baroque tenements: Dom Gąski and Dom Esterki – currently the seat of the Contemporary Art Museum. The neo-Renaissance town hall, which was designed by H. Marconi, houses the State Archive. On the other side of the market - in the seventeenth-century former Piarist college and the church of St. Jan Kant - the Jacek Malczewski Museum is located. Apart from painting by Malczewski the Museum features archeological monuments from the Radom lands.

One must go (east of the Market) to the church and the monastery of the Bernardine Fathers. The Late Gothic complex of buildings dates back to the second half

of the fifteenth century. It was expanded in the sixteenth century. The church of St. Catherine features a carved Passion group. Coffin portraits, epitaphs and tombstones from the eighteenth century also draw a visitor's attention. At the junction of the Malczewski and Reja streets is a former Benedictine monastery and a church, built between 1619-1627. Historic buildings of the nineteenth century located at Żeromskiego street catch the visitor's eyes. Many of them are decorated with polychromies that date back to the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Most of the paintings are in the form of a plafond and they are placed on the ceilings of staircases. They most frequently present the heavens.

The Garrison Church in the Constitution of May 3rd Square is a converted former Orthodox church from 1902.

One should also go to T. Kościuszko park. It is one of the monuments of nature. Trees and shrubs from around the world grow here. The neo-Gothic cathedral was built at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The Museum of the Radom Countryside is located in the suburbs, at the exit towards Kielce. It features the typical examples of the architecture and the equipment of rural households from the region. One can



see manor buildings, a church and rural farms, whose owners had a different financial status. A special exhibition demonstrates how an open-

air museum is created. One can listen to the host of individual farmsteads, which tell interesting stories about the former residents.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Radom – Iłża: 120 km. The total distance is 240 km.
- Iłża – 1,5 hours, Radom – 3 hours, Museum of the Radom Countryside – 1,5 hours.

Accommodation:

- Gromada Hotel, Radom, ul. Bulwarowa 15, phone (48) 330 85 86, www.gromada.pl
- Gromada Hotel, Radom, ul. Narutowicza 9, phone (48) 368 91 00, www.gromada.pl
- Gryf Hotel, Radom, ul. Puławska 8, phone (48) 365 54 05, www.hotelgryf.radom.pl
- Astor Hotel, Radom, ul. Chorzowska 1, phone (48) 365 63 63, www.hotel-astor.pl
- Aviator Hotel, Radom, ul. Malczewskiego 18, www.aviatorhotel.com.pl
- 'Centralny Ośrodek Szkolenia Maszynistów' Hotel, Radom, ul. Kraszewskiego 1, phone (48) 396 95-90
- Glass Hotel, Radom, ul. Beliny-Prażmowskiego 17, phone (48) 340 25 85, www.hotelgnass.radom.pl
- Iskra Hotel, Radom, ul. Planty 4, phone (48) 363 87 45
- Poniatowski Hotel, Radom, ul. Poniatowskiego 4, phone (48) 384 01 91, www.hotelponiatowski.radom.pl, www.hoteltm.pl
- E7 Hotel, Radom, ul. Czarneckiego 7, phone (48) 384 77 54, www.hotele7.radom.pl
- TM Hotel, Radom, ul. Focha 12, phone (48) 363 27 08
- Europejski Hotel, Radom, ul. Słowackiego 11, phone (48) 340 00 21, www.hoteleuropejski.radom.pl,
- Villa Cyganeria, Skaryszew, ul. Piaseckiego 1, phone (48) 610 30 47, 607 268 836
- 'Wsola' Hotel, Wsola, ul. Warszawska 3, gm. Jedlińsk, phone (48) 381 11 30, www.hotelwsola.radom.pl
- Pod Różami Hotel, Jedlnia Letnisko, ul. Radomska 49, phone (48) 322 21 41, www.pod-rozami.com.pl
- Ośrodek Szkoleniowo-Wypoczynkowy (Training and Recreation Center), Jedlnia Letnisko, ul. Nadrzeczna 4, phone (48) 322 11 86
- MOSiR Cabins, Ilża, ul. Orła Białego 3, phone (48) 616 23 40
- Motel Kajpaz at the Rafineria Gdańska gas station, Skaryszew, ul. Radomska 1, phone (48) 365 58 12, www.kajpaz.pl
- Agritourism lodgings

Restaurants:

