



AllWays

AllWays leading to Wrocław, Poland

www.allwaystraveller.com



A vibrant, colourful city rich in history and heritage

Wrocław, the historic capital of Poland's Lower Silesia region, rewards on so many levels.

Sitting on both banks of the Oder River, the city has grown over the centuries by embracing 12 small islands that are, today, linked by 120 bridges.

In its time, Wrocław has been part of Poland, Bohemia; the Habsburg Empire; Prussia and then Germany before being returned to Poland at the end World War II.

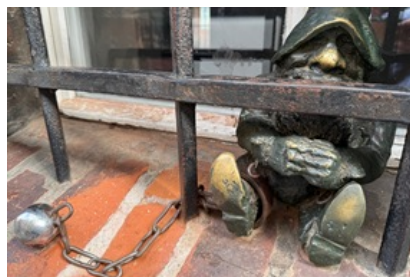
When taking a city break in Wrocław, one is sure to be drawn to the grand Rynek (Market Square), which is one of the largest and most stunning medieval market squares to be found in Europe.

While the Market Square might be the initial lure, there is so much more to enjoy on a city break to Wrocław.

Day trips into the Lower and Upper Silesian regions add to this city's appeal.

<https://visitwroclaw.eu/en/> and <https://www.poland.travel/en/>

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor
AllWays traveller





Discovering Wrocław - what took us so long?

Over the last couple of years Ann and I have become genuine Polonophiles.

By Ashley Gibbins

The more we get to appreciate the country and its culture, history, traditions, customs and cuisine the more rewarding we find a visit to this country.

Our first trip was to Warsaw and the second to Szczecin, and both were excellent.

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/index.php/allways-features/warsaw-is-soaring-upwards-and-onwards>

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/index.php/allways-features/szczecin-is-coming-into-its-own>

This time we got to Wrocław, the capital of the Polish region of Lower Silesia, and Opole in Opolskie Province, Poland's smallest region.

Wrocław is a city not that well known, which makes a visit even more rewarding.

Easy for you to say!

And no, it is not that easy to pronounce

The problem is that its name contains the letter ł, an 'L' with a stroke which is pronounced 'w' as in wet.

So Lech Wałęsa, the former the former Solidarność (Solidarity) trade union leader who was pivotal in the peaceful collapse of communism in Poland, became its president and was a Nobel Peace Prize laureate would pronounce his name Vawensa.

As for Wrocław, it is pronounced *Vrots-wahf*, something I eventually managed correctly as were ready to leave.

But it did not matter.

The citizens here accept their 'hometown' being pronounced in many different way and accept it with good grace and humour.

And it has not always carried this name.

Up until the end of World War II, the city was German and known as Breslau, becoming Wrocław after the defeat of Nazi Germany when Silesia, including the then Breslau was assigned to Poland.

The Soviet Red Army occupied Poland, which became a satellite state under Soviet Union control until its disintegration, and Poland's transition to democracy in 1989

While Silesia has a history stretching back centuries, it is the cataclysmic events of the 20th Century and the way Poland has surged forward as a staunchly pro-western European nation in the 21st Century that makes a visit all the more rewarding.

This is particularly the case with our trip to Wrocław with a day's excursion further into Lower Silesia.

Visiting Wrocław, one will initially be drawn to the Rynek, the city's stunning Market Square with its stunning Medieval Gothic Town Hall.

While Medieval squares such as this are a feature of many European cities, the Rynek and its surrounding streets of colourful buildings is particularly stunning and one of the best examples you can find.

The square is lined with bars restaurants and coffee shops, with alfresco seating.

But one also finds excellent restaurants and brewhouses throughout in Wrocław (as Ann explains below).

Just beyond the Market Square is Ostrów Tumski or Cathedral Island, which is the oldest part of the city with Gothic architecture and Wrocław Cathedral.

And this just scratches the surface of this vibrant city, as we discovered.

Having been built on a series of small islands inked by many bridges is why on reads and hears that Wrocław is the 'Venice of the north'

While this might be understandable, Wrocław does not need to draw comparison with other cities.

It is able to stand proud in its own right, and will greatly reward on a short city break.

Or one a little longer to explore the Upper and Lower Silesian regions, as we did.

Getting a good guide comes top of the list

Beata and Renata offer so much more than guided tours of Wrocław.

Although the words 'traveller' and 'tourist' are often seen as being interchangeable, there is real difference between the two.

Each represents a different, perfectly legitimate approaches to visiting somewhere.

While tourist tends to be looking for rest and relaxation as a break from everyday life, the traveller will be wanting to dig deeper into the culture of a place visited and gain a real understanding of history and people.

One needs to be a traveller to Wrocław to make the very most of a visit to this fascinating city.

And the first step in achieving this is to use the services of a guide for the first day or two of the stay.

We were lucky enough to find two excellent guides in Beata Wers and Renata Kokosza.

Like most tour guides, they are freelance professionals who have a deep and genuine knowledge about and love for their city.

And when one has a personal guide there is complete flexibility in what to do and see.

At the start of each tour, Ann and I explain what we looking for from the tour.

This gave first Renata and then Beata the chance to tailor make the tour to our needs.

And, in addition to taking in what we wanted to, we had quality time with the two women.

We asked any number of questions about everyday life in Poland and how this compared to the UK.

We were also given advice on places to eat and the trams we would need to get to where we decided to go during the rest of our stay.

And within minutes of meeting both Beata and Renata, it was like we were old friends.

This made our short stay in Wrocław far more rewarding than it would have otherwise been.

We started, as every visitor to the city is likely to do, with the Market Square and Wrocław Old Town before taking in the magnificent Wrocław University and Cathedral Island.

