



Mazovia **Biking routes**



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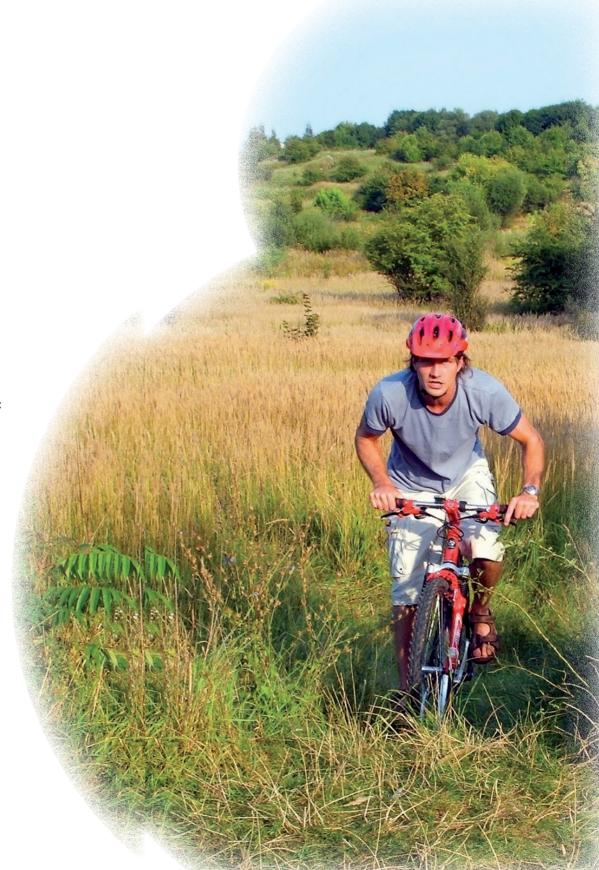
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MAZOVIA. BIKING ROUTES

Present 10 routes which will lead you through the most interesting spots of Mazovia. The length of route is designed to suit the abilities of an average weekend tourist. If you love breaking records, you may freely lengthen any of the routes. Remember to always have a map with you. The smallest useful scale is 1:100,000. We are certain that you will soon discover the appeal of independent exploration and start to develop your own routes. Have a nice ride!

THE MAGIC OF TWO WHEELS

As soon as the sun comes up, cyclists appear on the Mazovian roads. Every year their number increases, as once you get on a bicycle, you will find it rather hard to trade it for other means of transport. Mazovia is a dream region for bicycle tours – the prevalence of flatlands makes pedalling almost effortless. The relatively dense network of railway lines enables cyclists to reach even the most remote spots of the voivodeship.

Mazovia seems quite different from a bicycle saddle. Astonishingly close to the capital city, there begins a land of field tracks, enchanting wooden cottages and roadside shrines adorned with ribbons. It seems to be quite a different world, extremely remote from the street hubbub and skyscrapers of steel and glass. Take your time to rest in a small roadside shop. Watch how life goes on around you. Certainly, you will have many chances to chat with the friendly inhabitants of Mazovian villages – they ride bicycles, too. When you enter a forest you will also appreciate the merits of two wheels. The bicycle is silent, so birds and other animals will only run away from you at the last moment. Perhaps you will come face to face with a surprised hare, or maybe an elk - the king of the swamp - will block your way.

THROUGH FORESTS AND MEADOWS

There is no need to be afraid of monotony, because the region's landscape is astonishingly diverse. Mazovia is above all an agricultural land. The mosaic of fields is interspersed with shrubs and roadside. large-headed willows. Forests cover approximately one fifth of the region's area. The biggest forest complex of Mazovia is the Kampinos Forest (Puszcza Kampinoska). A national park, the only one in the voivodeship, has been created here. One forest is not equal to another - although it is handplanted pine that reigns supreme in Mazovian woods, you will have many opportunities to smell lilies of the valley in mixed forests in the spring, and in autumn you will be enraptured with the colours of broadleaved forests. Marshy depressions are kingdoms of dark and humid alders, and in valleys of great rivers there are riparian forests, today there being very few left in Europe.

The Mazovian flatlands are interspersed with patches of dune sands. In many places wind has built up quite big hills. Although views from them may be interesting, cyclists are not dune lovers. Pedalling on sand is a task for very persistent people.

A MEETING WITH HISTORY

During your excursions you should keep your eyes wide open. A domed hill among fields may be a prehistoric town. The first people in Mazovia appeared about ten thousand years ago. A large camp of reindeer breeders has been discovered in Świdry Wielkie near Otwock. In the early Middle Ages this land was inhabited by the Mazowszanie tribe. At that time impenetrable forests grew everywhere, and human settlements concentrated on the rivers.

In numerous copses you will recognise the remnants of ancient parks, and among the greenery you will discover the picturesque ruins of manor houses and palaces. In Mazovia, there are several hundred such ruins, and only a small number of them are used. The inscriptions on roadside shrines and monuments will help you to understand the history of the region. The history of Mazovia consists, above all, of consecutive wars. The most tragic effects were brought by the Swedish invasion of 1655, which slowed down the development of the region for over a hundred years. Many of the towns which fell into decline as a result of the war against the Swedes have never regained their former glory. In the 19th century several national uprisings swept through Mazovia. After the January Uprising (1863-1864) many Mazovian towns were deprived of their town charters, as a form of repression. Some of them have never regained their charters. Two world wars have also left a distinctive impression on the land's face, leaving behind many battlefields and cemeteries. Time marches inexorably on. Thatched cottages are slowly disappearing from the landscape, and horses drawing a plough have become a rarity. On the side roads of Mazovia time passes more slowly. You should discover the charm of Mazovian villages and small towns before their faces irrevocably change.

BY ROUTE AND OFF THE TRACK

Mazovia does not pamper cyclists with a dense network of marked routes, but each year the situation is improving. A circular trail, which is almost two hundred kilometres long, goes round the Kampinos Forest (Puszcza Kampinoska). A network of connecting tracks bonds the main hub with many railway stations and bigger towns. New routes are marked at the initiative of biking enthusiasts themselves. You will find them near Łochów, Wołomin and in the Kozienice Forest (Puszcza Kozienicka).



The plans to include the territory of Poland into EuroVelo, the all-European network of biking routes, are becoming more and more crystallised. Mazovia will be an intersection of two trans-European routes: EV2, leading from Irish Galway - via London, Berlin, Warsaw and Minsk - to Moscow, and EV11, beginning at the most northern cape of Europe and going – via Helsinki, Vilnius, Warsaw and Koszyce - to Greece. Undoubtedly, the standard of bicycle tours in region will become higher when these routes have been built. And certainly there will be more cyclists, tempted by comfortable, asphalt bicycle lanes.

BEFORE YOU SET OFF

You should remember to take several things with you. Pack at least a half a litre of water and a snack into a small rucksack. You never know how far from the nearest shop you will be seized by hunger. The weather is changeable, so a waterproof coat will come in handy. Also prepare a modest first-aid kit – several sticking plasters and hydrogen peroxide will be enough. With the help of a map you will come home from the wildest woods and countryside. Phew, maybe enough. Now it is time to take care of the bicycle. Your indispensable tool kit should include basic spanners, a chain rivet extractor, tyre levers, a pump and a spare inner tube. It is also worth taking a roll of insulation tape and a little patch kit. If you ride in a group, it is enough to take one tool kit. However, each tour participant should take their own inner tube – nature is sometimes malicious and if it punctures one tyre, it punctures them all.

Do not forget to put a helmet on your head before you mount your bicycle. This Styrofoam protection may save your life.

BICYCLE YEAR

There is no denying that cycling is a seasonal pleasure. In winter, even if there is no snow, only the greatest enthusiasts go on bicycle tours. In early spring melting snow may lead to the flooding of some stretches of routes. Equip your bicycle with proper mudguards and preferably avoid clayey ground. The most pleasant time for bicycle tours begins with the long May weekend. In spring, the forests and meadows teem with animal life. Take with you a pocket guide to birds. You will see how many species you can recognise during just one tour. On hot summer days the scorching heat is sometimes unbearable. Remember to take an adequate supply of liquids with you. Try also to



plan the route so that you can have a refreshing bath. In autumn, days become shorter, so the autumn tours cannot be long. The colourful leaves and carpets of purple heather can change the routes, which you followed many times in other seasons, beyond recognition.







WHERE THE FIRS RUSTLE

FROM STROMIEC FOREST TO KOZIENICE FOREST

Centuries ago, to the south of Pilica, a large forest rustled, in which Polish kings hunted big game. With the passing of time the forest split into two forest complexes of quite different natures. The proposed route at first leads along the edge of the Stromiec Forest (Puszcza Stromiecka). The vast woods have been replaced mostly with fields; in the river valleys there are picturesque meadows. The typical south Mazovian landscape in this region has remained untouched for centuries. To the south of the Radomka river the Kozienice Forest (Puszcza Kozienicka) stretches, which most resembles the immense forest of the times when the kings used to hunt. As it was centuries ago the ancient pines give shelter to many animal species.

Get off the train at a little railway station lost in the forests. Around Dobieszyn there stretches one of the largest and most beautiful sections of the former Stromiec Forest (Puszcza Stromiecka), which in the 19th century was cut down to a large extent. The remaining patches of the forests grow on barren, sandy or boggy soil. Mostly, they consist of pines or pines and oaks. Marshy depressions are covered with alders.

If you are pressed for time or feel like cycling fast, from Dobieszyn to Głowaczów you can go by road no. 729. In this case from the station you should head to the south.

However we suggest another, more adventurous, variant. From the station turn left, and after 150 m head right

onto a paved road. You will soon reach the end of the forest. The road leads through picturesque fields and among the widely scattered houses of the Sielce and Zadąbrowie settlements.

At the junction before the village turn left and after a while right, onto the asphalt road going among houses.

6 km Klementynów



Length of the route: 46 km

WHERE THE FIRS RUSTLE

Marking:

At first there are no marks, then the red marks of the hiking trail.

Difficulties:

Since the route runs mainly on forest tracks, it will be most enjoyable for cyclists who are used to off-road cycling.

Public transport:

The start of the excursion – the railway station in Dobieszyn, the end of the excursion – the railway station in Lesiów, both on the way from Warsaw to Radom.

0 km

Dobieszyn

After 1.5 km the road turns sharply to the south. Turn off to the left. The track leads to the north east, through a small wood. After approximately one kilometre, when you reach a junction in the wood, turn right. You will ride into fields interwoven with orchards. From a small hill you could see in the distance the tower of Głowaczów church.

12 km Głowaczów

This big village at the edge of the Radomka river valley obtained its town charter in the 15th century. Four hundred years afterwards, a flourishing cloth factory sprang up here. Głowaczów was one of many towns which where deprived of their charters in retaliation for the January Uprising (1863 -1864). Most of the remains of the past were wiped off the surface of the earth when in 1944 Głowaczów was on the front line during the battles for the Warka-Magnuszew bridgehead. However, it is worth visiting the contemporary church and to see the 19th century epitaphs set in its wall.

You will ride into Głowaczów from the north west. Narrow streets will lead you to the main Warka – Kozienice road. Turn right into this road. A gentle descent leads to a bridge over the Radomka river. Your route now joins the red hiking trail.

15 km Brzóza

The centre of the village, delightfully situated in undulating terrain, is marked by the towers of a 19th century neo-Gothic church. The temple owes its original silhouette, resembling more a town hall or a mosque, to Ignacy Essmanowski. The pink and apricot colour of the walls adds much charm to the building. In the interior, there are valuable elements of church decor, older than the church itself. The baroque carved pulpit and a series of low reliefs of 1635 have been brought from the Cistercian abbey in Oliwa.

Leave Brzóza following the main road leading to Kozienice. On the outskirts of the village the red marks of the trail turn right and go along a bumpy asphalt road to the south east. Follow the trail. If the day is hot, the wood you pass through will give you some respite.



Turn right, just as the trail goes. After 800m the trail turns off the main village road to the right, goes through fields and then leads to Marianów along the edge of a wood. 20,5 km Stanisławów

You cross a village road and plunge into the Kozienice Forest (Puszcza Kozienicka) for good. Thus you enter the Kozienice Landscape Park (Kozienicki Park Krajobrazowy). The trail follows a narrow forest path. Among the pines you will see isolated firs. In Mazovia these trees grow naturally only in this region. After less than three kilometres you will reach a wide forest track. Turn right, following the trail marks.

The junction of the forest routes is at the same time a hub of hiking trails. The black trail marks lead to the south east, while the yellow and red ("yours") turn right, to the south west. You are now on the main forest route, 22,5 km

Marianów

26 km

"Zagożdżon" Reserve





so called the Royal Road. The route goes along the border of the "Zagożdżon" reserve. Although you have to watch out for bumps, look around. This, more than two hundred year old forest of firs and oaks, was called the Black Forest (Czarny Las) by the local people. This name appropriately reflects the nature of the gloomy spaces under the canopy of huge trees. If you go through the wood in spring, you will see carpets of blooming forest flowers. The forest floor is - consecutively - decorated with snowdrops, anemones and lilies of the valley; at the threshold of summer purple martagon lilies come into bloom.

29 km "Ponty" Reserve

16

The trail crosses a forest clearing, then an asphalt road and once more plunges into the forest.

Through the forest runs a diminutive river, whose dammed waters make a scenic pond. The pond is surrounded with tall firs and oaks. Here you will see marks of the educational trail, leading from the nearby village of Przejazd. One kilometre further along you will reach the north edge of the "Ponty" reserve. It is the natural stand of firs and oaks that is protected. Some trees have grown here for more than two hundred years. Many bird species bustle about among branches and twigs. It is hard to discern them, but in spring they will perform a wonderful concert for you. In the backwoods of the reserve the black stork, which is a very rare specimen, nests.

After approximately 1.5 km you will arrive at the place where years ago a narrow-gauge railway track forked. Today only the embankments are left of the railway, which delivered wood to the sawmill. The border of the reserve turns to the south east; you go straight ahead, following the Royal Road.