- Frascati Restaurant, Radom, ul. Mieszka I 1/7, phone (48) 333 17 78, www.frascati.radom.pl
- Balaton Restaurant, Radom, ul. Focha 5, phone (48) 362 32 70
- Banja Luka Restaurant, Radom, ul. Żeromskiego 56, phone (48) 360 04 66, www.banja-luka.pl
- Casablanca restaurant, Radom, ul. Piłsudskiego 11, phone (48) 385 85 45
- Katakumby restaurant, Radom, Stare Miasto, phone 513 081 089, www.katakumby.radom.pl
- MammaLeo family Restaurant, Radom, ul. Szewska 14, phone 502 553 658, 502 072 244, www.mammaleo.pl
- Venezia Pizza House, Radom, ul. B. Chrobrego 42, phone (48) 360 10 40, www.veneziapizza.pl
- 'Jubilatka' Restaurant, ul. Słowackiego 3, Skaryszew, phone (48) 610 30 99



IN PUŁTUSK ON THE NAREW

PUŁTUSK

Picturesquely located, Pułtusk is a charming town, full of tradition and history. It has been famous for science for centuries. It provided educated staff for northern and eastern Poland. Today, there are also numerous schools here, including the College of Humanities. This gives the city a specific character.

In order to get to Pułtusk take road no. 61 towards Augustów and Suwałki. It is about 60 km away. The route, though cumbersome due to the heavy traffic on a narrow road, stretches along the Zegrzyński Reservoir and the Narew, provides scenic views. The number of hills is surprising for a town located so close to Warsaw.

Once in Pułtusk the signs pointing the way to the castle will get you to the center. This is how you can get to the marketplace. What comes as a surprise at first is its length, which is about 400 meters. Local guides say that we are in the longest market in Europe. You can park your car behind the old town hall tower. You can feel safe here as the local police station is just across the street.

A small hill to the south side of the market features a castle with the

town hall tower in the middle, which houses a museum. The other side is enclosed by a spectacular collegiate. The museum is the best place to start the tour. When going to the tower one should wear comfortable shoes - what awaits you are seven floors to climb. The stairs get steeper and more narrow as you go up.

The upper floors feature impressive archaeological exhibits. All of the exhibits come from Pułtusk. They are accompanied by pictures showing archaeological sites. The objects remained in good condition owing to the moisture. There is a lake four meters underneath the market. Archaeologists have dug out several layers of objects. These include pottery, wooden bowls and other utensils for everyday use. Well-preserved old leather shoes are worthy of attention. The items collected in this part of the museum come from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

The very climbing to the higher floors of the tower itself is quite an experience. Note the fantastic wooden bales on the ceiling, as well as the beautiful view from the small windows. When you get to the top floor



Sunset on the Narew

you can enjoy the view of the countryside through a telescope.

The tower was the seat of the municipal government and it was built around 1405. Its founder was Bishop Jakub z Korzkwi, called Kurdwanowski. Apart from administrative and judicial functions the tower also played a defensive role. All throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was gradually increased, and a more

spacious and functional building was added to the eastern side. During the 'deluge' in the eighteenth century town hall was haunted by fires. Later, the building fell into disrepair. Since 1880 it had been the seat of a fire brigade. At the beginning of the twentieth century the building was demolished. Luckily, the tower remained. In 1964 a Regional Museum was opened in the tower.



The Town Hall in Pułtusk

After leaving the museum we head towards the castle. We pass the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene on our way. Archaeological research has shown that during the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries it housed the a cemetery, initially in the vicinity of a wooden, and then a brick Renaissance temple. The current church was founded by bishop Andrzej Krzycki, one of the most prominent diplomats connected with the court of King Sigismund the Old. During World War II, Germans used the church as a storehouse for ammunition, weapons and military equipment. During the battle for the city (at the end of 1944 and 1945) it was so severely damaged that it had to be rebuilt almost from scratch. Until the early 90s, it housed the gallery of temporary exhibitions of the Regional Museum. Now, it once again serves the sacral functions.

Next we take a tour along the river levees. The Narew reservoir looks spectacular from here. One can see the rapid current of the river. On our way back we go down all the way to the river bank. There is a beach here in the summer. Antlers along the bank await patiently.

The castle stands on an artificial hill. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was a settlement with a rampart, or rather several settlements emerging in the same place after consecutive devastations.

The discovery of the rich relics (during archaeological excavations conducted in the years 1976-1985) became a sensation.

