



AllWays

AllWays leading to Świdnica and Lower Silesia, Poland

www.allwaystraveller.com



A Polish region just waiting to be discovered

Lower Silesia, one of Poland's historical regions, brings its own rewards.

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.

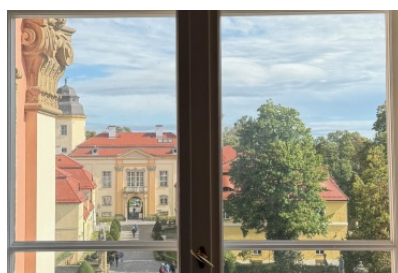
The Sudeten Mountain range, along Poland's border with Czechia, offers stunning and dramatic landscapes and a lure for those who enjoy hiking and biking as are the regions national parks.

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

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor
AllWays traveller





Look beyond Wrocław's and Lower Silesia beckons

Wrocław, Lower Silesia's historic capital, provides a base for venturing just a little further into this fascinating Polish region.

By Ashley Gibbins

Lower Silesia, which is also known as Dolnośląskie Province, is making a determined effort to lure those visitors to its historic capital of Wrocław.

And while this city offers a great deal as a short city break destination (see *AllWays leading to Wrocław*) it is also well worth going just a little further.

That is what Ann and I did, and we were not disappointed.

From Wrocław spent a day touring Lower Silesia itself and also had time for two days in the Upper Silesian capital of Opole.

Limited to the just one in Lower Silesia meant we need to make the most of it.

Which we certainly did.

It saw us visiting Świdnica (pronounced Shveed-NEET-sah) where our guide, the oh-so interesting Iwona Radzi took us up the Town Hall Tower (Wieża Ratuszowa) in the centre of the Market Square.

This offers a panoramic view of the old town below and the surrounding area town below.

It set the scene for our stroll through the medieval Market Square surrounded by its colourful tenement houses in Gothic, Baroque, and Classicist styles.

We also took in the Gothic St. Stanislaus and St. Wenceslaus Cathedral before moving on to Świdnica's magnificent Church of Peace (see below).

It was then a short drive to the striking Książ Castle, which was commandeered by the Nazi's during WWII.

It was being earmarked become one of the main headquarters for Adolf Hitler or one of his special residences (see below).

Our day trip to Lower Silesia gave us just a glimpse of the what the region has to offer travellers, which is a great deal.



Iwona Radzi

More information :

<https://dot.org.pl/>

Iwona Radzi at iradzi@o2.pl



The Church of Peace

The main attraction in Świdnica is undoubtedly the Church of Peace of the Holy Trinity (Kościół Pokoju), the largest wooden Baroque church in the world.

It was built in the mid-17th century following the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War.

The Catholic Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand III reluctantly allowed Protestants in Silesia to build just three Churches of Peace and outside of the city walls.

They needed to be constructed within one year of wood, clay and straw (non-durable materials and it was these constraints that saw the creation of an 'architectural masterpiece'.

If the church's exterior is striking with its black and white façade, the interior is stunningly rich in Baroque decoration and with four tiers of painted galleries.

More information

<https://kosciolpokoju.pl/en/>





Książ Castle

Książ Castle, with some 400 rooms is one of the largest and most historically important of Poland's many castles.

Located high, rocky cliff, overlooking the gorge of the Pelcznica River and within a landscaped park, it was first as a defensive fortress 1288 and 1292.

Needless to say the castle has been extended and remodelled through the centuries. And now offers a blend of architectural styles including Gothic, Baroque, and Rococo.

Visiting from the UK, Ann and I were fascinated to get to know about link between the castle and Princess Daisy of Pless, the last aristocratic resident of the castle.

Daisy married Hans Heinrich XV von Hochberg, Prince of Pless, in 1891, the then owners of Książ Castle. The Hochbergs were one of the wealthiest and most influential families in Europe, with vast estates in Silesia.

Daisy, known for her 'extraordinary beauty, charisma and progressive views', connected to King Edward VII of Great Britain and the German Emperor (Kaiser Wilhelm II).



During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Książ became famous for its opulent interiors and terraced gardens, which were developed Daisy's influence.

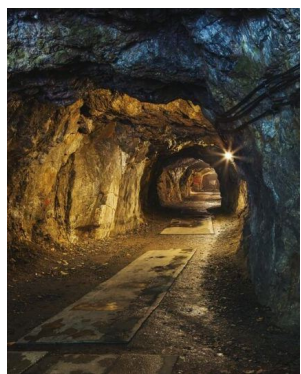
Hans Heinrich the magnificent Palm House built nearby as a gift for her, as she was a great lover of flowers and exotic plants.



The War years

In 1941 the castle was commandeered by the Nazi regime, and work started on convert it into one of Adolf Hitler's new headquarters or as one of his private residences.

The caves



There also took place a massive and top-secret construction programme to build a complex of seven caves in the surrounding Owl Mountains, one of which is directly beneath the castle itself.

Concentration camp prisoners were used as forced labour to excavate a vast network of tunnels deep beneath the castle, for still unknown reasons.