The trail reaches a road, at first paved, then asphalt; after a while you come to the Leniwa (lazy) river. The name probably derives from the slow pace of the river. From the little bridge a beautiful view stretches over a broad, marshy

33 km

The bridge over the Leniwa river



valley. To your right you can see the old viaduct of narrowgauge railway. The asphalt road leads along the outskirts of Stoki village. 400 m beyond the bridge the main road (and the black trail) goes to the south. Follow the red trail marks, which once again plunge into the forest. The asphalt gives way to chippings; after a while you cycle on sand. All the time the Royal Road is accompanied by the railway embankment. You cross two forest tracks which connect the villages situated at opposite sides of the forest. After approximately 3.5 km the trail goes through the dune embankment of Jaroszkowa Mountain.

37 km

"Ciszek" Reserve To the south of the place where the railway embankment ends, grow the woods of the "Ciszek" reserve. There are several wood complexes which are protected; splendid over one hundred fifty year old firs constitute a high percentage of them. The name of the reserve derives from yews ("cis" in Polish), which are said to have grown here at the beginning of the 20th century.

To the left of the route stretch marshy woods of alders. These trees grow on the so called deflation basin, created by the erosion of sand dunes. Since the depression is inextricable from the dune, there begins an arduous sandy stretch of trail. You have to go up a big hill, not without reason called the Large Mountain (Wielka Góra). Fortunately, the next dune embankments are lower and lie parallel to the route. After 3.5 km of cycling through the mixed forests which grow on dunes, the trail reaches the edge of the wood. On your left there is a valley of a small brook with the charming name of Live Water (Żywa Woda). The trail crosses an asphalt road and goes through a forest clearing, following a wide chipping track among buildings. After a while you plunge into a wood for the last time. When you pass the last trees, you will see the buildings of Lesiów.

44,5 km Lesiów After reaching an asphalt road turn left according to the trail marks; at the next intersection turn right. 300 m further, at a junction of routes, choose the left branch.

The day is probably ending... However, if there is a lot of time to the train's departure, you can go to the diminutive Mleczna river, which flows parallel to the railway track. On its opposite, left bank at one time there was a medieval town. Perhaps you will discern the remains of it. The 2.5 m high mound has a diameter of several dozen meters.

46 km

The railway station in Lesiów

WHERE THE FIRS RUSTLE

Practical information

Głowaczów; Źródłowa Restaurant ul. Rynek 21, tel. +48 (48) 623 10 09

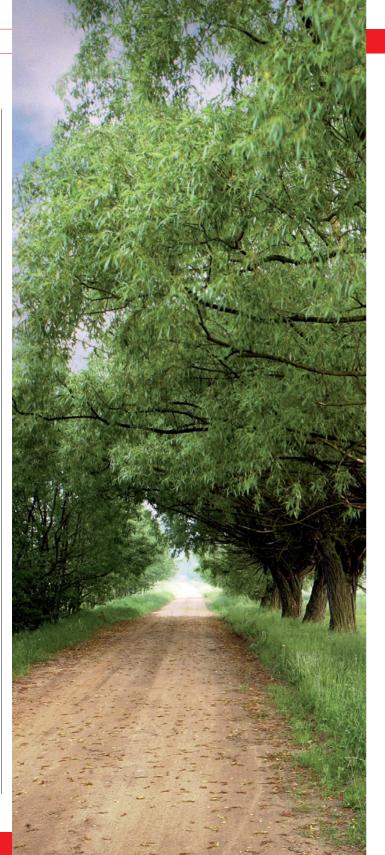


Brzóza; farm accommodation, Krystyna Jaroszek, ul. Warecka 68, tel. +48 (48) 623 02 53

Głowaczów; farm accommodation, Bożena Wysoka, ul. 11 Listopada 2, tel. +48 (48) 623 19 40, 600 798 603

Stanisławów; farm accommodation, Jan Rębiś, Stanisławów 69, tel. +48 (48) 623 02 91





Among meadows AND ORCHARDS

KABATY – CHYNÓW

The proposed route goes at the border of two lands the Warsaw Plain (Równina Warszawska) and the Central Vistula Valley (Dolina Środkowej Wisły). The most important point of the route is a medieval castle in Czersk, but there are also other interesting places on the way. The salt drops of a brine graduation tower in Konstancin will remind you of the seaside, and historic villas will allure you by their charm. The Vistula near Gassy is quite a different river than in Warsaw. White flocks of gulls sit about on the sandbanks. At the end of the route waits a charming little wooden church and delicious apples from Mazovian orchards.

Length of the route:

53 km.

Marking:

No marks, some stretches of the route coincide with hiking trails.

Difficulties: An easy route.

Public transport:

Kabaty – the Warsaw underground, Chynów – a railway station on the Radom – Warsaw line.

From the underground station a bicycle lane goes towards ul. Wąwozowa and then to the Kabaty Forest (Las Kabacki). This favourite resting place of southern Warsaw inhabitants has been a nature reserve since 1980. In 1939, the then hunting grounds of the Wilanów owners (the Potocki and Branicki families) were bought by the Warsaw authorities. It was the then president of Warsaw, Stefan Starzyński, who originated this undertaking – today the reserve bears his name. On bright weekends it is really crowded. Everybody wants to rest in the shade of the ancient trees.

On your left you pass a forester's lodge and after a while you ride into an open area. At the edge of the forest there are shelters and a playground for children; the road to the left leads into the Park of Rest and Culture. Amongst the forest scenery you will find bars, an open air swimming pool and funfairs.

Go straight ahead along the edge of the forest, which after a while will give way to railings. This is the Botanic Garden of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Polska Akademia

0 km

Metro Kabaty

2,5 km Park of Rest and Culture

Nauk - PAN). Since it is forbidden to cycle in the Garden, put off visiting this most be-flowered place of the capital city until another day. To see it at its loveliest, you should come here in spring, when a unique collection of azaleas comes into blossom.

For some time your route has been accompanied by green trail marks. Turn left, following the marks. UI. Prawdziwka and then Borowa will lead you down to the Vistula valley.

5,5 km

Klarysew

At the opposite side of the busy ul. Warszawska there is a characteristic narrow-gauge railway station building – it was only several dozen years ago that the railway was carrying passengers from Piaseczno to Wilanów. Turn right into ul. Warszawska and following the bicycle lane head towards the centre of Konstancin. Comfortable cycling ends by the railway track.

6,5 km Rondo

Turn left, into ul. Piaseczyńska. You can again follow a comfortable bicycle lane. After approximately 1 km you will see blue trail marks. Turn left, following the marks. A chipping track goes towards a little bridge over the Jeziorka river and then to Zdrojowy Park in Konstancin.

Although it is hard to imagine, this fashionable sub-Warsaw town is just a little over one hundred years old. In 1897 Witold Skórzewski (the owner of the Obory estate) parcelled out the land by the Jeziorka river, planning to make a summer resort in the pine forest. He named it Konstancin, after his mother. Luxury villas sprang up among the pines like mushrooms. The healthy microclimate, deposits of therapeutic mud and rich brine springs made Konstancin a spa, which has been highly regarded till today, and at the same time one of the trendiest sub-Warsaw addresses.

8,2 km Zdrojowy Park This large English-style park was established at the very beginning of Konstancin's history. Its greatest attraction is the brine graduation tower, which is 40 m long and 6 m high. Drops of brine flow down through bundles of wicker, making a mineral-saturated mist in the air. Spending time in the graduation tower is helpful in treating chronic upper respiratory tract infections and diseases caused by city air pollution.

Blue trail marks lead through the oldest, residential part of the town – along ul. Matejki and ul. Mickiewicza. After a while low buildings give way to blocks of flats. You then ride onto the edge of the Vistula valley. Down below stretches the "Łęgi Oborskie" reserve. It protects the natural riparian forest of elms and ashes, which were once very typical of the Vistula valley.

Go further, following ul. Literacka which runs at the foot of an embankment.

On your left you pass a picturesque avenue, leading to the manor house in Obory. The baroque mansion was built from 1681 to 1688 for Jan Wielopolski, the then Great Chancellor of the Crown. The building designer came from the circle of the outstanding architect Tylman of Gameren. The huge manor house has a characteristic mansard roof. The building is surrounded by an ancient park, in which many monumental trees grow. For many years the Obory mansion has been a writers' retreat. Many famous poems and short stories have been created here.

Keep following the main road, which gently curves to the left and heads east, towards the Vistula bed. You will cross a grove of alders (the "Łyczyńska Olszyna" reserve) and ride into the open area. Straight like an arrow road leads to Gassy village.

Ride up onto the Vistula embankment and head to the south. After approximately one kilometre a narrow field track turns off to the right. Following the track you will pass by Piaski village and then cross the old bed of the Vistula river. At the junction, which is just behind the water, in Cieciszew, turn left. Yellow trail marks will lead you along field tracks to Dębówka.

11 km

The Obory Palace

15,5 km





20,5 km

AMONG MEADOWS

Dębówka

At the intersection the yellow trail marks turn left, towards the Vistula river. Go further –straight ahead. An asphalt road runs among orchards and fields towards Podłęcze and then along the embankment, across Wólka Dworska. You really have to go up the embankment, from which stretches one of the most beautiful Mazovian views. The panorama of sandbanks in the Vistula bed encourages the taking of a longer rest.

Refreshed, keep going to the south. The road crosses the embankment and goes under a railway viaduct.

An extensive view over the Vistula valley is the prize for the tiring ride along ul. Lipkowska. The centre of the town is marked by high church towers. You will reach them turning right, into ul. Szpitalna, and then left, into ul. Pijarska.

29 km Góra Kalwaria

In the second half of the 17th century, in a little town on a high river bank, Bishop Stefan Wierzbowski set up a Calvary which was to imitate the Jerusalem original. It was arranged on a cruciform plan and included 6 churches, 35 chapels and 5 monasteries. However, only few of the build-





ings have survived until today. In the place where ul. Pijarska cuts through the vast marketplace, there once crossed the arms of the Calvary cross. An artificial hill was built there, on which the baroque church of the Raising of the Holy Cross, the former Calvary chapel (called Pontius Pilate's House) is situated. To the east of the church a shapely classical town hall of 1834 rises up. Adjacent to it are the former shambles with columned arcades. At the back of the town hall there is a reconstructed bishop's palace of the second half of the 18th century. The eastern end of the marketplace is marked by an impressive church and a former Observantine monastery. The baroque temple was erected in 1755 to 1759 to the design of Jakub Fontana. The rich, late barogue interior decor has remained until the present day. In the right chapel there is a picture of Our Lady from the second half of the 17th century, which is famous for miracles.

Behind the church turn right and go down the steep paved ul. św. Antoniego. Further on there waits for you



AMONG MEADOWS AND ORCHARDS



a little bridge over the Cedron river and a tunnel under the busy road no. 50. The asphalt road leads along an embankment. In the place where the road cuts through the embankment go further straight ahead along a gravel road. Follow the green trail marks. After a while you will discern the towers of Czersk, emerging from behind the fruit trees that surround you. When you reach an asphalt road, turn right. You will have to strain your muscles going up a steep escarpment.

Soon after you reach the top of the escarpment, turn left. The path crosses the terrain adjacent to the church and leads to a castle. You can enter the castle area with your bicycle. **34,5 km** Czersk

One of the oldest Mazovian towns, in medieval times Czersk was an important trade centre and a seat of dukes. At that time the Vistula river flew near Czersk. When at the end of the 16th century the river changed its bed and moved over 2 km away from the town, it has lost its defensive values and economic significance. Today the tiny town appears to be an oasis of peace.

The most valuable monument of Czersk is the ruins of a Gothic castle. The building was erected at the turn of the 14th century, to the order of the Duke Janusz the First. The approach to the castle is via an 18th century arcade bridge. The remains of the medieval buildings are only three towers, partly renovated, and a wall joining them. The hole in the middle of the courtyard is all that is left of the well. The square entrance tower served as a guardroom and probably as the steward's lodging. In the west tower, the highest one, there was a storehouse, while the east tower housed a prison. From the towers there is a wonderful view over the orchards in the Vistula valley.

Like any "decent" castle, Czersk has also its own "White Lady". And no mean one, since it is Queen Bona herself that haunts it. For hundreds of years she has been looking for the scattered pearls of her necklace, which broke when she was leaving Czersk for her native Italy.



AMONG MEADOWS



Just by the castle there is a sleepy marketplace, which you leave heading south west, towards the road to Tarnobrzeg. Riding into the road you turn left and cycle 1.5 km along the busy route. Behind a little bridge over the Czarna river there is an intersection. The asphalt road to the right leads to Wincentów. Choose the chipping track to Pęcław, which turns off to the south west, running diagonally between two roads. After a while the chipping will give way to asphalt.

39 km Pecław

2 - - -

At the intersection turn right, and after one hundred meters left, into the chipping track leading to the south west. A kilometre further – at a fork – take the right branch. You now follow a narrow track among picturesque orchards. You are in a large fruit growing region, which stretches from Góra Kalwaria to Grójec and Nowe Masto nad Pilicą. The region is most beautiful in spring, when everything is covered in flowers. After two kilometres the dirt track turns into a gravel road; after another thousand metres you reach an asphalt road. Turn right.

At an intersection turn left. The orchards, meadows and cultivated fields around you make a picturesque mosaic. A landscape transformed by human activity can be sometimes really attractive! After 3 km you will ride among the houses of Jakubowizna village. 1.5 km further on the road crosses the railway track. Do not turn to the station yet – it is really worth going another 1.5 km and visiting Chynów.

45,5 km Machcin

53 km Chynów Station

The little wooden church was erected in the first half of the 18th century. Modest on the outside, striking with the richness of the interior equipment. The late Renaissance main altar dates back to the period when the church was built. The side altars are baroque. Beside the church stands a 19th century bell tower.