The oldest, fully stone building was erected by Bishop Paweł Giżycki on a hill in the middle of the fifteenth century. It was a rectangular residential building and a tower. Bishop Andrzej Krzycki arranged it in the spirit of the Renaissance. During the Swedish invasion the castle was seriously destroyed for many years it was impossible for the structure to recover from this damage. The reconstruction lasted until the eighteenth century. In 1812, Napoleon authorities turned it into a hospital. Although it was spared during the First World War, it was destroyed by fire caused by careless roofers in 1919. After renovation during the interwar period it housed numerous offices. After the last war, until 1975 it was the seat of the poviast government. Nowadays it is the seat of the Polonia House.

A nice park stretches around the castle and tennis courts are visible from a distance. The park features a playground, a boat rental, a tavern and stables with horses. There is also a special place for the barbecue. The shop offers you souvenirs and regional maps of the area.

Now we go to the beautiful collegiate church. It is located on the opposite side from the church. One can







The Polonia House in Pultusk

see that different architectural styles overlap here. The most visible influences are the Renaissance and Baroque styles.

The temple of the rank of the collegiate church was founded by Bishop Paweł Giżycki. The construction was completed in 1443. Bishop Andrzej Noskowski built a burial chapel on the extension of the southern nave. It is strikingly similar to the Sigismund Chapel in the Wawel Cathedral. In 1913, a part of the nave and the church chancel burnt. The chapel underwent a major refurbishment in the nineteenth century. During the Second World War it was initially turned into a prison, and later was used as a warehouse of the Jewish property. It suffered greatly during two consecutive floods in 1958 and 1979.

The very pearl is hidden in the middle of the church. These are the Renaissance frescoes. The look beautiful on the ceiling above the altar. After a fire in the sixteenth century they were painted and thus survived to this day. The collegiate church has uniform baroque furnishings. The pillars and inter-nave walls feature numerous epitaphs and commemorative plaques from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. If we want to see the interiors of the temple, we should go to Pułtusk on Sunday. It is unfortunately closed throughout the rest of the week, due to widespread theft which nobody can cope with.

At Piotr Skarga street, next to the cathedral, is a high school and a Jesuit church of St. Peter and Paul.

One should go to the back of the church to see the defensive walls. Permanent city fortifications were erected at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Bishop Erazm Ciołek planned to surround the entire city with a wall. The walls, which were considered unnecessary for defensive purposes, were taken down by Prussian and Russian authorities during the partitions.

The charming church of St. Joseph is located at Daszyński street. It was established along with the monastery of the reformers in the seventeenth century. In 1803 Prussian authorities seized the monastery. It has now been returned to the Church.

If you want to watch all the churches which are located in Pułtusk, we need to go to the ends of the city - to the exit towards Suwałki. The church of St. Cross is located right next to a cemetery.

Still further, outside the city gates is the forgotten mausoleum of Soviet soldiers who died in late 1944 and 1945. It was built with a lot of financial effort. A spectacular view of the Narew flood waters stretches at the back of the mausoleum.

We return to the marketplace, where three hiking trails depart. All of them lead over a pedestrian bridge. The green one turns left

to the river, while the red and yellow ones take us for a forest walk to the White Wilderness. First you have to cross the street, and then, passing houses, you will get to the

place where the trails split. You can start a walk along the red trail and get to the nature reserve through the forest, and then reach the yellow trail and return to the city.

Practical information

- Warszawa – Pułtusk: 60 km. The total distance is 120 km.
- Sightseeing the city – 3 hours, the museum – 1 hour, a tour of the White Wilderness – 3 hours.

Accommodation:

- Zalewski Hotel, ul. Jana Pawła II 19, Pułtusk, phone (23) 692 05 23, www.hotelpultusk.pl
- Baltazar Hotel, ul. Baltazara 41, Pułtusk, phone (23) 692 04 75, www.hotel-baltazar.com.pl
- DOM POLONII (Polonia House) in PUŁTUSK: Hotel, Restaurants, Conference Center (Dom Kresowy, ul. 3 Maja, Pułtusk; Stanica Wodna and Kasztel, ul. Szkolna 11; Zamek Hotel, ul. Szkolna 11), phone (23) 692 90 00, 692 90 02, www.dompolonii.pultusk.pl
- Wiatrak Hotel, Boby 16, gm. Pułtusk, phone (23) 691 08 06

Restaurants:

- Zajazd Kaskada Inn, ul. Kościuszki 76, Pułtusk, phone (23) 692 60 38



SIEDLCE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

TREBLINKA – STERDYŃ – JABŁONNA LACKA – GRÓDEK – WIRÓW – KARCZEW – MORDY – SIEDLCE – CHLEWISKA – MOKOBODY

We leave Warsaw going through road no. 2 towards Terespol, we take a turn just before Mińsk Mazowiecki into road no. 50 towards Ostrów Mazowiecka, while in Brok we take road no. 694 towards Ciechanów. When we get to Małknia we take the worn road to Treblinka. A drive through the narrow railway bridge can arouse strong emotions.