We also were able to plan the rest of our stay to make sure we got to Hydropolis; the Raclawice Panorama; Centennial Hall and Wrocław Zoo & Afrykarium, with more information on these below.



Beata Wers



Renata Kokosza

Taking a short break in a city like Wrocław will mean allocating time and budget.

It is therefore so well worth spending a little more to get the very most from the visit.

Beata and Renata will ensure this is what happens and they will be happy to discuss arranging a guided tour of the city that makes the stay the most interesting and enjoyable.

More information :

Beata Wers at beata.wers@wp.pl and
Renata Kokosza at
renata.kokosza@gmail.com

On the water



Another way to appreciate Wrocław is from the water.

We chose a very pleasant short trip along the Oder River and through the canals with Cityboats, whose fleet of solar catamarans sail the Old Town and under low bridges that other boats are unable to navigate.

Audio guides are in Polish, English, German, French, Spanish and Italian.

More information :

<https://www.cityboats.pl/>

The Krasnale

A great way to get to know Wrocław's is looking for Krasnale, or dwarfs in the old town and Cathedral Island areas.

Papa Dwarf, first appeared in 2005, quickly followed by four others, and today these have been joined by another over 1,000 dwarfs, each one an individual.

The Wrocław Dwarfs have become a real tourist attraction. Spot the first one and you are going to be constantly on the lookout for others.

For those with young children (and the young at heart) a dwarf trail map has stickers to highlight when one is found.

For most, taking smartphone images or getting down for a selfie with one suffices.

While this is great fun today, the dwarfs of Wrocław had more serious origins.

They first through the activities of the Orange Alternative, a Polish anti-communist underground movement which was active in Wrocław during the 1980s.

While opposition groups like the Solidarity union encouraged industrial unrest, the Orange Alternative used surrealist street art and humour and staged absurd events to ridicule and undermine Poland's totalitarian communist regime.

The dwarf became a key element of the Alternative's campaign. When the police painted over graffiti with anti-government slogans a dwarf would appear on the walls, usually with an orange pointed hat.

The image was used by artists and students, culminating in 1988 with *the Revolution of Dwarfs* when thousands of people marched through Wrocław wearing orange dwarf hats.

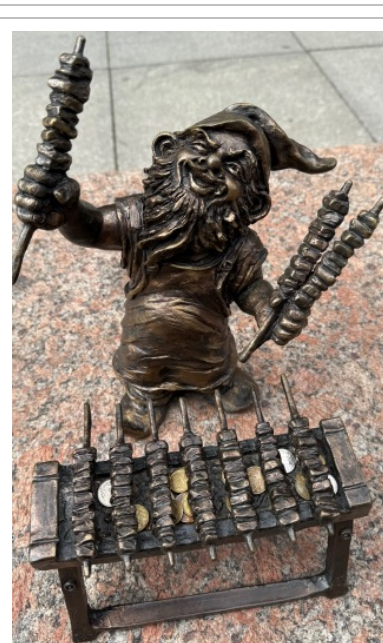
The Orange Alternative's use of non-violent humour could not easily be tackled by the authorities.

Arresting people dressed as dwarves chanting nonsense would make the regime and even greater figure of ridiculous.

The *Dwarfs of Wrocław*, and those exploiting them greatly aided the peaceful 1989 transition from communism to democracy in Poland.

More information

<https://visitwroclaw.eu/en/discover-and-explore/dwarves/>



A great deal to enjoy in the vibrant city of Wrocław

Having become acquainted with Wrocław, one can then decide what else to see and do. We took in the following attractions.

Aula Leopoldina and the Mathematical Tower



The Aula Leopoldina and the Mathematical Tower are found in the main building of the main building of the University of Wrocław.

Aula Leopoldina (Leopoldine Hall) is a spectacular example of a Baroque interior that managed to survive the ravages of WWII.

The hall is named after Emperor Leopold I of Habsburg, who founded the University of Wrocław in 1702, with the hall itself hall constructed some thirty years later.

Climb the Mathematical Tower and get great views of the city from its viewing terrace.



More information : <https://uwr.edu.pl/en/visit-us/aula-leopoldina/>

Wrocław Market Hall

Wrocław Market Hall, *Hala Targowa*, is the city's main covered market.

In addition to being a thriving market it is also a architectural landmark and attraction in its own right.

It was built between 1906 and 1908 when Wrocław was part of the German Empire and is heralded for what was then the innovative use of reinforced concrete trusses and parabolic arches in the roof structure.

It well deserves being called a concrete cathedral.



Cathedral Island



Cathedral Island, which is the oldest part of the city is resplendent in Gothic architecture and dominated by Wrocław Cathedral.

Ostrów Tumski, also known as Cathedral Island, was first settled by the Ślężanie who lived in what is now Lower Silesia in the Early Middle Ages.

Having the Oder River flowing either side of the island, back then, made it easy to defend.

Work on the construction of the majestic Cathedral of St. John the Baptist also began in the 10th Century with reconstruction over subsequent centuries.

Wrocław flourished due to its strategic position at the crossroads of major trade routes, particularly the Amber Road

The 'Road' connected the Baltic Sea region, with its rich amber deposits, to the Mediterranean Sea and was one of the first long-distance European trade routes.

Although no longer quite an island, this area of the city is resplendent in Gothic architecture lined with cobblestone streets and dominated by the Cathedral.



While Cathedral Island offers a serene visit during daytime, the is enhanced come dusk every evening.

This is thanks to an age-old tradition.