It is enough for today! Now your bicycle will be a railway passenger. 51,5 km The church in Chynów

Practical information

Góra Kalwaria; Marysieńka restaurant, ul. Dominikańska 7, tel. +48 (22) 727 31 28



Góra Kalwaria; Omega Pizzeria, ul. Dominikańska 32, tel. +48 (22) 717 85 03

Góra Kalwaria; Złoty Róg restaurant, ul. Wojska Polskiego 37, tel. +48 (22) 727 41 36

Konstancin Jeziorna; Alicja hotel (with restaurant), ul. Pocztowa 15, tel. +48 (22) 754 34 91



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Konstancin Jeziorna; Konstancja hotel (with restaurant), ul. Źródlana 6/8, tel. +48 (22) 754 11 55



AMONG MEADOWS



ON THE PINE TRAIL

MAZOVIAN LANDSCAPE PARK

For over one hundred years the Varsovians have been willingly going to the Otwock region for holidays. This region is not without reason regarded as the lungs of the capital city. Winds take the clean air of Otwock straight to the crowded streets of the big city. A favourable microclimate, the balsamic aroma of pines and the inviting woods for walks are only some of many assets of this region. Thousands of years ago, on the terrace of the Vistula river, the wind built dunes, which – for lowland Mazovia – are quite big hills. They are covered with pine forests. Marshy depressions, filled with peat, have formed among the dunes. The whole mixture makes a diversified mosaic, attractive for people, but above all providing a habitat and food for many animal species – both on the water and the land. In 1987 in the Otwock Forests the Mazovian Landscape Park was created. The protected terrain is cut through by a dense network of dirt tracks, which are perfect for bicycle tours.

From the modernist-Art Nouveau railway station building go to the west. From under a viaduct you will ride into a bit chaotic Niepodległości Square (Plac Niepodległości). Turn left, into ul. Andriollego. After a couple of minutes you will realise that - for the centre of a town - there are astonishingly many pines along the streets. The present shape of Otwock was formed in the second half of the 19th century, when the anti-tuberculosis properties of the region's air were discovered. Around the railway track newly built along the Vistula sprang up a spa, which soon became famous for its interesting architecture. It was a mixture of the then trendy spa construction style of the Alps and Schwarzwald, and the architecture of Russian dacha. The oldest of the wooden, richly decorated buildings was built by the famous illustrator Michał Elwiro Andriolli. Many years afterwards, Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński named this eclectic style "Świdermajer" – after the Świder river running through

Length of the route:

28.5 km.

Marking:

No marks, the route partly coincides with black and blue hiking trails.

Difficulties: An easy route.

0 km

in Otwock

The railway station

Public transport: Train to Otwock.

ON THE PINE TRAIL



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3.5 km

cemetery

The old Jewish



Otwock. The atmospheric wooden villas are intermingled with newer, not so romantic buildings, but the forest rustles like it did before.

At the intersection of ul. Andriollego and ul. Narutowicza turn left. Just around the corner there is a building worth visiting.

2,5 km Otwock Region Museum

The museum is located in a small "Soplicówka" villa at ul. Narutowicza 2 (Contact: Tel.: (22) 788 15 45, open Tuesday to Friday 9.00 am to 2.00 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11.00 am to 2.00 pm.). When viewing the exhibition you will learn about the natural environment and history of the region. Of the exhibit items the most interesting are old photographs and a collection of Judaics. The ethnographic collection is also worth seeing.

Go back to ul. Andriollego and ride to the next side street. There turn to the west, behind the signpost showing the way to a cemetery. In a young grove on dune sands, by the former road from Pogorzel to Karczew, there is an old Jewish cemetery. Before the war Jews constituted three fourths of Otwock's population. Here also the followers of Judaism happily spent their holidays. In 1940 the Nazis established in the town a ghetto (the second largest after the Warsaw ghetto), which was liquidated two years afterwards. The romantic atmosphere of the cemetery favours looking for the ghosts of the past. Discovering history is easier thanks to the fact that many inscriptions on the tombstones are carved in Polish.

From the cemetery go further to the west, following a dirt track among pines. At the edge of the wood your track will merge with a much wider road – so called the Red Road. You enter Karczew from the industrial quarter side. Turn left, into ul. Armi Krajowej, which will lead you to the centre of the town.

The local cattle fairs were widely known as early as in the 18th century. The shambles of Karczew rendered much service to the capital city during the Nazi occupation period. At night a few hundred butchers, risking their lives, were cutting up raw meat and making cold meat. In the mornings the narrow-gauge railway carried smugglers, laden with first-rate goods, to starving Warsaw.

The low buildings of the town are dominated by the late baroque parish church of St. Wit. The temple was erected in 1732 to 1737, probably to the design of Jakub Fontana. It was founded by Franciszek Bieliński, the Great Marshal of the Crown. Of the older church, the 16th century chapel of the Karczewski family remains. The temple was extended in 1911 to 1913. Two chapels, a transept, presbytery and storage room were built to the design of Hugo Kudera. In the inside our attention is drawn to a baroque boatshaped pulpit. The church is also adorned with two paintings by Michał Elwiro Andriolli. The design of the richly decorated door is attributed to the same artist.

From the church follow ul. Żaboklickiego, to the south west. At the intersection with ul. Częstochowska your eye

5 km Karczew



ON THE PINE TRAIL

will be caught by a nice roadside shrine of the mid- 18th century. The asphalt road ends by a cemetery. Go further across the fields towards the buildings of a poultry farm seen in the distance. Here again a hardened surface will appear. The road runs among the houses of Janów village. After a while you will pass an intersection with a road leading deep into a forest, which all the time dominates the horizon to your left. A kilometre further on you will cross a little bridge over the Bielińskiego Channel, which drains the marshes in the Vistula valley, and enter Brzezinka village. The road turns sharply right and after a few hundred metres left. Keep going among the widely scattered buildings.

10,5 km

Before the village begins for good, the road turns sharply left. At the turn, head towards the right. A dirt track goes among meadows towards the nearby wood. Once again you will cross over the Bielińskiego Channel. Behind the water the track touches the wall of the forest and then plunges into its dark and marshy interior. It consists mainly of alders. In early spring their trunks protrude right from the water. After a kilometre or so the terrain begins to rise, the ground becomes sandy, and the alders give way to pines. You have just reached the top of the higher dune terrace of the Vistula valley. From here the terrain becomes more diversified.

15 km Lasek

Behind the sandy hill, houses appear in the forest. This is the beginning of Celestynów. Although an asphalt road encourages you to head towards the town, turn left and cycle further through the forest. For some time the yellow trail marks will join up with your route. Let them go their own way – you should keep going to the north. After 1.5 km you will ride into a vast clearing and then you will be among the houses of Dąbrówka.

17 km Dabrówka

The village stretches along the undulating edge of the Garwolin Plain. The escarpment is cut by small valleys. The

name "Dąbrówka" derives from the word "debrza", which means gorge or ravine. Turn left, into ul. Karczewska. Soon the houses will give way to fields and after another kilometre you will be in the forest again. The road gradually becomes sandy. A gentle incline leads to the top of Dąbrowiecka Hill (Dąbrowiecka Góra).

The dune is also called a White Mountain (Biała Góra), after the colour of the sand it is built of. If you want to feel for a moment as if you are in a desert, dive to the right of the road, at the west side of the hill. Fine sand runs freely among stunted pines.

Several years ago the German army decided that the hill was a good defensive point. On the Dąbrowiecka Hill there are two of the best preserved bunkers of the German defences of 1944. The building of fortifications of the so called Przedmoście Warszawskie began as early as 1941. However, the work was abandoned after the successes of the German army on the eastern front. The gathered materials were sent to build the Atlantic Rampart (Wał Atlantycki). When in 1944 The Germans retreated in haste before the Red Army, the fortifications were being hurriedly finished, but there was too little time. Between 27th and 30th July 1944 the Russians broke through the German line at the weakly defended section near Dabrówka.

A gentle descent ends at an intersection of roads and trails. If you have had enough for today, turn right and you will reach the railway station in Pogorzel Warszawska (4.5 km). However, we encourage you to go straight ahead, following the black trail marks which lead towards Otwock. At first you will ride along a very wide, forest track. A kilometre further the trail turns left and, wandering through forest paths, runs in the shade of birches and pines. In the boughs of the trees jays quarrel noisily. If you are lucky you may see a herd of roe deer crossing a forest track.

The old building of the forester's lodge houses an ecological education centre of the Mazovian Landscape Park

19 km

Dąbrowiecka Hill

22 km "Peat" Base



(Karczew, ul. Torfy 2, open on weekdays 8.00 am to 9.00 am or 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm, tel. (22) 788 80 87). Classes for schools and other organised groups are given here if it has been arranged in advance. The greatest attraction of the base is, founded in 1998, a shelter for animals which, for various reasons, need help to return to nature: wounded roe deer, birds which have fallen out of their nests, and other "difficult cases".

Keep following the black trail marks, which will soon turn left, into a wide forest track leading along the edge of the "On Peat" reserve (rezerwat "Na Torfach"). The black trail is accompanied by the information boards of a forest educational trail. After 800 m you will reach an observation deck

23 km

"On Peat" Reserve

A strip of marshy peat bog stretches along the Vistula valley – from the Osieck region to Otwock. Most of the marshes have been drained, but here you can still admire a charming peat bog landscape.

In spite of appearances, the little lake by which you stand has not been created by nature. The depression resulted from peat extraction. Water flows down to it from the tiny springs which are at the northern edge of the excavation. Numerous peninsulas and tiny islands are covered with clumps of alders and birches. On the higher, dryer terrain, you will see poplars, pines and oaks. The little lake and the nearby flora make a perfect sanctuary for animals. Several dozen bird species nest here. It is easiest to see majestic white swans there. The woodpeckers, living in the hollows of the shoreline trees, make themselves heard by tapping loudly. The reserve's fauna includes rare specimens such as marsh turtle and smooth snake. Also bigger animals, including elks, live in the vicinity of the lake. If you want to observe the nature you should come here at dawn. Nevertheless, even in broad daylight this charming spot encourages a longer observation of nature.

Go back, following the track towards the forester's lodge, cross the intersection of forest paths and head to the north

west, towards Otwock, which is already not far away. Soon after the blue hiking trail joins up with your route, a residential area will appear among the pines.

You come to Otwock through one of the most beautiful quarters of the town. This settlement of clerical houses was built in the 1920's. The blue trail wanders along narrow lanes, and then follows ul. Poniatowskiego, ul. Filipowicza and ul. Armii Krajowej towards the railway station which you already know.

If you liked this tour, you will surely come here again and it will not be once. There are more interesting routes waiting for you and your bicycle. **28.5 km** The railway station in Otwock

25 km

Soplicowo

Practical information

Karczew; M. K. Broniszewscy restaurant, ul. Mickiewicza 34, tel. +48 (22) 780 67 57

Otwock; Stylowa restaurant, ul. Warszawska 19, tel. +48 (22) 779 32 71

Otwock; Zalesin restaurant, ul. Ambasadorska 14, tel. +48 (22) 788 92 47

Otwock; Tourist Services Office (Biuro Usług Turystycznych), ul. Poniatowskiego 1, tel. +48 (22) 779 31 05; it helps to find accommodation in holiday centres and private rooms.

Otwock;Start hotel, ul. Sportowa 10, tel. +48 (22) 779 24 26 (from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm)

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CHEŁMOŃSKI'S LAND

CHEŁMOŃSKI'S LAND

MIĘDZYBORÓW – SKUŁY – JAKTORÓW

The proposed route leads through the most beautiful spots of Mazovia. Check what has changed since the times when Józef Chełmoński was painting the landscapes of this region. Flat, agricultural area is interspersed with small patches of forest and picturesque valleys of the rivers Pisia Tuczna and Pisia Gągolina. It is worth seeing the various monuments of this region - from the huge palace in Radziejowice to the tiny church in Skuły.

When you leave the station, follow ul. Armii Krajowej and at the church turn left into ul. Staszica. At the next intersection turn right. The narrow asphalt road leading towards Bieganów is joined by the black trail. Follow the trail marks.

After you cross the railway track, turn off the trail for a couple of minutes. Turn sharply right. An asphalt road gives way to a dirt track and gently curves eastwards. Soon you will enter a forest. After a kilometre through a mixed stand of trees you will ride into a scenic gorge.

When you leave the gorge, the forest track is joined by the black trail. You cycle among beautiful oaks which make - now rare in Mazovia – thermophilic oak wood. In spring the forest floor is covered with a carpet of flowers. You can find there thermophilic species, such as multi-flowered buttercup and white cinquefoil, as well as plants typical for coniferous forests, including common cow-wheat. The trail, wandering through the wood, meets a gravel road and follows it southwards. When you reach an asphalt road, turn right. Soon you will be in Radziejowice.

For hundreds of years this small town belonged to a few noble families. Each of the owners wanted to make the

Length of the route: 50 km.

Marking:

No marks, the route partly coincides with black, green and yellow hiking trails.

Difficulties:

An easy route.

Public transport:

The start of the excursion – the railway station in Międzyborów; the end of the excursion – the railway station in Jaktorów; both on the way from Warsaw to Skierniewice.

0 km

Międzyborów

4 km Railway embankment

7,5 km

"Dąbrowa Radziejowicka" reserve

11,5 km Radziejowice



estate more attractive, so there is plenty to see here. The most important monument of Radziejowice is a palace surrounded by a wonderful landscape park. The manor owes its present shape to Kazimierz Krasiński, who at the beginning of the 19th century entrusted the conversion of the manor to the outstanding architect Jakub Kubicki. The building consists of two parts. The present baroqueclassical palace was at first an outbuilding, dating back to the beginning of the 17th century, and later converted in 1678 to 1684 to the order of the primate Stefan Radziejowski. The conversion was probably designed by Tylman of Gameren. The classic features of the palace were added by Jakub Kubicki, who started his work after 1802. The architect added also a gallery, joining the palace with the second building - a slender, little neo-Gothic castle which he had erected in place of the fortified manor house of the 15th century. Some elements of the older buildings were used in the outside walls of the castle. Today the palace houses the Artists' Retreat. Artists can look here for inspiration, admiring the landscapes which inspired the painter Chełmoński and walking along the paths on which Sienkiewicz was thinking out the scenes of his novel "The Teutonic Knights" ("Krzyżacy"). At weekends the stylish interior is open for visitors. In the Porcelain Room (Sala Porcelanowa) and the Sky-Blue Hall (Salon Błękitny) you will see an 18th century Meissen porcelain set, and in the Raspberry Hall (Salon Malinowy) – delicate silk wallpapers. Many paintings by the most famous 19th century Polish painters hang on the palace walls. In summer, the concert hall often resounds with classical music. The palace complex also includes ancient stables, coach houses, a water mill and the remains of farm buildings. On the opposite side of the road, a large manor house from the end of the 18th century, called the Steward's House (Dom Administratora), hides among the trees.

