



Częstochowa

Pauline Monastery on Jasna Góra, 42-225 Częstochowa, ul. Kordeckiego 2, tel. +48 34 377 77 77, e-mail: sanktuarium@jasnagora.pl, www.jasnagora.pl

Częstochowa is a city known to many around the world for the holy icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Infant Jesus in her arms. The icon is kept in the Sanctuary of the Pauline monastery at Bright Hill (Jasna Góra). It is said that up to 5 million pilgrims come annually to this hereditary home of Polish nationality to offer thanksgiving and veneration to Our Lady. One can often see pilgrims coming here on foot from 600 kilometres away. For some pilgrims, it may take as many as twenty days to cover the distance from home to the Chapel of Our Lady, and once there, they go down on their knees. Every August 15th, since 1711, on the feast day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the oldest pilgrimage in Poland arrives from Warsaw. Soon after that, in just a few days' time, on August 26th, the faithful multitudes come together to the shrine to celebrate the day of Our Lady of Częstochowa, devotionally recognised by Poles as Our Lady's Day. Annually, in September, on the first Saturday and Sunday of the month, a very famous Polish country folk and culture festival is held. Farmers from all over the country come to Jasna Góra and bring harvest-home wreaths that are the sign and symbol of their toil and of the harvest from their ploughed and planted fields.

Częstochowa is a city that cannot be judged by its look only. It is a city with history and heritage, art and culture where wait inside a variety of museums, galleries and auditoriums.

Gidle

Dominikan Fathers' Monastery, 97-540 Gidle, Plac Dominikanski 6, tel. +48 34 327 21 23, e-mail: gidle@dominikanie.pl, www.gidle.dominikanie.pl

The village of Gidle was once visited by the Polish kings: Władysław IV and Jan Kazimierz, and it is a place to be recommended to everyone.

There is the 15th century larchwood parish church of St. Mary Magdalene. There are the relics of a Carthusian hermitage in the crypt of the 18th century church of Our Lady of Sorrows. On the grounds of the Dominican monastery, there is a museum and a Way of the Cross. A tiny stone statue, the Madonna of Gidle, is in the 17th century Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The basilica is an outstanding example of 17th century architecture. The statue is in the perpetual care of the Dominican Fathers. The stone statue, merely the size of a hand, is the smallest image of Our Lady to be crowned by papal insignia. The statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus was found in 1516 by a peasant who was ploughing a field. Now venerated in the basilica on a large and beautiful altar, the miraculous image is among the many commemorative pictures that tell us about miracles received through the intercession of the Madonna of Gidle. The Madonna is the patron saint of farmers and miners, and, usually, is visited by 100 thousand pilgrims a year.



Święta Anna (Saint Anne)

Dominikan Sisters' Convent, 42-248 Przyrów, Święta Anna Aleksandrówka 42, tel. +48 34 355 40 42, e-mail: swanna@dominikanie.pl, www.swanna.mniszki.dominikanie.pl

This village is a place of silence and meditation. It is the domain of a contemplative order of cloistered Dominican sisters. In front of the church and among the trees, there is a Tadeusz Kosciuszko monument and a wooden cross, too. They are memorials to the patriotic insurgents of 1863. Inside the baroque church of St. Anne, there are 17th century frescos and 18th century paintings. Adjacent to the church, on a quadrangle, is the convent. A Gothic statue of St. Anne, who holds both the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus, is in the care of the nuns. Once Saint Anne was an especially important site for all pilgrims, and it is still a special stop-over site for pilgrims on their way to Częstochowa. The village of Saint Anne has its special day on July 26th. Crowds of people come to take part in the religious feast day celebrations of the village's patron saint, St. Anne.



Mstów

Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy in Mstów, 42-244 Mstów, ul. Targowa 95, tel. +48 34 328 41 18, e-mail: parafia@sanktuariummstow.com, www.sanktuariummstow.com

Poland's oldest centre of monastic life is in Mstów. Polish monastic life began in 1145, when the Canons Regular set up a monastery in Mstów. Soon afterwards, a synod took place there in 1212. As late as the 16th century, Mstów was of greater importance than Częstochowa. The town is renowned for a picture of Our Lady. This holy picture, regarded by the Archbishop of Gniezno as generous with Divine Grace, is venerated today. On Wednesdays, a Marian novenna is offered. Newly weds, and parents with their children after the Catholic sacrament of Baptism, kneel in devotion before this image of Our Lady. Also, worth seeing in Mstów: a 1620 cemetery chapel with a metal door fitting, a complex of old barns arranged on a picturesque hill to resemble the streets of the town, and on the banks of the Warta River, the Love Rock.



Lesniów

Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy of Lesniów, 42-310 Żarki, ul. Lesniowska 99, tel. +48 34 314 80 22, e-mail: lesniow@wp.pl, www.lesniow.pl

The devotion and veneration of Our Lady of Lesniów is closely linked to that of Our Lady of Częstochowa. In 1382, Prince Ladislaus of Opole (Władysław Opolczyk), prayed for the intercession of the Mother of God, because the people of his village had dug for water in vain. In answer to his prayer, a great spring gushed forth from under his feet. The heavenly grace granted then remains today as the Lesniówka stream. As symbol of his thanksgiving, the Prince endowed a shrine to be built next to the miraculous spring for a wooden statue of the Black Madonna. The 70 cm high Gothic statue, now on the main altar of the Sanctuary, has the constant veneration of devoted believers. The veneration of the statue was symbolically elevated when it was crowned by Primate Stefan Wyszyński and Cardinal Karol Wojtyła, later, Pope John Paul II. Our Lady of Lesniów is the patron saint of families. The Sanctuary complex, which consists of the Pauline Fathers Novitiate Monastery and the Shrine of Our Lady of Lesniów, has become an important pilgrimage centre for local inhabitants.