A lamplighter, in cape and top hat, walks the streets manually lighting the 100 or so gas lamps that bathe the streets in a warm glow and gives this historic area a special atmosphere.

The Panorama Raclawicka



The Panorama Raclawicka would come very near the top of an city break to do list.

It is a magnificent painting measuring 15 by 114 meters 'in the round' that surrounds visitors as they enter the rotunda building constructed to display it.

The painting by Jan Styka depicts the Battle of Raclawice, which was one of the clashes during the 1794 Kosciuszko Uprising by Polish-Lithuanian forces against the occupation of their country by the Russian Empire and the Prussia.

This one major success in the ultimately failed uprising was revered by the Polish for the heroes fighting for Poland's freedom

Styka's monumental work was the main attraction of the General National Exhibition in Lviv in 1894, and the Panorama Raclawicka put into storage.



The painting was transferred to Poland after WWII, but a painting of a Polish victory over the Russian army proved politically unacceptable to the Soviet Union and it was kept in cold storage for decades.

Eventually restored and put on public display in 1985, it has become a rite of passage the Polish people and seen by many hundreds of thousands of international visitors ever since.



Visiting the Panorama at ones allotted time, one is led up the circular viewing area to overlook the painting.

When the formal presentation begins, we move slowly around the painting while the story of the heroic victory by the heavily outnumbered Polish/Lithuanian forces over the Russian/Prussian army unfolds.

It is a memorable and affirming experience.

More information :

<https://mnwr.pl/en/category/branches/panorama-of-the-battle-of-raclawice/>

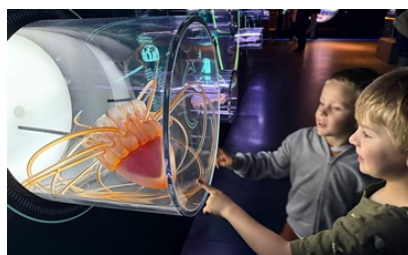
Hydropolis

Hydropolis, which is found via a casual and very enjoyable walk beside Oder River, is a unique, high-tech, interactive science centre and museum dedicated entirely to water.

Housed in an historic 19th-century underground clean water reservoir, it embraces exhibits, multimedia, interactive installations and models to explore the role of water in the environment.

It all makes one realise just how importance water is to every aspect of life on earth.

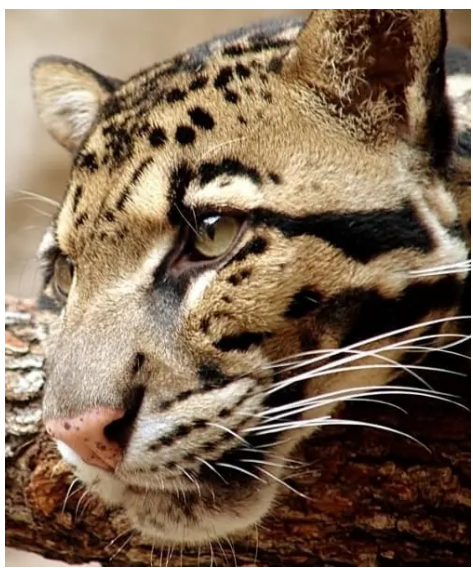
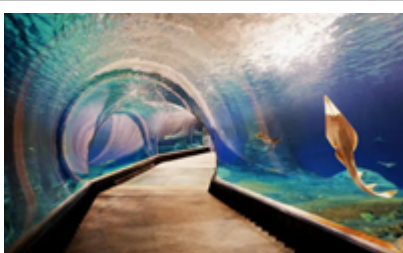
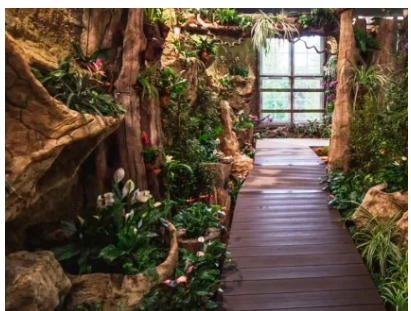
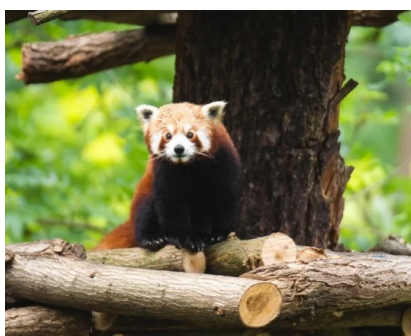
If I had doubts as to how much I would enjoy *Hydropolis*, they were dispelled as the cascading water parted at the entrance.



More information

<https://hydropolis.pl/en/for-visitors/>

Wrocław Zoo and Afrykarium



Wrocław Zoo, the oldest and largest zoo in Poland, makes an excellent day just out of the heart of the city.

Particularly when linked with a visit to the adjacent Centennial Hall and Japanese Garden.

The zoo is home to over 10,000 animals from more than 1,100 species, making it one of the most biodiverse zoos in the world.

The zoo features themed areas and pavilions, such as the Madagascar Pavilion, Monkey Grove, Terrarium and the Ranch along with Afrykarium, its most popular area

The Afrykarium is the only oceanarium in the world dedicated solely to the fauna and water environments of Africa.

It showcases African ecosystems in the Red Sea, Great Rift Valley lakes and Congo River.

One can see Hippos see Nile crocodiles, Manatees and African penguins and take the underwater tunnel that takes you through sharks and rays.

While there is debate about the ethicality of zoos, they undoubtedly nurture species that could easily become extinct in the 'wild'.

As with most of today's zoo's, the animals at Wrocław Zoo and Afrykarium are clearly well cared for and have as natural life as possible.