The whole land is covered in greenery. The English-style park was established at the beginning of the 19th century. The ponds, which were created by damming the waters of





the Pisia Gągolina river, are surrounded by splendid limetrees, elms and larches. A monumental ginkgo at the entrance to the palace will certainly draw your attention.

From the palace, a beautiful lime-tree avenue leads to the church of St. Casimir. The temple is regarded as a masterpiece of Mazovian classicism. It was erected in 1821 to 1822 to the design of Jakub Kubicki. The octagonal building has two projections in which a vestibule and presbytery are located. The interior is adorned by baroque-classical polychromed altars, on which there are the coats of arms of the Ossoliński and Krasiński families - Topór and Ślepowron, respectively.

From Radziejowice head southwards. Follow the green hiking trail marks. After crossing the busy Warsaw-Katowice dual carriageway you will ride onto a chipping track, which will lead you to a forest. Soon you will see ponds on the both sides of the track. At the intersection of tracks turn sharply right.

14 km The Bridge

CHEŁMOŃSKI'S LAND

over the Pisia Gągolina river

From the little bridge a beautiful view stretches over the green valley of the river. 300 m further turn right. After a kilometre you will reach a junction. Turn left and then, after about 50 m, right; keep going southwards. Soon you will enter a pine grove where you will encounter a wider road, perpendicular to yours (maybe by the time you are reading these words it will have been already asphalted). Turn left and 500 m further on, when the clearing on your left ends, turn into a dirt track, heading southwards. After 300 m take the left branch at the junction near a pond. The road will lead you out of the grove and cross the railway track. All around you can see the typical Mazovian landscape - buildings are widely scattered among fields, meadows and copses. In spring many places are yellow with dandelions. The quality of the surface will gradually improve.

23 km Petrykozy

Petrykozy, surrounded from three sides by forests, is one of the most beautiful spots of Mazovia. Here, as nowhere

else, the atmosphere of the paintings by Józef Chełmoński has survived. The village buildings are widely scattered throughout gently undulating terrain. In the depression near a crossroads there is a pond, from which thousands of frogs croak loudly in spring. Close by, in the thicket of park greenery, there shine the white walls of a little, gentry manor house. This 18th century monument belongs to the famous actor Wojciech Siemion, who has saved the manor house from destruction and found in it his retreat. The artist tries also to preserve other buildings for posterity. On the nearby meadow, the sails of two wooden windmills turn.

Leave Petrykozy following a dirt track which runs along the fence of the manor house. After 2 km turn left and keep riding along the edge of a wood. At the railway crossing the road turns northwards. 500 m further on turn left and go westwards, to Grzegorzewice.

Country holiday houses appear by the road. When you pass the signpost to the fish ponds, turn right, following the green trail marks. One more turn to the left and again to the right, along the railing of a little palace, and you will see an open area and a lot of water.

The ponds of Grzegorzewice make up the biggest of numerous artificial reservoir complexes in the valley of the Pisia Gągolina river. Several reservoirs are separated by picturesque causeways. It is best to contemplate the vast view from the nearby fish and chip shop, waiting for freshly caught fried fish. The fish farm to which the ponds belong specialises in carp; however, tench, crucian carp, amur biterlings, catfish, pike and a few other species are also splashing around in the water. On bright days the pond shores are crowded with anglers. It is not unrealistic to catch "a big fish" in Grzegorzewice.

Down to the pond shores descends a landscape park, which surrounds a tiny neo-Renaissance palace. It houses the Artist's Retreat of the Warsaw Bar, but cosy rooms also wait for guests not related to the Bar. **29 km** Grzegorzewice



Leave Grzegorzewice following the dirt track which runs from the palace gate through the centre of the village. When you pass the last houses of Grzegorzewice, you will enter a shady forest. Soon the yellow hiking trail will join up with your route. Behind the forest appear the first buildings of Skuły village.

At the crossroad in the village centre there is a charming little wooden church. This one-nave building is shaded by lofty larches. The church is dedicated to St Peter and Paul. It was erected in 1678 and then renovated several times. In the 19th century a wooden bell tower was built by the church. The rich baroque and rococo interior equipment of the temple contrast with its modest silhouette. The walls and ceilings are covered with 18th century illusionist polychromy. In some parts the polychromy was applied not on the wood itself, but on canvas attached to the walls.

From the church keep following the yellow trail marks. A chipping track passes among widely scattered buildings, fields and groves. After 1 km the trail turns right and follows a field path along the valley of the Pisia Tuczna river. Following the trail marks you will pass two picturesque, but slightly dilapidated, small bridges. Then the trail runs along the railing of a little manor house in Grzmiąca. At the gate turn left. A sandy track meets an asphalt road. The trail goes further along the road, to the north west. After 800 m you will cross the busy dual carriageway to Katowice. Keep going straight ahead. You will pass Bieniewiec village. Behind the village, 1.8 km away from the Katowice route, turn left onto an asphalt road and enter a forest. After 200 m the asphalt road turns sharply right. Keep going straight ahead, along a dirt track among young pines.

On a hot day you will surely stop here for a long break. At the lake, created by damming the Pisia Tuczna river, there is a bathing beach, a holiday centre and water sports equipment rental. Sometimes it is crowded here, but it does not spoil the pleasure of bathing in cool water.

32,5 km

Skuły

41 km Grzymek Lake



CHEŁMOŃSKI'S LAND



After a swim, cut through the Pisi river valley; when you ride up to the top of a small escarpment, turn right. Going along an asphalt road you will pass a few monumental oaks and plenty of leisure plots. The landscape, which inspired the painter Józef Chełmoński living over a century ago in the nearby village of Kuklówka, is today built on with second houses of the capital city inhabitants. After 2 km from the lake the asphalt road turns right. Go straight ahead along a dirt track road. When you reach a road turn left and just at the crossing turn to your right. A wide road has been damaged by heavy trucks carrying the output from the nearby gravel pit. At a sharp turn to the right keep going straight ahead, towards the buildings seen in the distance.

45 km Józefowskie Cross the main village road and keep riding straight ahead. Soon the yellow trail marks will join up with the route. All the time you ride among widely scattered farms. The road turns right and goes along the bridge over the Pisia Tuczna river. On the opposite bank of the river valley there is a road from Kuklówka to Jaktorów. Turn left into it and head towards Jaktorów, which is now not far away.

Looking at the modern architecture of this large village you would never guess that just 600 years ago a little settlement, surrounded by the Jaktorów Forest (Puszcza Jaktorowska), existed here. The large forest disappeared without trace, but in Jaktorów you can see a monument to the last aurochs killed in this forest in 1627.

The excursion ends at the railway station.

50 km Jaktorów

CHEŁMOŃSKI'S LAND

Practical information

Grzegorzewice; restaurant, grill-bar by the fish ponds, ul. Pałacowa, tel. +48 (46) 857 98 03

Radziejowice; Kolorowa restaurant,

tel. +48 (46) 857 98 21

ul. Słoneczna 2, tel. +48 (46) 857 74 00, 515 700 771



Grzegorzewice; the Artist's Retreat of the Warsaw Bar (Dom Pracy Twórczej Adwokatury Warszawskiej),



Grzymek;Training and Leisure Centre (Ośrodek Szkoleniowo-Wypoczynkowy), ul. Malinowa 1, tel. +48 (46) 857 72 32, 508 038 886

Radziejowicethe Artist's Retreat (Dom Pracy Twórczej), ul. Sienkiewicza 4, tel. +48 (46) 857 71 25





THE KAMIEŃCZYK FOREST

The atmosphere of the Kamieńczyk Forest (Puszcza

Kamieniecka) surrounding Łochów is favourable to

cyclists. A group of enthusiasts of the "Wertepowiec"

club marked out a real bicycle trail in the neighbour-

hood of the town. The trail goes across very diversified

terrain. Field and forest tracks will lead you along beau-

tiful valleys of the Liwiec and Bug rivers onto dune hills and near picturesque marshes. There are also many in-

AROUND ŁOCHÓW

teresting historical places.

56 km **Marking**:

Green bicycle trail.

Length of the route:

Difficulties:

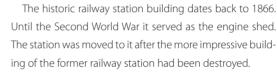
The route is not very difficult, mainly along dirt tracks.

Public transport:

The railway station in Łochów, on the route from Warsaw to Białystok.

0 km

The railway station in Łochów



Cross the railway crossing and go along ul. Szkolna to ul. Wyspiańskiego. By the school a huge erratic block attracts attention. This excellent specimen of granite gneiss was brought from the north during the glaciation of central Poland. It was dug up a few years ago during drainage work.

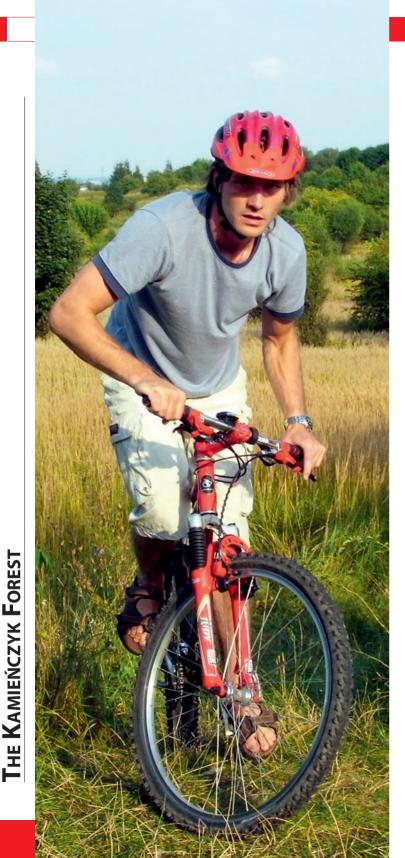
The trail passes the last buildings and enters the Kamieńczyk Forest (Puszcza Kamieniecka).

Centuries ago the Mazovian dukes hunted big game here. The Forest has been named after the dukes' hunting manor house in nearby Kamieńczyk. The wood was significantly thinned out in the 19th century, so you will not see large stretches of ancient forest, but it is still one of the most beautiful parts of the Mazovian forest complex. The landscape is formed here mostly by a mosaic of dunes and marches. Lush alders grow in wet depressions while the higher, low-mineralised terrains are covered with pine woods. Here and there you can see patches of spruce, whose range limit runs to the north of Mazovia. The Kamieńczyk Forest (Puszcza Kamieniecka) gives shelter to many animal species. You can meet here not only



3 km

A forest intersection





roe deer, boars or hares, but also badgers and elks. Marshes and marshy meadows are the breeding places of black storks and cranes. In spring and autumn many birds of passage stop here for a while.

The Kamieńczyk Forest belongs to the Bug River Valley Landscape Park (Nadbużański Park Krajobrazowy). The biggest protective area of this type in Poland covers 140,000 ha, stretching from the forest complexes of Pułtusk in the west to Sterdyń in the east.

At a forest intersection turn right. Here the black hiking trail joins up with your route. The track runs through a pleasant pine wood. When you pass a feeding rack, a more difficult - but also more exciting - part of the route will begin. A few steep descents and inclines await you. At the next hill a red trail, going from the south west, joins up with your route. Quite an arduous path will lead you down into a small picturesque valley of the Wilżanka river. Beavers have taken a special liking to this little river.

At the big old bed of the Bug river there is a settlement of holiday cottages. The trail again enters a forest. Now vou ride around the "Jegiel" reserve, which was established in 1981 to preserve the unique ancient spruce forest. The trees growing on the boggy terrace of the Bug valley are over 200 years old. The backwoods of the reserve are the kingdom of elks.

The trail runs across the summer resort. At the intersection near a shop turn left. Soon you will pass a camping site, on which two monumental oaks grow, 200 m further on flows the Bug river. For the next few kilometres the route goes along the bank of the river, forming here a huge loop. The river waters wash away a high dune, which is a perfect observation point. At one point the trail turns off to the forest, which hides a crossing over a stream that flows into the Bug river. When you overcome the obstacle, you will go up to the top of a high bank and enjoy a beautiful view for a kilometre or more.

Then the trail turns off to a wood and leads to another summer resort.

After passing the buildings you will ride into the meadows by the Bug river. Further on the trail returns to the wood and joins up with the red hiking trail for a while. Again you ride into an open area. The road gently curves to the left and along the edge of vast meadows it leads to a bridge over the Liwiec river. The marshy plains are a nesting place for many bird species, including lapwings. If alarmed by your presence they will give a loud cry and, flying around, try to distract you from the place where they have laid their eggs.

The asphalt road from Gwizdały to Kamieńczyk goes over a bridge, from which a beautiful view stretches over the valleys of the Liwiec and the nearby Bug rivers. In early spring the nearby meadows are often flooded with water. The two rivers merge about a kilometre to the north of the bridge. It

11 km Wywłoka

13,5 km

Szumin

17 km

Rafa

20,5 km

A bridge over the Liwiec river



THE KAMIEŃCZYK FOREST

is worth riding up to the very mouth; the views from a high dune will more than make up for your effort.

Behind the bridge, turn left. After 1.5 km you will arrive at Świnotop. Behind the village the trail turns off to the left and through a wood it leads to the convent of Our Lady of Loretto.