The Museum of Struggle and Martyrdom is open between 9.00 a.m to 7.00 p.m. The former extermination camp, i.e. Treblinka II, is located closer to the parking lot. It was built by Germans in mid-1942 in the vicinity of the already existing penal labor camp. It was established as a part of the Reinhard Plan, which was aimed at the physical liquidation of the Jewish population. It occupied 17 hectares. The first transport of prisoners arrived on 23 July 1942. They were Jews from the Warsaw ghetto. People were killed in gas chambers. An armed rebellion broke out on August 2 1943. The camp was partially destroyed; it was dismantled in November 1943. According to the estimates it killed at least 800

thousand citizens of Poland, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Germany and the Soviet Union.

Janusz Korczak, a social worker and an educator, also died here.

In 1964 a Memorial Mausoleum was unveiled in Treblinka. Near the parking lot is a trench, a leftover of the former railway track, and a symbolic ramp in place of the former fictional station, which was arranged to lessen the vigilance of the victims. There were signs, a cash register, a waiting room, a cafeteria, and even train schedules. Besides we can see granite pillars with the names of countries whose citizens suffered death here. The most visible object is a large, 8-meters monument with bas-reliefs depicting the cruel death of the victims. Behind the monument is a symbolic stack, accompanied by a symbolic cemetery, consisting of 17,000 stones with the names of the larger town from which the murdered victims came. At the concentration camp cemetery there is only commemoration by name: Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldschmit) and Children.



Memorial Mausoleum in Treblinka

Two kilometers further is the labor camp, or Treblinka I. It was established in the summer of 1941 at an existing gravel pit. In the initial period the prisoners included farmers who failed to supply the quotas on time, and people who avoided forced labor. The prisoners - apart from working in the gravel pit - were employed at felling trees, building a bridge on the River Bug, and the unloading of wagons. The stay in the camp - in conditions of hunger and terror - often ended with death. The camp was liquidated (for fear of the approaching front line) on 23-24 July 1944. During the liquidation of a group of 500 prisoners were shot. The buildings and the

fences were blown up. Today there is a monument near the mass graves (made of pink sandstone) in the form of a stone wall.

We follow road no. 677 to Kosów Lacki, then to Ceranów - and following road no. 63 leading to Siedlce we pull off to Sterdyń. We stop at a rectangular market square. This is a market with a square, which features an obelisk commemorating the 100th anniversary of the emancipation of the peasants and a stone monument dedicated to the soldiers of the AK. Next to it you can see the towers of the Baroque parish church of St. Anna. It was built between 1779-1783 by the Ossoliński foundation. The Baroque-Classicist main al-



Palace in Sterdyń

tar dates back to the late eighteenth century. The pulpit and baptismal fonts from the eighteenth century are also historic. What is noteworthy are the commemorative and epitaph plaques: dedicated to the Ossoliński, Krasieński and Górski families.

We come to another hill, located behind the church, which features an impressive palace and park complex. It is the old seventeenth or eighteenth-century baroque mansion, which was enlarged and transformed in the early nineteenth century for Stanisław Ossoliński. The palace complex is surrounded by an old park, whose space has been magnificently renovated (Ossoliński Palace Hotel). You can admire the effect from behind the gates (or you can

also spend the night here). What you can watch from very close is the chapel located at the gate, which was built at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a beautiful statue of St. Florian.

Back on road no. 63 from Sterdyń towards Siedlce, we take a turn in the town of Sabnie and pull off to Jabłonna Lacka. It houses an interesting parish church, built between 1824-1834 in the form of a Greek temple with a four-column Ionic portico at the front. The founder of the church was Ludwik Bieniewski, the owner of the land property in Jabłonna.