More information : <https://zoo.wroclaw.pl/en/> and <https://zoo.wroclaw.pl/en/pavilions/afrykarium/>

The Japanese Garden, Centennial Hall and Pergola



The Japanese Garden



The Japanese Garden was created for the Centennial Exhibition in 1913.

It features traditional Japanese elements such as bridges, stone lanterns, and a tea pavilion, offering a tranquil escape.

The Japanese Garden, which is found just opposite the Wrocław Zoo, is a very pleasant and serene place that well suits a visit if the weather permits.

It has several Japanese-themed gardens displaying Asian flora including cherry blossoms in spring, Japanese maples and bonsai-like trimmed trees and shrubs.

These are enhanced by Japanese features including a bridge, stone lanterns, tea pavilion, water cascade and Koi carp pond.

The Japanese Garden was originally created in 1913, as part of the World Exhibition, but has undergone major restoration projects over the years with support from Japanese garden specialists.

The Centennial Hall



The Centennial Hall, which is surrounded by the Japanese Garden and Pergola, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site for being an outstanding example of early Modern engineering and architecture.

The hall received its World Heritage status

Built between 1911 and 1913, it was at that time a pioneering feat of engineering and one of the world's first major structures made of reinforced concrete, with its dome then having the largest span in the world.

The Pergola



The Pergola, adjacent to the Centennial Hall, has the Wrocław Multimedia Fountain which features stunning water, light and sound shows during the warmer months.

More information

<https://halastulecia.pl/en/for-visitors/>

<https://zzm.wroc.pl/obiektyzzmcp/ogrod-japonski-we-wroclawiu/>



The Art Hotel Wrocław

A fine hotel with a fascinating past

The Art Hotel in the heart of Wrocław's old town is full of history and character.

BY Ann Mealor



Lying close to the main market square, it is within easy walking distance of all the city's major attractions and close to the river.

Dating back to the 14th century, it was the first brick building on Kielbasnicza Street, in the former Butcher's Quarter, and made an impressive four-storey family home.

During its long lifetime the building has housed a printing shop, housing the famous Baumann presses and the headquarters of the Association of Polish Architects.

Now a thoughtfully renovated hotel, rich, period features can be enjoyed throughout the building including moulded ceilings, Renaissance window columns and a magnificent, heavy wrought iron door dating back to 1520.



Our room

Our room was spacious and elegant, decorated in muted, soft colours with original artwork on the walls and luxurious organic Aloe Leaf toiletries in the bathroom.

Slippers were in the wardrobe and tea and coffee on the dressing table.

Staff were always very good providing me with fresh milk, hot and cold, for my bedtime beverage and extra pillows when I needed them.

We had everything we needed for a very comfortable stay.

Dining at The Art Hotel



Breakfast



The breakfast buffet at *The Art Hotel* was mouth wateringly good.

I was like a child in a sweet shop not knowing what to choose, or where to start but wanting to try everything!

There was a cold selection made up of refreshing watermelon, pineapple and melon, cereals, nuts, yoghurts, a range of breads, jams and honey, salads, local cheeses, cold meats, egg mayonnaise and pate, plus a hot choice of scrambled eggs, baked beans, roasted vegetables, bacon and sausages.

The pastry section was very tempting with croissants, traditional chocolate and cream polish gateaux and warm filled pancakes.

There was also a delicious pannacotta topped with a raspberry coulis.

You could fill up for the day and explore until teatime without letting lunch interrupt your sightseeing.

The breakfast room, although large had an earthy, farmhouse-kitchen feel, with its wooden floor, Welsh style dressers, and sturdy pine tables. All the dishes were regularly topped up and the buffet area kept neat and tidy.

Lunch



We had a delicious lunch in the charming courtyard style *Art Restaurant*.

With its cobbled floor, rustic, chunky furniture, cascading green foliage, wrought iron and stone central well feature and pumpkins- a plenty it brought the outside in. The menu, based on traditional Polish and Italian cuisine, makes the most of seasonal and regional produce. I was pleasantly surprised by the number of vegan options too.

However, you can't go wrong with soup in Poland – it is their speciality dish; the portions are generous and the flavours fantastic.

Here I had a warming, bright green, silky-smooth pea soup with vegan feta, mint and roast fenugreek.

Ashley went for the pinky-purple beetroot sourdough, with quail egg, cream and dill oil. The two dishes made quite a colourful combo on the table.

We both had fish for the main course.

I had a fried Dory fillet, a fish I hadn't had for a long time, in a caramel sauce with truffles and wild broccoli and Ashley chose the salmon with pineapple polenta, peas and mango relish.

Both dishes were beautifully prepared and tasted as good as they looked!

The house wine, a Spanish white from La Mancha, was very quaffable and great value at around £4 a glass.

We managed to squeeze in a glass each with our meal before saying our final goodbyes to the friendly staff and heading off to the airport.

More information



<https://www.arthotel.pl/en>

Dining out in in Wrocław



Dining in Wrocław is a culinary pleasure.

High quality ingredients and seasonal and regional produce are always on the menus.

By Ann Mealor

There is a mix of traditional and modern Polish cuisine as well as the usual Italian, Indian, Chinese, Mediterranean restaurants etc that you would expect to find in a large city.

Pierogi, traditional Polish dumplings with savoury and sweet fillings are absolutely delicious and well worth trying. Soups are also a speciality - the traditional beetroot soup being one of my favourites.

Restaurant prices are very reasonable, food presentation creative and the Polish white wine, Solaris, exceedingly good.