24 km

Loretto

The convent, hidden among pine woods, exudes peace and quiet. A permanent exhibition presents the history of the congregation. A faithful copy of the miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary of the Italian Loretto has been placed in a small church. During the Second World War the nuns ran a secret hospital for the soldiers of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa) and gave shelter to the refugees from Treblinka, the German extermination camp.

The trail follows a path running along the Liviec river and then comes out of the wood onto a gravel road. In Puste Łąki turn left, onto an asphalt road leading from Wyszków to Węgrów.

The crossing is guite unusual since it has been built on

26,5 km A bridge over the Liwiec river

a bend. Just behind the bridge turn right. The gravel road leads up the Liwiec valley. In Pogorzelec village the trail turns onto the river embankment and goes along it for another 2 km. In Julin, near a small historic manor house presently housing an orphanage, the trail comes back to the road. From Julin a forest track leads to the Gniazdowo summer resort. The trail again runs along the river, returns to the gravel road to grass the lead form and again again

the gravel road to cross the local flow, and once again turns towards the river. You will travel across beautiful meadows and then follow a path on a high escarpment.

32 km Railway bridge Under a railway bridge there are the ruins of the former crossing, over which water churns up spectacularly. The trail leads to another settlement of holiday cottages. Keep going along the bank of the Liwiec river. After 2 km of pedalling through the summer resort, look out for traces of an early medieval town among the cottages. The young pine woodland makes the task difficult, but if you strain your imagination you will make out the traces of the embankments and the moat.

200 m behind the ancient town, the trail turns left into the main road leading from Łochów to Mińsk Mazowiecki. After 200 m turn off the main road to the right and come back to the banks of the Liwiec river, which are dotted with holiday cottages. When the trail comes out from among the leisure plots onto a gravel road, it will lead you to a place called "a pump" by the local people. In the times of steam trains, water was drawn here from the Liwiec river and then pumped to the railway station in Łochów. In the brick buildings to the left there was an intermediate pumping station.

The trail becomes an asphalt road and then turns right, to a manor house. This 19th century building was erected to the design of Bolesław Podczaszyński. Two multi-storey projections and a front portico with cast-iron columns are the distinctive features of the manor house. Its glory days have already passed, but the trees of a beautiful landscape park surrounding the manor house still rustle. The trail cuts through the manor land, turns into ul. Rzeczna and crosses the Kopanka river. After a while you will again be near the Liwiec. It is the last glance at the river which in this place is shaded by a high embankment.

The trail runs further across vast meadows. Follow quite a visible path, by which there are a few information boards. After a minute you will be in a pine wood. You have to cross the Kopanka river again.

The trail crosses an asphalt road and then runs through a forest. After 2 km you will cross the road from Łochów to Węgrów. You ride up a gentle hill of significant – for this region – height; 117 m above sea level. The further part of the route goes along the ridge of the Baczkowskie Dunes (Wydmy Baczkowskie). Behind the last descent you will go across a small concrete bridge and then along a factory fence. **38,5 km** Stary Łochów

41,5 km Stare Laski



48,5 km Łopianka Marsh The level of water in two little lakes gradually declines, while the number of interesting marsh plants increases. The dense bulrush by the shores is inhabited by ducks. The trail joins up with an asphalt road and leads across Łopianka village towards Łochów.

51 km Łochów Fabryczny The trail passes by a complex of industrial buildings. Some of them are already valuable monuments. You will continue among blocks of flats and then cycle through a forest. You ride out of it in Stary Łochów. The trail turns left, into ul. Nowowiejska and then right, into ul. 1 Maja. Pedalling to the end of the route on an asphalt road would be too monotonous – the trail goes back into the forest to lead you again to the same road some kilometres further on.

55,5 km The railway station in Łochów

Here the loop closes.

eart of Poland

Practical information

Roadside bars

Łazy k. Łochowa, tourism farm, Włodzimierz Kałasznikow, Łazy 141 a, wkalasznikow@op.pl, tel. +48 (25) 675 05 92, 606 470 386

> **Łochów**; tourism farm; Andrzej Gałązka, Nadkole 9, tel. +48 605 655 670

Kamieńczyk; Holiday Centre (Ośrodek Wypoczynkowy), gm. Wyszków, tel. +48 (29) 741 17 11, 741 17 06











TOWARDS PODLASIE

Towards Podlasie

SUCHA - LIW - WĘGRÓW - SUCHA

Here you will discover the charm of the country. Far away from big cities, among fields, woods and meadows, time seems to go by more slowly. Maybe that is why so many attractive monuments have survived in the east of Mazovia. The proposed route will allow you to see some historic monuments of different periods. You will visit an early medieval town, the richness of baroque sacred architecture will make you giddy and the thatch roofs of the cottages in the open-air ethnographic museum in Sucha will remind you how the nearby villages looked not so long ago.

On the outskirts of the village, in a vast landscape park, there is a big larch manor house. This baroque building was erected in 1743 to the order of Ignacy Cieszkowski, a castellan of Liw. In 1787 the manor house was visited by the Polish king Stanisław August Poniatowski and in 1814 August Cieszkowski, the outstanding philosopher and economist, was born here. After 1945 it was inhabited by the employees of a State Agricultural Farm (PGR). Several years ago the totally dilapidated building was purchased by Maria and Marek Kwiatkowski. The former appearance of the manor house has been restored thanks to their perseverance and intensive work. The inscription over the entrance says: "sub veteri tectu sed parentali" - under an old, but family roof. The interior decor evokes the character and atmosphere of the Polish gentry's manor house. In the rooms facing the garden, several fragments of original paintings have remained on the ceilings.

Around the manor house an open-air ethnographic museum has been set up. Historic wooden buildings typical of the Siedlce region are being gathered there. This is a Museum of Wooden Architecture of the Siedlce Region (Muzeum Architektury Drewnianej Regionu Siedleckiego). (Sucha 1, tel. 604-095-147, open every day except Mondays 10.00 am to 3.00 pm - from 1st May to 30th

Length of the route: 38 km

Marking:

No marks, a short stretch of the route coincides with the red hiking trail.

Difficulties:

An easy route, mostly along paved roads.

Public transport:

None – only by car.

0 km

Open-air ethnographic museum in Sucha TOWARDS PODLASIE



October.) There are already about twenty buildings. It is supposed that one of the cottages was a shelter for the Rev. Stanisław Brzóska, a general and the chief chaplain to some of the partisan troops, during the January Uprising of 1863. It is also worth looking the round manège from the end of the 19th century and a Dutch-type windmill with original machinery.

Leave Sucha following the asphalt road eastwards. You will cut across the valley of the Kostrzyń stream and then ride into Kopcie village. Beside the church, from the first half of the 20th century, there is a 19th century bell-gate. The interior of the church is also worth seeing.

At the intersection turn left. The road heads towards Proszew, where it turns left and goes across a bridge to the opposite side of the stream. Passing through Polków you will reach Oszczerze. Turn right and then immediately left, into an asphalt side road. Your route is joined by the red hiking trail. Following the trail marks in Ziomaki turn off to the right, onto a paved road and then ride through a wood, along the Liwiec valley.

After leaving the wood you will cycle across fields. Now strain your sight. To the south of the village - between the road you follow and the Liwiec river – you will see the remains of a large early medieval town. The settlement, dating back to the 11th century, was ringed with embankments. From the river side they are 10 m high. This valuable monument is at the same time an excellent observation point.

When you reach the village, turn left. The gravel road gently curves westwards, towards Karczew. There turn right into road no. 697. When you pass the little green valley of the Struga river, you can enjoy cycling through the woods. The first buildings by the road will be a sign that you are getting close to Liw.

From the 15th to 17th century Liw was a large and important town. Its importance was due to its strategic location on the bank of the Liwiec river which defined the border between the Crown and Lithuania. The Swedish invasion of 1655, as well as the later epidemics and fires, led to the collapse of the town; from the days of glory only the castle has remained, which attracts many tourists to Liw.

However, the two slender towers which you will see entering the town are not parts of the castle, but of St Leonard's church. This neo-Gothic building was erected in 1907. Inside, the baroque side altars and a baptismal font draw visitors' attention. A stroll through the terrain adjacent to the church may be at the same time a lesson in ecology – on metal plates there are maxims about the benefits of the existence of trees and their protection.

While riding through Liw pay attention to the traditional, wooden houses. Half a kilometre behind the church turn right, into a cobbled road leading to the castle. This red brick building, overlooking the river meadows, is regarded as one of the most valuable monuments of Mazovia. The castle was erected at the beginning of the 15th century to **19,5 km** Liw

12 km Grodzisk

TOWARDS PODLASIE





the order of Duke Janusz the First. In the 17th century it was developed by the duchess Anna and the gueen Bona. After the war against the Swedes the castle fell into ruin. At the end of 18th century, among the remains of the castle, the district governor's office was built - a baroque manor house, whose white walls contrast with the older ones. The legend says that at midnight in the castle rooms and on the walls appears the "Yellow Lady" - a ghost of a wife unjustly accused and sentenced to death for infidelity. In the daylight it is worth visiting the local museum, which displays a rich collection of weapons, both Polish and used in Poland - from centuries-old swords and rapiers to Kalashnikov bayonets. Portraits, paintings of battle scenes and historic maps add splendour to the exhibition. [Armoury Museum (Muzeum Zbrojownia) in the castle, ul. Stefana Batorego 2, Węgrów]: tel. (25) 792 57 17, open every day except Mondays 10.00 am to 4.00 am).

From Liw keep following the main road towards Węgrów. After 2 km turn left, to Krypy. In the village turn to the right and cross the bridge over the Liwiec river. Of course, you may keep going along the main road. However, be warned that the main road bridge is "haunted" – at nights by ghosts and by day by cars.

Situated at the border of Mazovia and Podlasie regions, Węgrów obtained its town charter as long ago as in 1441. In the following centuries Węgrów was a dynamically developing centre of trade and craft. The town owed its prosperity to the Kiszka and Radziwiłł families, to whom it belonged. The latter set up the famous cloth factory. Until the mid 17th century Węgrów was also the main centre of the Reformation in Podlasie region. The star of the town was on the wane when the railway bypassed it. Today it charms tourists with country peace and splendid churches which evoke the rich past of Węgrów.

Following ul. Żeromskiego you will reach the marketplace. During the Second World War it was severely destroyed. However, at no. 26 an 18th century historic inn has

24 km Węgrów



TOWARDS PODLASIE

survived, so called the Gdańsk House (Dom Gdański). Today there is a tourist information office in it. Building no. 1 also dates back to the 18th century. The east side of the market-place is taken up entirely by a three-nave parish church.

This, one of the most valuable sacred monuments of the region, was originally built in the 16th century as a Gothic church, which burnt down at the beginning of the 18th century. Only the presbytery and two slender side towers remained of the original building. From 1703 to 1706 the burnt down church was rebuilt in a baroque style, probably to the design of Tylman of Gameren. The work was supervised by Karol Ceroni and Jan Reisner. The interior of the church hides a stunning baroque decor. The walls and the ceiling are covered with polychromy by Michelangelo Palloni. The paintings portray scenes from the lives of Our Lady and Christ, and numerous images of the saints and Church Fathers. The content of the paintings, emphasising the dogmas negated by the Protestants, as well as the unusual richness of polychromy, were to support the fight against the Reformation. The painting from the cemetery chapel, "The Dance of Death" - the popular motif of the period - even today sends a shiver down the spine.

In the vestry there is a gallery of portraits of Węgrów owners as well as municipal and church dignitaries. The legendary mirror which belonged to Master Twardowski (a Polish folklore character) also hangs here. As the most popular legend says, the sorcerer used a heavy metal mirror to summon and show to the king Sigmund Augustus the ghost of his beloved wife Barbara Radziwiłł. It is said that the people who look at themselves in this mirror are affected later on by disasters. The malicious spell affected, among others, Napoleon, the general Chłopicki and the Węgrów-born Carmelite nun Barbara Ubryk, who was walled up alive in her convent cell.

From the marketplace go along ul. Kościuszki to another splendid church. The baroque church of the Order of the Reformati was erected from 1693 to 1706, certainly also to the design of Tylman of Gameren. The interior of this one-nave temple – with rows of chapels on both sides – is adorned with polychromy by Michelangelo Palloni. In the dome – at the crossing of the nave and transept – delights one of the most outstanding works of the painter, showing the Triumphant Church. Dripping with gold, the epitaph of Jan Krasiński, set over the entrance to a chapel, also draws the attention of visitors.

If you want to see the third of Węgrów's churches you have to ride from the marketplace into ul. Gdańska and after 50 m turn left, into ul. Narutowicza. The one-nave classical building with a square tower is much more modest than the rich baroque churches. Beside the church there is a one-storey vicarage from the second half of the 18th century.

Leave Węgrów following road no. 637 towards Liw. Before the bridge turn right and head southwards along a shady road through a forest.

The village, beautifully situated on the right bank of the Liwiec river, is very old. According to the preserved documents it existed in 1388, when the king Władysław Jagiełło granted it to the Wilno cathedral. A little wooden 18th century church is the most valuable monument of Jarnice. Beside the church stands a 19th century neo-Gothic bell tower. According to the local oral tradition the temple, which had been originally built in Budziszyn near Mokobody, was transferred to Jarnice in approximately 1820. The interior decord of the church is classical.

Keep heading southwards, along the Liwiec valley covered with meadows. When you pass through a marshy forest and Pierzchały village, you will see in the distance the towers of the Wyszków church.

Entering Wyszków you will pass by a baroque roadside shrine of St. Florianus, dating back to the end of the 18th century. By a large square, in the centre of the village, there is a monumental baroque temple of 1788. Its triple facade resembles the parish church in Węgrów. The church was founded by Aleksander Ossoliński, the Great Sword-bearer

28 km

Jarnice

34,5 km Wyszków

63

CAZOVIA.



of Lithuania. On the wall of one of the towers adjacent to the church you can see the epitaph of the founder. The interior decor, dating back to the period when the temple was built, is classical. On the altars you will see paintings by the famous painters of the period: Szymon Czechowicz, Franciszek Smuglewicz and Józef Łukaszewicz.