Jabłonna is only 4 km away from Gródek. It lies on the left side of the Bug River on a high escarpment. Polish, Lithuanian and Russian influ-

ences have clashed here for centuries. Uniates prevailed here. There used to be a Uniate church in Gródek, which - like most others - was converted into a Roman Catholic church in 1919. You can reach the church from the middle of the village. One should turn right. It is a wooden church (with timbered structure) with one towered nave. A belfry is standing nearby.

Near the church is a holiday resort where you can rent a camping cabin. Following the path along the fence one reaches the Bug river. The river looks very picturesque. A walk on its shore is a pleasure.

In the vicinity of the next village, Mołożew, is a nature reserve called Mołożewska Dune; it protects waterfowl and waders.

Wirów is located just outside Mołożew. Even when you're on your way there you can see the original buildings of the former Orthodox monastery that was built by the Tsarist authorities in the late nineteenth century in the Byzantine style. Orthodox sisters once carried out various training for the Polish youth on farming, as well as cooking and sewing. They taught maths, reading and writing in Russian. An Orthodox church and a parsonage were built nearby. These were, of course, propaganda activities aimed at Russification of the Polish nation. In 1918 the nuns moved to Russia. The Prioress of the monastery was a distant cousin of Tsar Ni-

colas II. The Polish authorities organized a female seminar in the building of the convent for teachers. It was run by Catholic nuns. It existed until 1928. Until 1957 it housed an Orphanage. Currently it is a seat of an educational institution for the mentally disabled at a moderate level.

We continue our journey to Korczew. Unfortunately, sometimes we have to move along dirt and paved roads. The village is just as old as Drohiczyn. It had changed owners over centuries. Wiktoryn Kuczyński acquired Korczew in 1712. One can see a palace and park complex here. The size of the area including the palace and the park was 35.5 hectares. Most of the park resembled a forest. The palace was built in a classicistic style. This is a one-story, brick building, brick, 40 meters long. It is supported by columns in the center and topped by a triangular facade. Currently renovation works are under way, performed by the inheritors of the owners. However, the facility is made available to the public. The interior features a magnificent wooden hall. A exhibition dedicated to Cyprian Kamil Norwid is located on the first floor. What draws attention downstairs, in the ballroom, is a magnificent ceiling. The pictures collected here show the history of the palace: from the pre-war glory, through a period of devastation, when the ballroom housed a store

warehouse, until the time of reconstruction.

We can trace the Kuczyński family tree in a side room.

Once the palace had 50 rooms, they remember the times of the Bar Confederation, when its supporters led by Leon Kuczyński gathered here. All rooms in the palace were decorated in the style of Louis XV. The palace and its large courtyard are surrounded from the south and the west with a mighty wall.

A walk in the park surrounding the palace can also be pleasurable. One can see still the surviving avenues. A splendid view over the valley of the Bug stretches behind the trees. Signposts lead to the stone from the pre-Christian times. You can stop for the night in a palace tower.

We continue our trip from Korczew along the road to Siedlce. The late Renaissance parish church in Knychówek features seventeenth-century side altars, a pulpit, a baptismal font, a confessional, and choir stalls.

The next stop on our tour is Mordy. The town prides itself on the eighteenth-century classicist palace. The Baroque gate leading to the palace is noteworthy. The whole complex is surrounded by a park of the eighteenth century, with remnants of the former moats and ramparts and many species of conifers. Unfortunately, the decaying buildings can only be

admired from behind the wall. We move on the Baroque parish church from the early eighteenth century. Since the beginning of the fifteenth century Mordy had belonged to the Koszycki family, in 1552 it became the property of the Vilnius Voivode Michał Radziwiłł, called the Black. He turned this place into a strong center of Reformation in Podlachia. One of the main centers of Arianism in Poland was located here. In 1553 a synod attended by Podlachia and Lithuanian pastors was held in Mordy.

The next destination is Siedlce. The first mention of Siedlce is from 1448, the city received municipal rights from Sigismund the Old in 1547. Siedlce belonged to the Gniewosz family, who assumed the name Siedleccy in the first half of the sixteenth century. The town developed in the second half of the seventeenth century, under the Czartoryski family. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Izabela and Kazimierz Czartoryski founded a church for the city and built a palace. Aleksandra Ogińska rebuilt the palace and the church, and it was at her initiative that other buildings appeared in the city, including the Town Hall. It is a late Baroque and Classicistic building. Today, the building houses the Regional Museum, where the can see collections illustrating the history and culture of West Podlachia.