Although meat is very popular here, fish and vegetarian options were always available - and I spotted vegan dishes on a few of the menus. Whether you enjoy fine dining or eating more casually, the food at every level is delicious.

We were fortunate enough to dine at the following

Ida Cuisine and Wine

The popular Ida Cuisine and Wine is tucked away on the edge of the Wrocław's Old Town, inside the Hotel Jazz.

With exposed brickwork, concrete flooring and varnished wooden tables, it has a classic bistro feel.

To our table came complimentary homemade, herby bread with whipped butter, award winning Spanish olive oil and a shot of bright pink beetroot juice – a most welcome surprise! The portions here are generous and the food unfussy, yet creative.

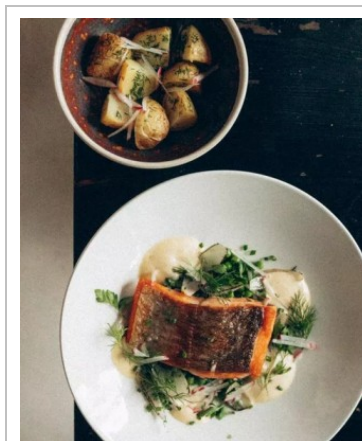
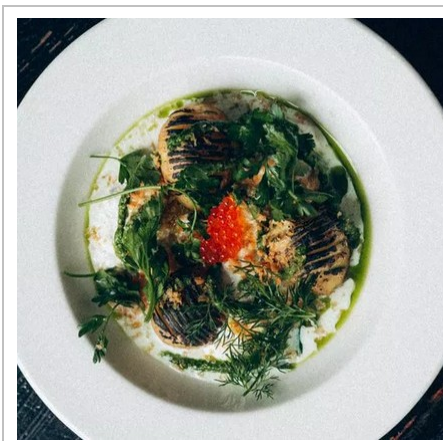
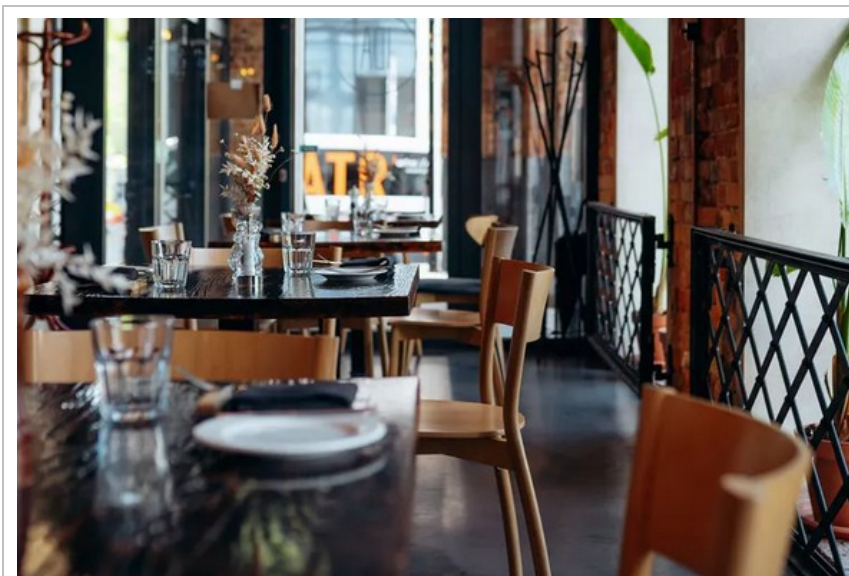
My warm goats-cheese glazed starter with peaches, mint, crunchy walnuts, beetroot and a crisp salad was sumptuous and Ashley's herring with apple, sour cream and horseradish looked a picture and tasted as good.

The pierogi filled with wild garlic and smoked cheese and the potato dumplings with local cheese, mushrooms and broad beans were both delicious and beautifully presented.

The glass of Polish Riesling I had was excellent.

More information

https://guide.michelin.com/gb/en/lower-silesian/Wrocław_2399695/restaurant/ida-kuchnia-i-wino





Restaurant Wrocławska

Wrocławska, a traditional restaurant features the cuisine of old Wrocław.

Inspired by the fictional food-loving pre-war detective Eberhard Mock, you will find many hearty, local treats here.

I had a creamy, purple, beetroot soup to start, followed by one of the regional specialities, a Silesian Sky pork, bacon and dumplings in a warming sauce made from dried plums, cloves, apples, apricots and cloves. Sheer pierogi perfection.



Ashley chose the tangy marinated herring followed by Zander, a sweet, delicate fish in a garlic white wine sauce with new potatoes.

Daniel, our very knowledgeable and friendly waiter, recommended we share a dessert of warm, Belgium chocolate pierogi topped with cream and blueberry sauce.

Wrocławska also makes its own schnapps, has a range of locally brewed beers and a comprehensive selection of wonderful lower Silesian wine.



More information

<https://Wroclawska.com.pl/en/homepage/>

Piwnica Świdnicka

Piwnica Świdnicka, in the heart of Wrocław's Market Square, is the third oldest restaurant in Europe. Set within a series of historic Gothic cellars beneath the old Town Hall, it dates back to the 13th century.

Recently refurbished, it has a chic, modern feel with whitewashed brickwork, atmospheric lighting and bistro style tables. The mix of old and new works very well.

Beer has been brewed on the premises since 2022, in a specially installed brewery, so there are plenty of craft ales to choose from. If you can't make a decision, you can order a tasting platter of six and pick out your favourite as you go along.

We went for lunch, and both had a scrumptious cauliflower cream soup. Pale and velvety, topped with a swirl of oil and breadcrumbs, it was served piping hot, in a dramatic black bowl with a very wide rim.