CZĘSTOCHOWA TOURIST GUIDE



POLAND





Cracow-Częstochowa Upland

The area around Częstochowa is a part of the picturesque Cracow-Częstochowa Upland, stretching from Częstochowa and Wieluń in the north towards Cracow in the south. The Częstochowa region offers great opportunities for different forms of active tourism: hiking – with ca. 700 km of marked hiking trails, cycling, horse-riding, cave exploration, and rock climbing. Artificial lakes in Poraj and Blachownia invite enthusiasts of water sports and the airport in Rudniki offers aviation sports opportunities. The golf course “Rosa Golf Club” in Konopiska, less than 20 km away from Częstochowa, is also a great attraction. Amateurs of fishing, hunting or mushroom picking will find suitable areas near the city, too. About 9,000 places have been prepared for tourists in accommodation of different categories, from three-star hotels to school youth hostels and camping sites, to suit every pocket. Country lovers are welcome on holiday farms.



Nature reŝerwes

There are several nature reserves close to the city of Częstochowa. The largest of these is **the Falcon Mountains Reŝerwe (ŝokole Góry)**. Limestone hills and picturesque white rock clusters are hidden in a beech forest. Further mysteries are found in the forty-six caves beneath the surface of the Reserve. With an abundance of calcite stalactites and stalagmites, the 140 metre long **Mauriceŝ Cave (Jaskinia Maurycego)** is considered the most beautiful cave in Poland. From the forest floor above into the **Coral Cave (Jaskinia Korallowa)** below, trees' tangled roots alter the cave's ceiling overhead. Dripstones formed on the roots resemble corals. The oldest human skeleton ever found in Poland was discovered in the **Falcon Mountains' Mosquito Cave (Jaskinia Komarowa)**. Scientists estimate that the skeleton is 32 thousand years old. The forested **Parkowe Nature Reŝerwe** has the most bizarre and fantastic rock formations: Twardowski's Gate (Brama Twardowskiego), the Rock with a Cross (Skala z Krzyżem), the Bear Cave (Jaskinia Niedzwiedzia), and the Rampart Settlement (Osiedle Waly). At the latter, an excavation was made on an 8th to 9th century tomb. Legends and fairy tales are often associated with these places. There are, also, scenic and magical springs: Sigismundus' Spring (Źródła Źygmunta) and Elizabeth's Spring (Źródło Elżbiety). In the centre of the Reserve, there are several fishing spots with the tastiest trout in all the Jura Upland. **The Zborów Mountain Reŝerwe** was established to preserve the most beautiful scenic landscapes of the Jura Upland. Its distinctive rocks can be seen from quite a distance. It is a beautiful place, and it is the natural habitat for some of the rare bird and butterfly species that are indigenous to the Jura area. The surrounding countryside is truly a climber's paradise. With supervision and training from professional instructors, it is a perfect place to improve skills, too. On the rocky walls rivalry between the best climbers makes for all kinds of competitions. Other Reserves of interest are: **the Beech Mountain Reŝerwe (Bukowa Góra)**, noted for its 200 hundred year old beeches; **the Beech Cluster Reŝerwe (Bukowa Kępa)**; **the Oak Mountain Reŝerwe (Dębowa Góra)**; **the Kaliszak Reŝerwe**; **the Ostreŝnik Reŝerwe**; and **the Green Mountain Reŝerwe (Zielona Góra)**. At the foot of Green Mountain, there is a stalagmite-filled cave 70 metres long, and from the peak of that same mountain, one can enjoy a panoramic view of Częstochowa. Nearby caves come in all sizes and shapes. Also, in the caves of the Jura Upland, interested cavers can easily find some unique species of Ice Age beetles. Likewise, a watchful eye should be kept open for the caves' numerous colonies of bats!

Castles and forts

During the reign of King Casimir the Great, the rocky relief of the Jura Uplands played an important role in the history of Poland and in its military defence. At that time, a defence system of watchtowers and castles was built. The fortresses built on the Jura hills made defensive use of the area's natural characteristics, however, after a while, the importance of this plan diminished. As early as the 16th century, most of the fortresses had fallen into ruin. But because of the legends and history surrounding the ruins, along with exceptional natural beauty, the **Eagleŝ' Nests Route** remains something not to be missed. The ruins of **Olsztyn Castle**, close to Częstochowa, should be visited. King Casimir the Great built Olsztyn Castle in the 14th century, and in its dungeons many a man was imprisoned. The castle became famous for the heroic struggle waged there against the Archduke Maximilian Habsburg's army, under the command of Kacper Karliński. These historic events have become the topics of literature and paintings. For a satisfying and unforgettable experience, visit **Mirów and Boboliŝe**. The two castles, set among unusually shaped limestone rocks and different kinds of flora, are only separated by a pleasant and interesting stroll. Among other places to see is the watchtower in **Przewodzisowice**. It is perched on an inaccessible rock surrounded by a wild forest. The watchtower ruins at **Morsko** and **Ostreŝnik** are worth seeing, too. These castles, all near Częstochowa, are a gateway to the stronghold route. It is a route that begins at Częstochowa, goes on through Ogrodzieniec, and finally, ends at Cracow.

Important phones / Information

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Jura Tourist Information
42-400 Zawiercie, ul. Piastowska 1, tel. +48 32 672 43 31, e-mail: centrala@jura-it.pl, www.jura-it.pl

The Jurassic Communities' Association
42-440 Ogrodzieniec, Plac Wolności 42, tel. +48 32 673 33 64, tel./fax +48 32 673 37 98
e-mail: biuro@jura.info.pl, www.jura.info.pl

Emergency numbers

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