A monument of Tadeusz Kościusz-



The Town Hall in Siedlce

ko is located to the eastern side of the Town Hall. He visited Siedlce in September 1794. When he came for the first time he met Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz at a dinner at Aleksandra Oginska. On his second visit he stopped on the way to Wiśniowa, where he was going to review the troops of General Sierakowski.

After passing through Floriańska street we come to the parish church of St. Stanislaus the Bishop. It is a Baroque-Classical building built between 1740-1749. Its consecration took place in 1753. The new facade was added in 1793. The Classical altar dates back to the late eighteenth century. The main altar fea-



House of Creative Work 'Reymontówka' in Chlewiska

tures a seventeenth-century painting of the Madonna and Child. It is worth emphasizing that the paintings of the evangelists in the presbytery come from the Ossoliński gallery.

As we go along Kościuszko street from the church behind the intersection one can see the former court stables and an outbuilding. The Ogiński palace is to the east. It is a classicist building. Its glory years are those of the life of Aleksandra Ogińska. The hetman's wife used to invite poets and painters from all over Poland. She organized festivals, tours, performances. Today the palace is the seat of the University of Nature and the Humanities.

The palace is surrounded by a landscape park, founded in the years 1776-1781. On July 20 1783, on the occasion of arrival of King Stanisław Au-

gust Poniatowski, extra rooms were built in the park, and new islands were created in the ponds. Currently the size of the park is 14 hectares, almost twice less than in its heyday.

Outside Siedlce we have to pull off the road connecting Warsaw and Terespol. Chlewiska (in the Kotuń gmina) features a beautifully situated nineteenth century manor house, called 'Reymontówka' located among forests and meadows. Aurelia Reymont - the widow of the Nobel Prize winner - purchased the manor and palace complex in 1926. The times of Aurelia Reymont were the period of the glory of Chlewiska. New additions at that time included the eastern part of the manor, a gardener's cottage, the entrance gate with a fence in the Podhale style Today it houses the House of Creative Work. Open air

workshops, art workshops and conferences are held here.

Then we go to Mokobody. It is the location of a church, which is interesting due to the fact that it was created according to a project which won the competition for the royal Temple of Providence. It was supposed to stand in place of today's Warsaw Botanical Garden (near Łazienki) as a vote for the adoption of the Constitution of May 3rd. Jakub Kubicki, who was brought to Mokobody in 1793 by Jan Onufry Ossoliński, decreased the size of the temple four times in comparison to the original design and be-

gan its construction which lasted 25 years. The temple is a classicist building of harmonious shapes. It became famous as a sanctuary owing to the seventeenth-century Image of Our Lady of Budzieszyn; it is located on the side chapel. The cult is associated with the village of Budzieszyn, where according to a legend Polish warriors were miraculously saved from a treacherous attack of the Yotvingians. Apparently, the sleeping men were woken up by the glow emanating from the image of Our Lady and Child. In Budzieszyn also boasts a spring, which attracts pilgrims who wish to regain health.



Practical information

- Warszawa – Treblinka – Sterdyń – Korczew – Siedlce: 170 km. The total distance is 340 km.
- Treblinka – 2 hours, Sterdyń – 1 hour, Gródek – 1 hour, Korczew – 1 hour, Siedlce – 2,5 hours.

Accommodation:

- Palace Tower in Korczew, reservations, phonetel. (25) 631 20 68, www.korczew-palac.pl
- Arche Hotel, Siedlce, ul. Brzeska 134, phone (25) 644 04 33
- Hetman Hotel, Siedlce, ul. Warszawska 133, phone (25) 644 30 00, www.hetman.siedlce.pl
- Dom Handlowy Janusz (Commercial Center)– Hotel – Restaurant, Siedlce, ul. Pusta 15, phone (25) 633 06 66
- Małutki Hotel, Siedlce, ul. Gałczyńskiego 4, phone (25) 643 59 20
- Panorama Hotel, Siedlce, ul. Okrężna 25, phone (25) 644 99 55, www.panoramasiedlce.com
- Zespół Pałacowy Ossolińskich (Palace Complex), Sterdyń, ul. Kościelna 43, phone (25) 781 09 50

Restaurants:

- Signor Caffettano Restaurant, ul. Armii Krajowej 12, Siedlce, phone (25) 644 68 16, www.caffettano.pl
- Zaścianek Polski, Siedlce, ul. Asłanowicza 17, phone (25) 631 02 29, www.zascianek.idt.pl



NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, arranged in two columns.