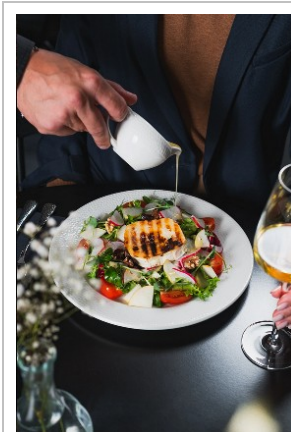
Fish courses followed.

I had a perfectly cooked fried zander, with crayfish, potato puree, cauliflower and butter sauce and Ashley the soft flakey, roasted salmon with asparagus, pesto and pea couscous.

This is a real gem of a place, in a great location, that has stood the test of time due to its continually high standards.

More information :

<https://piwnicaswidnicka.pl/en/home-en/>



La Maddalena



Situated in on the banks of the River Oder, with picturesque views over the water and city, this is a perfect place to enjoy a romantic meal for two.

The restaurant features in the Michelin guide, reflecting the quality of the chefs, the food and its presentation.

The complementary home-made bread and whipped butter sprinkled with poppy seed were delicious.

As as were the two soups we ordered for our starters- a creamy fish broth with a very generous portion of salmon and a white vegetable cream soup topped with crunchy almonds and olive oil.



This was among my favourites.

For mains, I had a succulent pork rump steak, with a light mushroom mousse, crispy potato rosti, black olives and a piquant green pepper sauce.

Ashley had the Pyrenean trout, a colourful dish with yellow tomatoes, peas, lettuce and a golden yellow saffron sauce.



Both dishes were beautifully prepared and intricately presented.

We shared a rich and decadent chocolate fondant nicely balanced by a mango and passion fruit ice-cream with shards of delicate meringue balanced on top.

A restaurant worthy of a special occasion.

More information

https://guide.michelin.com/gb/en/lower-silesian/Wroclaw_2399695/restaurant/la-maddalena

Przystań Restaurant

Set on an island in the middle of the River Oder with impressive views of Wrocław, Przystań's award winning cuisine can be enjoyed in a stunning waterside location.

Featured in the Michelin Guide, fresh, local ingredients form part of every meal and careful attention is paid to the look of every dish.

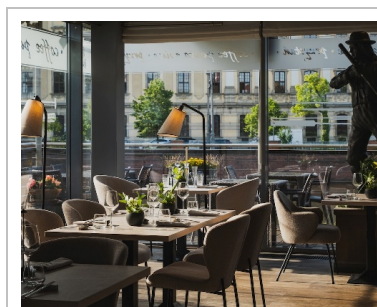
There is an outdoor terrace overlooking the river, the best place to be when sipping a cocktail and dining on a warm, summers evening.

The restaurant is liked by many and has a vibrant buzz about it.

When we dined, there was the added bonus of live music which we always appreciate.

Przystan is chic and modern with bistro style tables and very comfortable chairs. Happily, I was sat with a nighttime view of the twinkling city.

For starters, we both chose the generously portioned and reassuringly chunky fish soup.



For mains, I had the tender, slow-cooked beef rib on a bed of creamy mashed potato and grilled romaine, with a rich, yet light lip-smacking sauce and crisp horseradish chips.

For Ashley, it was the crispy skinned zander fillet, well partnered with green peas, capers and a herby salmon croquette.

To finish, I had the best tiramisu I have ever tasted and Ashley the luscious chocolate fondant, the centre oozing out like hot lava once freed by the plunge of the spoon.

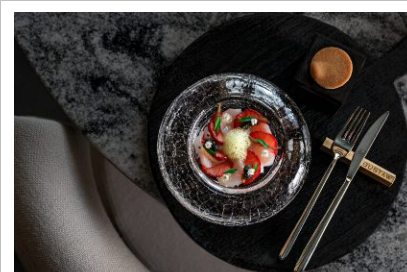
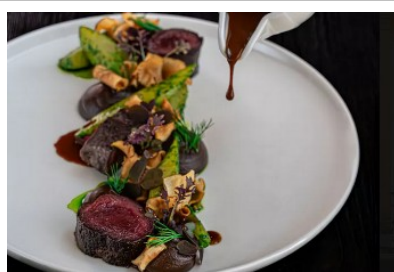
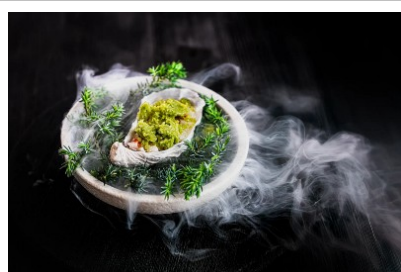
Our meal, accompanied by a glass of excellent Polish Riesling, was one to remember.



More information

<https://przystan.wroc.pl/en>

Gustaw Restaurant



What a treat it was to dine at Gustaw.

Relaxing, yet sophisticated and set within the atmospheric historic remains of a sixteenth century military fortification, this restaurant rightly deserves its place in the Michelin guide and its reputation as one of the best dining experiences in Wrocław.

The décor is bright, with a natural blue-sky effect above an Italian style, sunken atrium surrounded by tall pillars – giving the effect of an old Roman baths filled with marble topped dining tables instead of spa waters.

The ceiling is extremely high, creating a sense of grandeur.

whilst the walls lining the grey, concrete walkway around the main dining area are boldly painted in blocks of rust, gold and royal blue.

Somewhat surprisingly, it all works together extremely well.

Head chef Kacper Sawon puts his own modern twist on Polish and Beslau traditional dishes using the finest of local ingredients.