Leave Wyszków crossing the bridge over the Liwiec and ride along the road to the south west. In Pobratymy the road turns sharply right and then left. 300 m further on turn into a gravel road running southwards. Go through the fields and cross the little bridge over the river of the "charming" name Stinker (Śmierdziucha) to get back to Sucha.

38 km Sucha When you meet an asphalt road turn left and after a while you will be in the centre of the village.

eart of Poland

Practical information

Liw; Liwia restaurant, ul. Nowomiejska 48, tel. +48 (25) 792 57 32



Węgrów; Krasnodębski Hotel, ul. Gdańska 80, tel. +48 (25) 792 27 27, www.hotel-krasnodebski.pl

Węgrów; Kameralna restaurant, ul. Rzemieślnicza 1, tel. +48 (25) 792 53 95

Sucha; tourism farm, Zofia Ambroziak, Stara Sucha 9, tel. +48 (25) 793 51 15



Węgrów; Camping site, ul. Żeromskiego 22, tel. +48 (25) 792 26 68

Liw; tourism farm, Z. i H. Woźniak, ul. Nowomiejska 1/3, tel. +48 (25) 792 57 19



KAMPINOS FOREST

THE FOREST LOOP

The Kampinos Forest is one of the biggest wood complexes in Mazovia. The decision to protect it was taken as early as before the Second World War. The first forest reserve "Granica" was set up in 1936 and in 1959 the Kampinos National Park was created. The mosaic of sand dunes and marshy depressions determine a large diversity of flora. In the Kampinos National Park there are over seventy plant species which are entirely protected. The Park boasts also a rich fauna; including insects and arachnids, it is inhabited by over 3000 animal species.

The proposed route makes a loop around the eastern part of the Forest. On the way you will see not only picturesque dunes and marshes, but also interesting historic monuments. One of the most valuable is the church in Brochów.

At the edge of the Forest you can find a car park and a spacious resting place. The Educational-Museum Centre (Ośrodek Dydaktyczno-Muzealny) housing a nature museum is 0.5 km further, to the east. An asphalt road leads to it.

Granica was set up at the end of the 18th century as a forest settlement. Its inhabitants worked clearing the forest and making charcoal. During the interwar years a forest district office was established here. The complex of wooden buildings in the then trendy national style is now under the charge of the conservator. The forester's lodge housed bicycle rental. The Kampinos Forest Museum (Muzeum Puszczy Kampinoskiej, Granica k. Kampinosu tel./fax (022) 725 01 23, open every day except Mondays 9.00 am to 4.00 pm) is shaded by huge trees. At the entrance you will see a three trunked Forester's Oak (Dąb Leśniczego), with a girth of 5.5 m. Close by, under a little roof, the jaw of a whale found in Pomerania is exhibited. In front of the museum there is a stone with a tablet devoted to professors Jadwiga and Ro-

Length of the route: 54.5 km

Marking:

Green and yellow bicycle trail; partly with no trail marks.

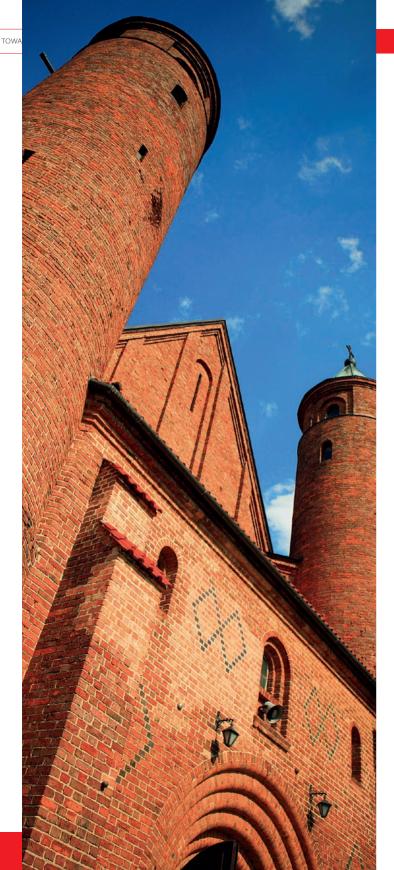
Difficulties:

The route is not very difficult, goes mainly along well flattened dirt tracks.

Public transport:

None; you have to bring a bicycle in your car (bicycle rental not available).

0 km Granica



KAMPINOS FOREST

KAMPINOS FOREST

man Kobendza, indefatigable advocates for establishing the Kampinos National Park. Inside the wooden building there is an exhibition presenting the natural environment and history of the Forest.

An open-air exhibition opposite the museum building shows all the Polish national parks. Nearby there is a tiny open-air ethnographic museum of forest buildings, where you will see three historic homesteads with thatched and shingled cottages, transferred here from the villages which gradually become extinct. The two museums are connected by the Third Millennium Avenue (Aleja Trzeciego Tysiąclecia). Each of the oaks along the avenue was planted by a person who has rendered great service to the region or country. Among others, the President and the primate have "their" oaks here. The trees are still very small, but each year the avenue grows up, and in length.

From the museum go eastwards, following the green bicycle trail marks. A sandy track runs along the edge of the oldest area of strict protection in the Forest, set up in 1936. Here, on over 230 ha, the ancient coniferous forests intermingle with alder woods full of lush undergrowth. They constitute one of the most splendid stands of trees in the entire national park.

At the bend of the trails (to the right) begins a sandy stretch of the route, which will lead you to an asphalt road. To the east of the road from Kampinos to Górki you will see the marshy area of strict protection - "Pożary" - with a lowland bog of well preserved unique flora community. It is a sanctuary for many animal species, including elks. These mighty animals are a symbol of the Kampinos National Park.

The road goes further towards the dune hills. To the right you can see the huge hornbeams and pines in the area of strict protection – "Nart". In spring the slopes of dunes are covered with beautifully blooming lilies of the valley.

5 km Górki

At the edge of a wood you will see a tiny wooden shrine, beside which lies a huge trunk of the Pine of the Partisans of 1863. The ancient tree, dating back to the times when the January Uprising skirmishes were taking place in the Forest, fell down in 1984. This Pine is an important witness of history. The legend says that its boughs bent downwards because of the weight of the partisans hanged by the tsarist army.

Go northwards along an asphalt road among the village houses. The road crosses the Łasica. In the past it was a small river. After it had been meliorated in the 19th and 20th centuries it became the longest of the networked forest channels which drained marshes for the needs of agriculture. As a result many areas have been dried up too much and the water relations have been disturbed. In effect, both fauna and flora of the park have been damaged and the local authorities are facing the problem of water shortage. After crossing the bridge you will pass by a small, modern-style church on the right. The church, originally wooden, was completely destroyed by a fire in 1999 and reconstructed a year later. The shape of the church frontage resembles an eagle, while the steeply sloping roof – a tent.

At the edge of a forest your route will join up with the yellow bicycle trail. Following the trail marks go to the north. A chipping track cuts across the northern dune belt, which is an impressive complex of parabolic dunes linked together. The pine woods growing on the sandy ground give shelter to deer.

Turn left, following the green marks of the bicycle and hiking trails. Now you ride along the northern edge of the Kampinos Forest. Centuries ago this route was the road nearest to the Vistula river bed, which remained dry even during the largest floods.

Many years ago there was a clearing here, on which a group of splendid oaks grew. The huge, wide-branched trees are over two hundred years old. The stoutest has a girth of 4 m.

A little bit to the west, you will notice a cross on the grave of the Polish Home Army soldiers by the trail. In

13, 5 km "Wilków" forester's lodge

15 km Poleskie Dęby



September 1944 Polish partisans won a skirmish against a German troop.

17,5 km The Cross By the green trail, near a dune called Fox Hill (Lisia Góra), there is another cross. The information board says that it was erected in May 1927 by Bronisław Wesołowski and his wife Wiktoria. On the board there is also an inscription commemorating the pastoral trip of John Paul II to his fatherland in 1983.

21,5 km Piaski Królewskie At the edge of a wood there is a big hub of trails, a forest car park and a resting place. 200 years ago there was a settlement of tar makers here, who worked clearing the forest and making charcoal. From 1916 to 1959 in Piaski a sawmill worked, supported by the narrow-gauge railway from Sochaczew. Today the silence of the forest wilderness is disturbed only by the cry of jays flying among the trees.

The green bicycle trail leaves the borders of the national park. At first it heads northwards, to the hamlet of Nowiny, where it turns to the west. You will ride among young pine woodlands, interspersed with holiday cottages. In some places you will see the Vistula valley through the wood.

25 km a little bridge over the Kromnów Channel Behind a little bridge the trail turns sharply southwards to turn off back to the west after a while. You go through the village of Kromnów. It is well known that one of the oldest Kampinos settlements, which belonged to the Czerwiński monastery, existed as early as in 1065. The southern part of the village through which you ride, has been bought by the Park authorities for expansion of the forest. In this desolate spot your attention will be attracted to the brick building of the forest district office, in national style, which was trendy during the interwar period.

The trail keeps going westwards between sandy Kurlandzka and Czerwińska Mountains, and the Kromnów Channel and the Vistula valley interspersed with branched willows.







30 km The Jagiełło's Road

The trail crosses an asphalt road. Its name refers to the summer of 1410, when the Polish army going towards Grunwald followed this forest track. If you want to take a short-cut, turn southwards. You will find the trail again after 3 km, in Tułowice.

If you have chosen the longest option, keep following the bicycle trail along the Kromnów Channel. At the second bridge the trail will turn sharply to the left, behind a small dune hill - to the right and after a kilometre once again to the left. A dirt track through fields, meadows and groves leads straight ahead to the south

35 km Tułowice

For the second time during the excursion you cross the Łasica channel. In the centre of the village – behind a fence - hides a classical manor house from the beginning of the 19th century. In Tułowice there is also a little station of a narrow-gauge railway, which runs from Sochaczew to Wilcze Tułowskie on Saturdays, from May to October.

The green bicycle trail wanders along the fence of the manor house and then goes through a wood to fields and meadows on the Bzura river.

Picturesquely situated on the old bed of the Bzura river, the village is known for its fortified church, which is one of the most original sacred buildings in Poland. The redbricked temple of St. Roch and John the Baptist was erected in the mid- 16th century as a Gothic church. 100 years later it was reconstructed. The present shape of a Renaissance basilica was given to it by John Baptist, a Venetian builder famous in Mazovia. Three round towers are adjacent to the brick body - the lower at the presbytery and the other two high at the sides. The church is surrounded by solid fortifications which were accompanied by a moat. The remnants of the moat can be seen from the Bzura river. In 1806 the parents of Frederic Chopin were married in Brochów church. The future composer was baptised in the same temple on 23rd April 1810. This fact is commemorated with a tablet set on one of the pillars.

From the church follow the marks of the bicycle trail and the blue hiking trail. At first the route goes along a road; after 500 m turns off to a chipping track leading eastwards. Riding through fields and meadows you will cross an asphalt road from Tułowice to Sochaczew and the narrow-gauge railway track that runs along it. At the fork of the trail turn to the south, following the green bicycle trail marks. The agricultural landscape is interspersed with widely scattered buildings of Wólka Smolana village.

At the fork of tracks the trail turns sharply left. After a while the trail marks turn off to the right, towards Żelazowa Wola.

44 km Wólka Smolana

If you want to visit the birthplace of Frederic Chopin, keep to the trail. After the additional 9 km you will return to the described route in Kirsztajnów. Since the manor in Żelazowa Wola is not adequately adapted to welcome

39 km

Brochów





cyclists (bicycles are not admitted, and no safe place for parking bicycles), we propose that you put off visiting it until some other day.

Keep to the chipping track which crosses an asphalt road and which continues among widely scattered houses heading to the south east. After 2.5 km the track will be joined by the bicycle trail coming back from Żelazowa Wola. Behind the hamlet of Kirsztajnów the trail plunges into a forest, which after a long ride through an open area will be a nice change. Behind the forest the route approaches the edge of the Vistula proglacial valley. To your right there is a few metres high escarpment, cut through by picturesque little valleys and small ravines. To your left stretches a scenic view over the meadows on the Olszowiecki Channel. About 2.5 km after leaving the forest the trail turns northwards, into an asphalt road to Granica.

54,5 km Granica The end of the tour. The shelters on the car park invite you to rest.



Practical information

Granica; seasonal bar on the car park

Żelazowa Wola; Pod Wierzbami restaurant, tel. +48 (46) 863 32 43



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Tułowice; Osada Puszczańska PTTK, Tułowice 48, gm. Brochów, tel. +48 (22) 7257033 (from May to October)

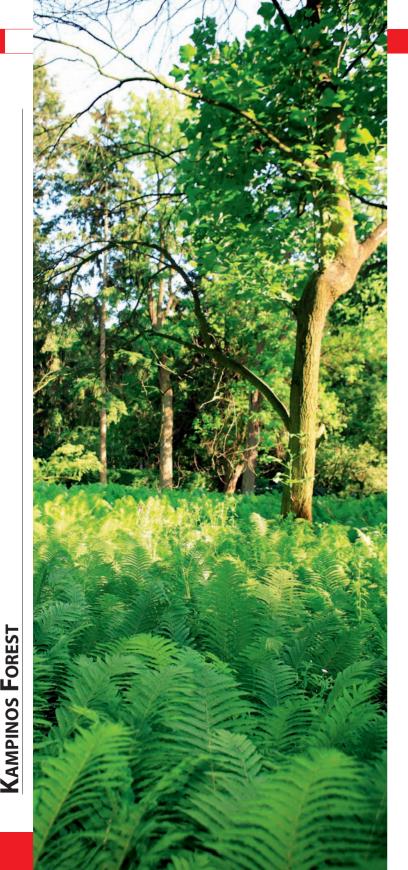
> Kampinos, tourism farm, Krystyna Perkowska, ul. Dolna 8 a, tel. +48 (22) 725 02 64

Kampinos, tourism farm, Halina & Jerzy Brzezińscy, ul. Chopina 16, tel. +48 (22) 725 03 73

Other tourism farms: www.kampinos.pl







FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH

Hardly anywhere in the world are there wood complexes which lie just beside a capital city. All the more we should appreciate the Kampinos Forest. The woods growing on the sandy terraces of the Vistula valley are of great environmental significance. Clean air masses from the Forest allow the fume-choked capital city to breathe. The heart of the Forest is inhabited by many animal species. The king of the forest marshes, the mighty elk, is the symbol of Kampinos. Individual elks can venture as far as the suburbs of the capital. On sunny weekends the traffic goes in the opposite direction; thousands of Varsovians who want to rest in the bosom of nature escape from the city to the wood. Well organised forest car parks, resting places and a dense network of tourism trails await them.