His presentation is second to none, and his artistic use of delicate, edible flowers makes each dish a joy to behold.

First up, a very welcome amuse bouche of whipped mushroom mousse topped with roasted pecans.

Next were starters: a creamy goats cheese log on a bed of purple loganberries and beetroot, topped with chopped hazelnuts and feathery green salad leaves; and a fish soup of two crunchy croquettes in a warm, amber coloured broth topped with samphire and edible flowers the colour of deep plum.

Both were superb.

My main course of crispy skinned stone bass in a *beurre blanc* sauce, green pea puree and kohlrabi topped with a light as a feather bouillon foam looked and tasted beautiful.

Ashley's wreath of pierogi was filled with mushroom, truffle, potatoes and topped with a cloud of cheese foam.

A surprise pre-dessert of two golden, Mirabelle fruit jellies cleansed the palate perfectly in preparation for the dessert, a Mirabelle white chocolate covered mousse, with homemade ice cream and a zesty lemon sauce.

It almost looked to good eat and it was a shame to spoil the work of art on our plate – but we did and it was worth it.

To finish, we had a glass of ruby red homemade fruit of the forest liquor – a fitting end to our Gustaw culinary journey.

More information :

<https://restauracjagustaw.pl/en/welcome/> and https://guide.michelin.com/gb/en/lower-silesian/Wroclaw_2399695/restaurant/gustaw

Restaurant Konspira

While this restaurant is worth a visit for the décor alone, the food is really good too.



Walk through the door and step back in time to the late 1940s.

Konspira is furnished like a family home of the era: coloured rugs scattered over wooden floors, net curtains hanging from windows, old style radios, gramophones and televisions filling shelves and corners, photos and memorabilia decorating the walls and even a motorbike finding space in the main room.

However, this would have been no ordinary house, but that of the resistance.

At the end of the second world war, 1945 Poland was saddled with a puppet government controlled by Moscow.

Many Polish people were part of an underground movement that fought against this communism and Russian control.

In thousands of private homes conspirators worked day and night printing and distributing illegal pamphlets and newsletters against the government.

At the back of Konspira is a small dining room accessed through a wardrobe.

This is a secret chamber full of books, typewriters, writing desks, walls lined with press cuttings; black and white photographs; motorbike helmets; tape recorders; gas lamps; cameras and other items that would have been used by the freedom fighters.

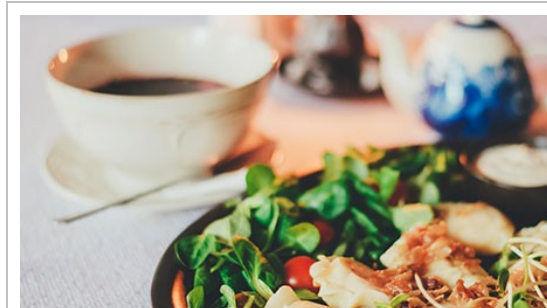
It is all so interesting and there is so much to take-in whilst enjoying a hearty, traditional and very well-cooked Polish meal, chosen from a menu designed like a conspirator's magazine.

We went for lunch, and my herring tartare starter, served on a rustic wooden plank with crusty bread was particularly good as were my crispy potato pancakes with fried spinach, grated fresh parmesan and juicy tomatoes.

Ashley's first course of jacket potato slathered with cottage cheese and spring onions was a real comfort food on a drizzly day and his grilled cauliflower with mayonnaise and yoghurt sauce particularly satisfying.

Wrocław is a special place as far as the anti-Communist opposition of the 1980's is concerned.

Dining at Konspira brings this part of Poland's incredible history to life in a very enticing way.



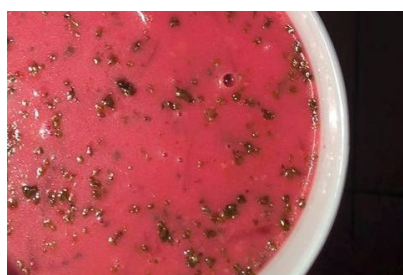
More information :

<https://restaurackonspira.pl/en/homepage-4/> and <https://www.poland.travel/en/>

The Wrocław Milk bars



Bar Mleczny Karmazyn, inside the Market Hall has a 'satirical' display showing cups and cutlery chained down during the Soviet era to prevent them being stolen



For a totally different and unique dining experience there are the *Bar Mleczny* or Milk bars.

These are traditional, no-frills, cafeteria-style eateries that offer hearty Polish cuisine at very affordable prices.

This is because those running each bar can claim a public subsidy for each meal served.

The 'milk' term derives from the original fare served during the 19th and early 20th centuries, which was based on dairy produce and vegetables.

Today the milk bars embrace a range of traditional Polish dishes including, and of course, Pierogi, which are Polish dumplings.

There is also likely to be ruskie with potato and cheese; Kotlet Schabowy with breaded pork cutlet, beetroot and tomato zupy.

The milk bars, which are an essential part of Wrocław's daily life will see city workers and students enjoying meals next to retired citizens young families and, of course, visitors looking for a traditional and delicious Polish experience.

Two of Wrocław's milk bars that will not disappoint are :

- **Bar Mleczny Miś**, which is the classic milk bar : <https://www.facebook.com/p/Bar-Mleczny-Mi%C5%9B-100057359983983/>
- **Bar Mleczny Karmazyn**, located inside the Market Hall <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1231300623549713&set=pb.100063807390321.-2207520000>

If you liked Wrocław



AllWays leading to Lower Silesia

Lower Silesia, one of Poland's historical regions, offers more just beyond its capital Wrocław.

While its largest city and gateway to the region is Wrocław, there is much to see beyond its historical capital.

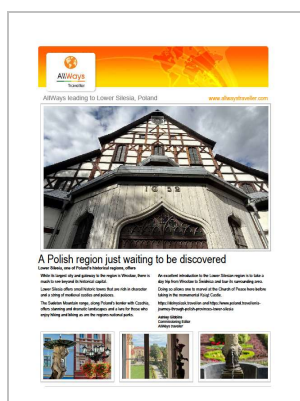
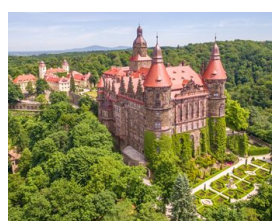
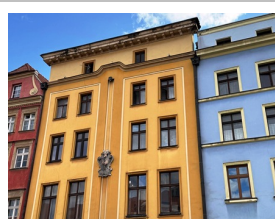
Lower Silesia offers small historic towns that are rich in character and a string of medieval castles and palaces.

The Sudeten Mountain range offers stunning and dramatic landscapes and a lure for those who enjoy hiking and biking as are the regions national parks.

An excellent introduction to the Lower Silesian region is to take a day trip from Wrocław to Świdnica and tour its surrounding area.

Doing so allows one to marvel at the Church of Peace here before taking in the monumental Książ Castle.

<https://dolnyslask.travel/en> and <https://www.poland.travel/en/a-journey-through-polish-provinces-lower-silesia>



AllWays Traveller to Lower Silesia :

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features/lower-silesia-a-polish-region-just-waiting-to-be-discovered>



AllWays leading to Opole

Opole, on the Oder River, the historical capital of Poland's Upper Silesia region.

One can get there in just under an hour by train from Wrocław, the capital of Lower Silesia.

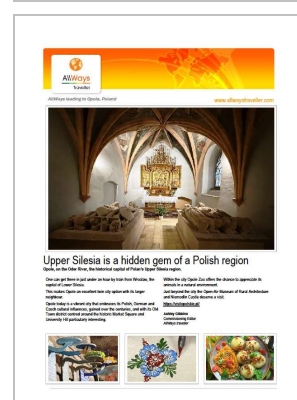
This makes Opole an excellent twin city option with its larger neighbour.

Opole today is a vibrant city that embraces its Polish, German and Czech cultural influences, gained over the centuries, and with its Old Town district centred around the historic Market Square and University Hill particularly interesting.

Within the city Opole Zoo offers the chance to appreciate its animals in a natural environment.

Just beyond the city the Open-Air Museum of Rural Architecture and Niemodlin Castle deserve a visit.

<https://visitopolskie.pl/>



AllWays Traveller to Opole and Upper Silesia :

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features/upper-silesia-a-hidden-gem-of-a-polish-region>



AllWays leading to Warsaw

This is very much in contrast to the city's relatively recent history.

Warsaw was ravaged during World War II with Poland itself repressed, as a Soviet bloc country, for forty plus years afterwards.

With democratic change in the early 1990s, Warsaw has embraced its new lease of life and has come truly into its own.

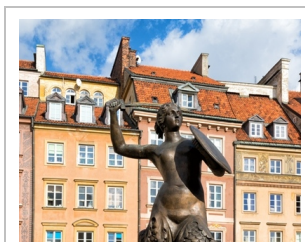
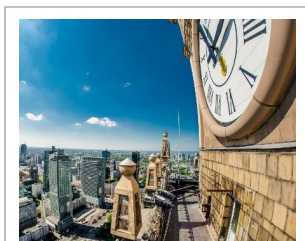
Discovering Warsaw, today, it is easy to understand why the city was voted *European Best Destination of the Year 2023*.

Warsaw is a city of great historic and cultural heritage, with splendid parks and gardens, fine dining opportunities and an excellent transport network.

The old town is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site

The city also wholeheartedly embraces Frederick Chopin as its favourite son.

www.go2warsaw.pl



AllWays leading to Szczecin

The port city of Szczecin is located on the Oder River in northwest Poland.

When Poland opted for a democratic future in the early 1990s, Warsaw Poznan, Krakow and Gdansk were the first to welcome international visitors.

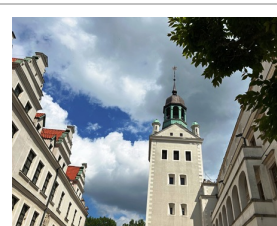
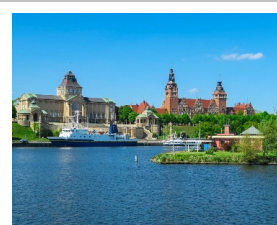
The city of Szczecin needed more time to establish itself as a short break destination but, in recent years, has made a genuine commitment to laying the foundations of its tourism infrastructure.

It now offers a warm visitor welcome in a fascinating city with excellent accommodation and dining options.

This makes Szczecin an alluring and rewarding city break in its own right.

It can also be paired with day trips to the seaside resorts along the bracing Baltic Sea or as a base for discovering the fine wines being produced in West Pomeranian wineries.

<https://visitszczecin.eu/en>



AllWays Traveller to Warsaw :
<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/warsaw-is-soaring-upwards-and-onwards>

AllWays Traveller to Szczecin :
<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/continents/europe/warsaw-is-soaring-upwards-and-onwards>

AllWays leading to Wrocław



AllWays traveller and the International Travel Writers Alliance



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www.allwaystraveller.com



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

www.itwalliance.com



Ann Meador is a professional travel writer and photographer and Managing Editor of *AllWays Traveller*



Ashley Gibbins is a professional travel writer and photographer and Managing Director of the International Travel Writers Alliance.