In 1959 in the area of the Kampinos Forest the Kampinos National Park was set up. The second biggest area of protection in Poland covers over 38.000 ha of a mosaic of diverse woods and meadows.

The proposed route cuts through the Forest from the north to the south, thus enabling you to become acquainted with all the typical landscapes of this part of Mazovia – from the old beds of the Vistula river, through the dune and marsh complexes, to the agricultural terrains of the Łowicz-Błonie Plain.

0 km Modlin

From the railway station, the yellow bicycle trail (together with the green hiking trail) leads to the left, towards a bridge over the Narew river. After crossing the bridge you should look behind you. The waters of the river reflect the red walls of the Modlin fortress. This astonishingly huge military building was erected to the order of Napoleon. The emperor noticed that the fork of the Vistula and Narew rivers is of strategic importance. After the November Uprising (1830 - 1831) the Russians significantly developed the fortifications, adding the external bastions and six forts. By the First World War two rings of forts sprang up



Length of the route:

385 km

Marking: Yellow and green bicycle trail; the last part with no trail marks.

Difficulties:

An easy route.

The beginning of the route:

the railway line

from Warsaw to Nasielsk; the end of the route:

the railway line from

Warsaw to Sochaczew.

Public transport:

around the fortress. The most distant fort was built 8 km from the fortress. The Modlin fortress, since it had been built, was garrisoned by the Russian, German and Polish armies. During the defensive war of 1939 the garrison heroically defended the fortress until 29th September. To visit it you should plan a separate excursion.

After a while you will cross a bridge over the Vistula river. Just behind the bridge the road goes along the northern edge of the "Ruska Kępa" reserve. On the flood terraces you will see a beautiful patch of willow and poplar riparian forest.

Go over the viaduct to cross the busy route to Gdańsk. The trail runs through fields towards the Dolne Lake. The elongated shape of the shallow reservoir is easily recognisable as the old bed of the Vistula river. The trail passes the lake to the north, going through fields and meadows to Kazuń Polski.

7 km Kazuń Polski At the intersection in the centre of the village turn onto an asphalt road heading to the south west. After the next intersection the houses give way to a pine wood, but the Kampinos backwoods are still far away. After nearly a kilometre you will enter the little village of Czeczotki. A yellow connecting trail joins up here with the green bicycle trail which circles the entire Kampinos. Turn left, following the trail marks. A dirt track will lead you to a wood. A few hundred metres to the north, deep in the wood, you will find Fort VI, which belongs to the ring of defences supporting the Modlin fortress. Here in the summer of 1939 the army carried out experiments with the biggest cannon designed by the Poles. The huge mortar fired 700 kg shells.

Keep going through fields; when you reach the asphalt road turn right. The trail, cuts across Jesionka village and runs through fields dotted with clumps of willows, leads to Adamówek. The dark wall of a forest, seen in the distance, is getting nearer.

13 km Adamówek

After passing Adamówek, the trail enters the forest and goes eastwards along the edge of the animal sanctuary in

"Kaliszki", an area of strict protection. On scorching days the forest shade allows some relief after a long ride in the open area.

Beside the forest car park and resting place, the yellow bicycle trail turns off onto an asphalt road going deep into the Kampinos. Follow the trail marks. The shady Palmiry Road (Palmirska Droga) gently curves to the south. At first you ride among pines growing on dunes then you descend towards the marshy depression of the Wilcza Struga stream. The pattern of sand dunes alternating with interdunal marshy depressions is a characteristic feature of the forest landscape. The sand, which forms the over-flood terrace of the Vistula river, was brought by the water from the melting continental glacier. When the glacier had withdrawn, strong winds formed the dunes. On the dry, nutrient poor ground grow undemanding trees. Broadleaved and mixed forests constituted the original flora of the Kampinos. However, since they were cut down, single-species forests of pines have dominated. The depressions from which the sand had been eroded away (so called deflation basins) became boggy. The alders which grow on them form characteristic clumps. In spring each of them is a tiny island among widely spread thaw water.

The terrain gradually rises. The road cuts across another, higher and more extensive, range of dunes.

The cemetery in Palmiry makes you ponder on the martyrdom of the Poles during the Second World War. The cemetery – mausoleum was set up to the design of Ewa Śliwińska and Romuald Gutt in 1948. On the vast clearing over two thousand people, murdered by Germans from December 1939 to July 1943, have been buried, whose bodies had been exhumed from mass graves in the Kampinos Forest and Chojnów Woods (Lasy Chojnowskie). In the cemetery there are graves of such well-known people as the Vice President of Warsaw Jan Pohoski, activist of the Polish Socialist Party Maciej Rataj and the Olympic champion Janusz

16 km

The car park in Palmiry

KAMPINOS FOREST

20,5 km The cemetery in Palmiry



Kusociński. The exhibition in the pavilion beside the cemetery is devoted to the history of the battles in September 1939, the underground activity and partisan fighting in the Kampinos Forest region (the museum is open every day – except Mondays and post-holiday days 9.00 am to 2.30 pm, tel. (022) 794 42 56). The most impressive are the personal belongings found during the exhumations.

22 km Pociecha Over 100 years ago a forest settlement used to be here, in which there was a roadside inn, called Solace (Pociecha) for encouragement. Today there is no inn, but the local car park and friendly resting place enjoy popularity. At the edge of the forest you will see a cross commemorating the battles of the "Jerzyki" troop of the Polish Home Army. The events of the war took place here at the turn of August and September 1944.

The yellow bicycle trail, together with the blue trail, follow a wide chipping track to the south. Soon you will see young plantations by the track. It was only a dozen or so years ago that the farmers from nearby Truskaw cultivated this area.

This large sub-Warsaw village is one of the closest to the capital city rest spots in Kampinos. On the small square by the terminus of suburban buses there is a monument commemorating the battles of the Second World War. Notice the barrel of a German canon, protruding right from the ground.

The trail cuts through the village and once again plunges into the forest. Among birches and pines you go towards Mariew. There the yellow trail joins up with the green bicycle trail. Turn right, following the trail marks. The trail runs along an asphalt road through Mariew and Wólka. The open area of meadows will delight your eye after the long ride through the forest. In Wólka – according to the trail marks – choose the chipping track leading straight to Zaborów.

In a small village at the southern edge of the Kampinos Forest there are some interesting monuments. The parish church of St. Ann was built in 1791 to the design of Hilary Szpilowski. The triple facade of the classical temple is adorned with Toscan pilasters. In the interior, classical altars dating back to the turn of the 18th century attract visitors' attention.

At the back of the church there is an eclectic palace, erected for the Goldstand family in 1903 to the design of Franciszek Lilpop and Karol Jankowski. The palace is surrounded by a large landscape park. The Polish films "Lalka" and "Kariera Nikodema Dyzmy" were shot in this picturesque scenery. Today the palace is private property.

Near the contemporary building of the school you will see the former blacksmith's shop of 1840, whose purpose has changed very often. Only in the 19th century was there a school here and during the Second World War it served as a station of the German military police.

In Zaborów you will part with the marked trail. Go to the south east along the asphalt road leading to Święcice.

31 km Zaborów

24 km

Truskaw



After another 2 km you will reach road no. 2. Turn left. The road from Warsaw to Poznań is very busy, so it will be safer to ride on the pavement. 700 m further on turn right. The asphalt road will lead you to a railway track. 300 m to the east there is a railway station.

The train will take you to the centre of the capital city within half an hour.

38,5 km

The railway station in Płochocin

Practical information

Modlin; the bar by the beach, Tourist Centre "SILURUS", +48 (22) 775 59 01



Truskaw; Dziupla restaurant, ul. Falińskiego 6 a, tel. +48 (22) 722 65 43

Leszno; the Training and Consultation Centre of Bank BGŻ S.A. (Centrum Szkoleniowo-Konsultacyjne BGŻ S.A.), ul. Fabryczna 1, tel. +48 (22) 725 67 00, (Monday to Friday 725 67 09 and 725 67 10)

Tourism farms



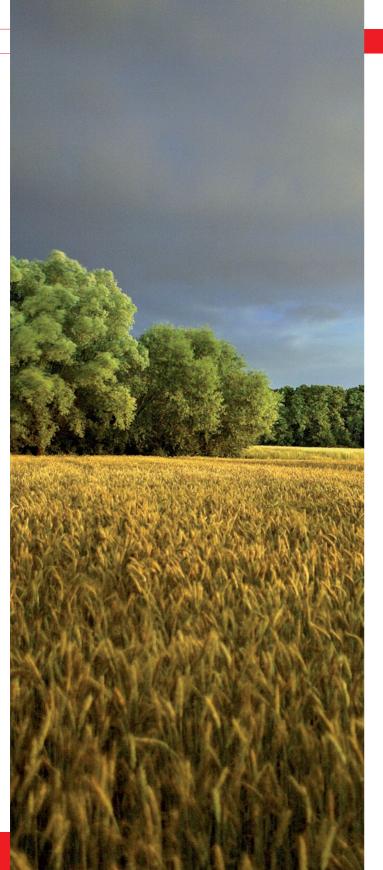
34 km The manor house in Pilaszków

This nice looking manor adds variety to the typically Mazovian agricultural landscape. The classical bricked manor house was erected in the second half of the 18th century for Franciszek Ryx, personal secretary to King Stanisław August Poniatowski. The faithful courtier entertained here the last ruler of Poland. During the Kościuszko Insurrection the leaders of the uprising stayed at the manor house. It was here that Jan Henryk Dąbrowski was promoted to general by Tadeusz Kościuszko. Several dozen years later the manor house was inhabited by Mieczysław Marszewski. The Poniatowski Bridge (Most Poniatowskiego) is the most famous work of this outstanding engineer.

You can learn the details of the colourful history of the manor by visiting the historic interior of the Polish Manor House Museum (Muzeum Dworu Polskiego, tel. (022) 722 51 63, 722 51 65, open on Sundays from 3.00 pm).







PŁOŃSK UPLAND

Length of the route: 28.5 km

CZERWIŃSK N. WISŁĄ – RADZIKOWO – CHOCISZEWO – CZERWIŃSK

This guite short route is abundant in contrasts. From the high stone walls of a Romanesque abbey it will lead you to little wooden churches. At first you will spin along asphalt roads, but towards the end of the route you will break out in a sweat on the paths by the Vistula river. We hope that the beautiful agricultural landscapes of Płońsk Upland (Wysoczyzna Płońska) will take your fancy.

Marking: No marks.

Difficulties:

Most of the route is on paved roads but the stretch along the Vistula river includes paths and steep descents.

Public transport:

0 km

None; you have to bring your bicycle in a car.

Czerwińsk nad Wisła

This small town upon the Vistula is willingly visited by tourists, attracted by its guietness, beautiful views and valuable monuments. It is a well-known fact that the settlement on the high bank of the river existed as early as in 1065. Less then a hundred years later, the then Płock bishop, Aleksander of Malonne, brought, from the distant Lombardy, Canons Regular who established an abbey here. In the 15th and 16th centuries Czerwińsk was an important centre of grain trade. The town was often visited by rulers and royal privileges were granted here. After it was destroyed during the Swedish invasion of 1655, Czerwińsk has never regained its former glory and in 1869 it was deprived of its town charter.

When you arrive at Czerwińsk, head towards the tall church towers. You can park your car in a spacious car park adjacent to the monastery. In front of you there is one of the most valuable monuments of Mazovia. The Romanesque basilica of the Annunciation was erected in the first half of the 12th century. Despite the later changes, many original features of the temple have been retained. Two stone towers with double windows and arrow slits dominate the church. The portal of 1140 is a valuable specimen of Romanesque artistic masonry. Look for traces of sword sharpening on the left column. It is said that they were left by the knights heading towards Grunwald. In the first days of July 1410, near Czerwińsk, under command of King Władysław



PŁOŃSK UPLAND



Jagiełło, gathered the army before an expedition against the Teutonic Knights. From the Małopolska region, the army crossed the Vistula river over a pontoon bridge which – for those times – was a wonder of technology. Returning from the victory, the King presented the Czerwińsk church with his basinet as a token of his gratitude.

In the interior of the temple you will see valuable Romanesque and Gothic wall paintings. In the main altar there is the painting of Our Lady of Czerwińsk, famous for miracles. This oil painting, painted in 1612 by Łukasz of Łowicz, is a copy of the Roman original located in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Beside the basilica stands a huge monastery. The building has been rebuilt many times since its original construction in 1328. Salesians have been residing here for eighty years. The monastery museum displays valuable exhibits related to the history of the Czerwińsk abbey and presents an interesting exhibition devoted to Salesian missions. From the monastery courtyard stretches a beautiful view over the wide waters of the Vistula and the distant Kampinos Forest behind them.

After leaving the monastery car park, turn right. A kilometre further you will cross a busy road to Płock. Go straight ahead along the road towards Połońsk. The comfortable asphalt surface allows you to admire the views. Gently undulating agricultural terrain stretches out around you. The landscape is interspersed with widely scattered buildings, small patches of woods and rows of branched willows. After 6 km of a quiet ride turn right, to Radzikowo Stare.

A gravel road runs among low village buildings. In this quiet village the whirlwinds of the modern world seem to be unrealistically distant. Notice the double cross standing by the road. Years ago it was believed that such a sign protects the village against the plague. So called Lorraine crosses – once popular in Mazovia – are a rarity today.

At a hill to your left you will glimpse the turret of a church among some trees. To get to the church turn left at the school building and a gently curving field track will lead you up the hill. The small wooden temple of John the Baptist was built from 1712 to 1739. The church seems to be cut off from the world. There is a little grove to the west and south of the temple. A narrow path among the trees descends to the village. To the north and east of the hill you can admire a nice panorama of arable fields.

Go back to the village. At the school turn left. A bumpy road goes eastwards. After 1 km at an intersection among the fields turn left and head towards the buildings, which are already not far away. A dirt track runs along the house towards the turret of another church, seen in the distance.

The 19th century wooden temple dedicated to St. Bartholomew stands by a small square. Along the edge of the square runs an asphalt road. A new fence and paving blocks around the church remind you that we live in the 21st century, but the monument is nicely fitted into the

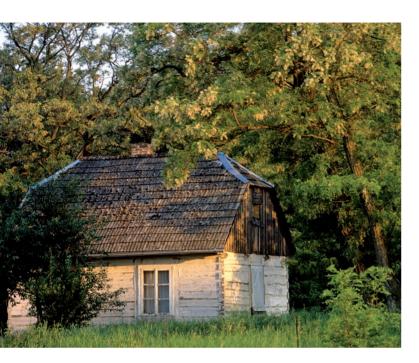
7 km Radzikowo Stare

10 km Grodziec

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PŁOŃSK UPLAND



modern surroundings. A wooden bell tower rises beside the church. Nearby there is a contemporary cave chapel, flooded with colourful flowers. It is hard to distinguish the artificial flowers from the natural ones.

From the church follow the asphalt road to the south east. You will go up a gentle hill. Stop at the top of the hill and look behind you. Sideward views are also noteworthy. To your right a mosaic of fields descends towards a little valley parallel to the road. On the sunny slopes, among other things, delicious strawberries are planted.

At an intersection turn right. When you cut through a little wooded valley, you will pass by the bricked buildings of an old distillery. Go straight ahead at the next intersection until you reach the busy road no. 62.

17,5 km Chociszewo You have to proceed for a short distance along quite a busy road. Soon to your left you will see a little wooden church of St. Leonard, surrounded by a ring of trees. It was erected in the first half of the 19th century and rebuilt in 1878. The one-nave temple is distinguished with lancet windows and projected tower at the front. The late Renaissance main altar dates back to the 17th century. In the vestibules, notice the late Gothic 16th century crucifixes.

Follow the road which has led you to the church. It curves back to the Płock road. Turn right and after 200 m once again right, into an asphalt road leading to the village with the difficult to pronounce name of Wychodźc.

Now you are facing the last, but at the same time the most difficult, part of the route. Turn left and go along a gravel road through the village. After 1.3 km, at a junction, turn off to the left. All the time you are riding among buildings. Behind the bridge, on a drying-up small channel, the village of Wilkowiec begins. Keep going straight ahead. A sandy road runs through a wood. At a junction, before a big clearing with houses, turn right. A clayey path climbs steeply up a hill. A narrow gorge leads to the edge of the Vistula river escarpment, where a field

22, 5 km Wychodźc

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PŁOŃSK UPLAND



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track will take you to the left. At another junction of paths choose the left branch. You keep going among the fields and widely scattered buildings. After less then 3 km, at an intersection of paths, turn once more to the left. After 500 m the path descends steeply. At the fork choose the right branch. You should be really careful on the stony slope. When you reach the foot of the escarpment safe and sound, turn right. A sandy path gradually goes away from the Vistula river and after a while becomes wider. Once again you will climb an escarpment. Keep following the gravel-sandy track which at the end becomes the asphalt Polna street in Czerwińsk. At an intersection turn left and you will see a small square. From here you can get to the monastery, which overlooks the town, following ul. Klasztorna. Along the street there are traditional low buildings, typical for small Mazovian towns. Now you face the last uphill ride.

28, 5 km

You are again in front of the Romanesque basilica.

eart of Poland



Practical information

Medalik Bar, ul. W. Jagiełły 17, Czerwińsk n. Wisłą, tel. +48 501 237 226



Jaworowy Dwór, Trębki Nowe 100 a, gm. Zakroczym, tel. +48 (22) 785 22 97, www.jaworowydwor.pl





ACROSS KURPIE

BOROWIK INN - LELIS - ŁYSE - BOROWIK INN

The sandy plain at the northern edge of Mazovia was formed by water from the withdrawing continental glacier. It is cut by wide, peat-bogged valleys, through which Omulew, Szkwa, Rozoga and other rivers flow to the south to the estuaries at the Narew. Centuries ago an impenetrable forest rustled here. At first it was called "Zagajnica", then the name Green Forest (Puszcza Zielona) was generally accepted. Mazovian dukes and Polish kings hunted bears, aurochs and deer in these woods.

In the 17th century the settlers living upon the Vistula river began to colonize this still virgin land. The forest was their feeder: they hunted, caught fish in the rivers and took honey from wild beehives. Their neighbours called them "Kurpie" – after lime-tree bast, the processing of which was their occupation. Although the immense forests were gradually cut down, the inhabitants of this region have retained their colourful culture. It is expressed through colourful national dress, characteristic architecture and interesting traditions.

From Ostrołęka you will drive to the beginning of the route following the road which leads to Myszyniec and further to Masuria. Among the trees, at the village of Szwendrowy Most, to your right you will see a large car park and the Borowik Inn beside it.

From the car park a forest track runs to the north west through a pleasant pine wood. After about 1 km you will have to cut through a range of dunes. Be prepared for quite a lot of sand as well as descents and inclines. 2.5 km from the car park the track gently curves to the south east. You will pass by a forest clearing on your right hand side. At the edge of the clearing the forest rack turns off to the left. Now for a kilometre you have to follow the sandy route through dunes. Then you will ride into a vast clearing across which stretches a village.

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Length of the route: 65 km.

Marking: No marks.

Difficulties: An easy route.

> **0 km** Borowik Inn

Public transport: None; to the beginning of the route you have to bring your bicycle in a car.



ACROSS KURPIE

4.5 km

ACROSS KURPIE

Durlasy

When you reach an asphalt road, turn left. Riding through the village pay attention to the traditional Kurpie buildings. Wooden cottages are distinguished by rich window ornaments. "Crowns" ("koruny") and sills are cut out in elaborate patterns. Also the wind boards which cross over the roof ridge, called here "sparogi", are adorned with cut-outs.

When you reach a perpendicular asphalt road, turn right. The road goes along the foot of a dune arch towards the Lelis village, which is now not far away.

7 km Lelis

One of the oldest Kurpie settlements existed as early as in the 18th century. There was an ironworks here, in which iron was smelted. So called bog iron ore was extracted from the nearby wetland, where poor iron secretions precipitated as a result of geochemistry processes. The present-day village buildings are of contemporary design. From the village centre you can, for a moment, turn left to have a look at the wooden church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Although the building is barely several years old, its silhouette actually does not differ from historic temples of the region.

After a glance at the church return to the main, asphalt road and continue north east. Beyond the village you will cut through a small grove and ride into vast, drained meadows in the valley of the Rozoga river. Near the bridge over the river you will pass by two nice roadside shrines. After leaving the valley you will enter a pine wood, covering another range of dune hills on your route. Fortunately, you will continue along an asphalt road.

14,5 km Dabrówka

This nice, small village stretches along the edge of the Szkwa river valley. Here you will see guiet a lot of old cottages and a charming wooden shrine. A wooden church of the 18th century is the most valuable monument of Dąbrówka. Originally the temple stood in Kadzidło, from where it was brought here in the 19th century. Most of the interior decor is baroque. The unique folk character of the church has remained untouched. Beside the church there



is a huge small-leaved lime, called Dabrówka. The girth of its trunk measures nearly three metres.

Keep to the asphalt road. From the bridge over the Szkwa there is a nice view over the river and the meadows by it. Along the opposite edge of the valley stretches Gaski village. Turn left. A dirt track runs along through some houses, on the border of meadows and woods. After a longer while you will pass by a forester's lodge on your left and plunge into the forest. You will go along the edge of the "Czarny Kąt" reserve. The characteristic, for the Green Forest (Puszcza Zielona), stand of trees is protected. In the pine forest spruces shimmer with dark greenery and the forest floor is covered with a thick carpet of bilberries and red berries.

When you reach the buildings turn left and ride through the village. At the intersection you may for a moment turn off to the left, towards the church seen in the distance. This neo-Gothic temple was erected in the 18th century. After a

24 km

Czarnia





MAZOVIA, BIKING BOUTES

glance at the church go back and follow a dirt track to the north. The mosaic of meadows and fields is interspersed with widely spread buildings. The track gently meanders, crossing the consecutive drainage canals. Gradually, you approach a large wood complex. From the hamlet of Złota Góra the track runs through coniferous forest, straight ahead to the north. When you reach the asphalt road from Nowogród to Myszyniec, turn left.

35,5 km Serafin

If you have not much time, you can keep going straight ahead to Lyse village. However, we advise you to turn right. A stylised wooden signpost invites tourists to visit the "Serafin" reserve. A gravel path runs from a car park to an observation tower. From the tower you can enjoy a wonderful view over the flat surface of peat bog. Once there was a lake here, which gradually grew over. Today the surface of lake glistens only in its southern part. The peat bog is covered with diverse flora. In the wettest places you will see a high, thick blanket of peat moss. A large area is covered with green sedge. The presence of shrubby willows and alders proves that the bog is gradually drying up. The peat bog and its surroundings are inhabited by many animal species. Among others, cranes nest here. Often their characteristic clang comes from the bog. Rushes give shelter to many species of ducks and other water birds. Birds of pray hunting smaller animals can be often seen over the peat bog. The reserve is also inhabited by the king of the marshes, the mighty elk. With a bit of luck you may see its chunky figure from the tower. From the observation tower a narrow wooden footbridge leads a few hundred metres deep into the bog land. From the plates attached to the footbridge you can learn a lot of interesting information about the environment which surrounds you.

After the visit to the reserve, mount your bicycle and go back to the asphalt road. Turn right, towards Łyse village.

37,5 km Łvse

This large village is a well-known centre of Kurpie culture. On Palm Sunday the Easter palm contest, famous in Poland, takes place here. These crêpe paper masterpieces are a few metres high. The religious celebrations are accompanied by a bustling fair, and varied by performances of folk ensembles. Everyday visitors are attracted by two churches. The older (wooden) one was built in the second half of the 19th century. The two-towered temple of St. Ann is surrounded by a ring of tall trees. In the interior you can see charming folk paintings. Nearby rise the huge walls of the new church of Christ the King of the Universe. If you come here during a Sunday mass, among the crowd of the faithful you will notice women clad in traditional costumes.

Riding through Lyse you will see some historical houses, elaborately decorated. At a big junction in the centre of the village turn left, and after 800 m once again left, into an asphalt road to Kadzidło. At first the road runs across meadows and fields. Behind a dune embankment, covered with a forest, lays Lipniki.

The village situated at the edge of the Szkwa river valley is frequently visited by summer tourists. On the way you can stop at a 19th century church and a wooden windmill. The road keeps going to the south west. It cuts across the valleys of the Szkwa and Rozoga rivers and then leads to Kadzidło, hidden among the dune hills. **42,5 km** Lipniki

This big village is an important centre of tradition and folklore; it is regarded as the spiritual capital of the Kurpie region. Local customs and colourful costumes can be admired during cyclic folk events: "Kurpie Wedding" (the third Sunday of June) and "Kadzidło Sunday" (the first Sunday of September).

The village houses are dominated by a neo-baroque church of Holy Ghost, dating back to the end of the 19th century. You should note the interesting interior decor, especially the baroque main altar of the 17th century, brought here from the church of St. Ann in Kodeń in the Podlasie region, and two holy water basins made of sea shells. Also several feretories, carried in processions during church holidays, are stored in the church.

ACROSS KURPIE



ACROSS KURPIE

On the road to Ostrołęka, to the south of the church, there is Zagroda Kurpiowska – a small, but very interesting open-air ethnographic museum (tel. (29) 761 82 00, open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, on Sundays 12.00 am to 5.00 pm). The museum displays a traditional Kurpie homestead – a cottage with a granary, woodshed, barn, manège and well. In the interior original furniture, as well as homestead equipment and tools, are exhibited. During summer holidays meetings with folk artists are organised in the museum.

From Kadzidło you may ride to the Borowik Inn along the main road, but it is often busy with traffic. If you feel like absorbing more Kurpie atmosphere, turn into the side road leading towards the south east, to Brzozówka. Almost immediately you will enter a wood. In Brzozówka turn southwards, into the dirt track road to Szafarnia. When you reach the village, turn left. Less than 2 km further – at a junction – turn off to the right and along the edge of the wood go southwards. When you meet an asphalt road, turn once more to the right. In the village of Łodziska you will ride onto the main road to Ostrołęka. Turn left. After 2 km you will see the familiar car park.

65 km Borowik Inn

Practical information

Kadzidło; the bar at the petrol station, Trasa Mazurska 56, tel. +48 (29) 761 81 86



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Lelis; Borowik Inn (Zajazd Borowik), Łodziska 1 a, tel. +48 (29) 760 52 31

Lelis; Jagna Inn (Zajazd Jagna), ul. Słoneczna 1, tel. +48 (29) 761 18 53, www.jagienka.pl

> Kadzidło; tourism farm "Kurpianeczka", ul. Sachalin 45, tel. +48 (29) 761 60 67, 600 445 922

> > Other tourism farm: www.eholiday.pl, www.ostroleka.powiat.pl

ACROSS KURPIE



Have a snack before you leave.

Notes







Notes







Notes