Thousands of prisoners died from disease, malnutrition and exhaustion due to the brutal, inhumane conditions they were forced to work under.

The Legend of the Nazi Gold Train

The Legend of the Nazi Gold Train, and it being buried under Książ Castle, has become a part of local folklore for decades.

It was believed that, in the final days of World War II, a German armoured train laden with gold, jewels and priceless artwork was brought from the city of Breslau (now Wrocław) to the nearest station to Książ Castle.

The train is said to have entered the network of underground tunnels and sealed off to avoid it falling into the hands of the advancing Red Army.

Despite there being no concrete evidence that The Gold Train ever existed, it is a legend that helps fuel the great popularity of Książ Castle as a visitor attraction.

Visiting Książ Castle today provides an opportunity to tour the restored historical rooms and learn about the life and times of the Hochberg family, particularly Daisy's role in the property.

There is also the chance to take a guided tour of some of the tunnels dug by the Nazis, an equally fascinating if deeply thought-provoking experience.

The gardens surrounding the castle offer a relaxing opportunity to take in the views and the castle's exterior.

The Palm House nearby features exotic plants and is also open to visitors.

Dining at Książ Castle



Restaurant Książęca, Książ Castle Restaurant Książęca is the ideal place to stop for a bite to eat before or after a visit to Książ Castle.

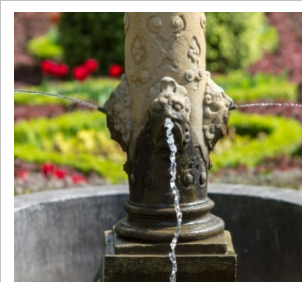
Set in picturesque grounds, there is the opportunity to dine outside on the patio and take in the splendid countryside views, weather permitting!



For starters I had a satisfying homemade sorrel soup and Ashley the sweet, crunchy asparagus.

To follow, I chose juicy prawns and spicy chorizo on a bed of fresh, crisp, green salad and Ashley a succulent grilled trout, with fresh herbs and fried potatoes.

Our food was tasty and plentiful and the restaurant spacious and comfortable with fresh flowers on the tables. It all made for a very pleasant mid-day lunch.



More information

<https://www.ksiaz.walbrzych.pl/en> and
<http://www.restauracja-ksiazeca.pl/>

If you liked Świdnica and Lower Silesia



AllWays leading to Wrocław

Wrocław (pronounced roughly Vrots-wahf), the historic capital of Poland's Lower Silesia region does not disappoint.

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

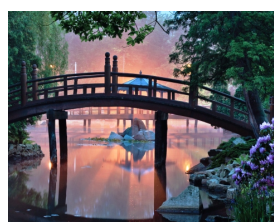
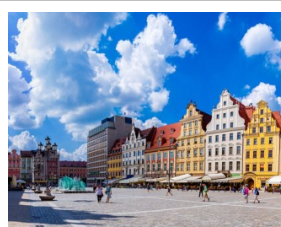
In its time, Wrocław has been part of Poland, Bohemia; the Habsburg Empire; Prussia and then Germany before being returning to Poland in 1945.

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/>



AllWays Traveller to Wrocław :

<https://www.allwaystraveller.com/allways-features/wroclaw-a-vibrant-colourful-city-rich-in-history-and-heritage>



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.

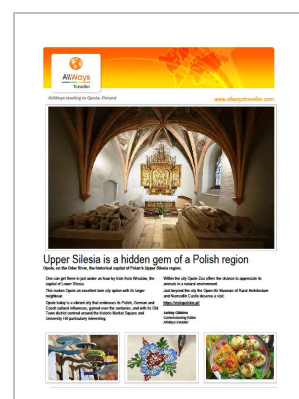
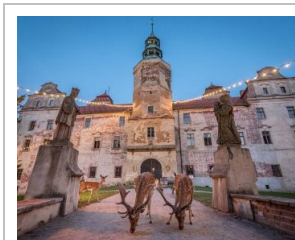
This makes Opole an excellent twin city option with its larger neighbour.

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.

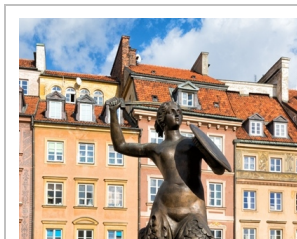
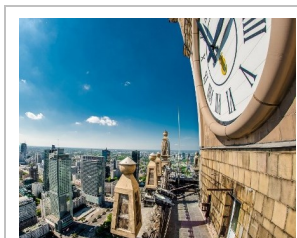
Discovering Warsaw, today, it is easy to understand why the city was voted *European Best Destination of the Year 2023*.

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 Traveller to Warsaw :

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



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.

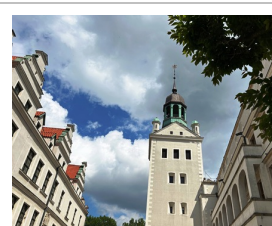
The city of Szczecin needed more time to establish itself as a short break destination but, in recent years, has made a genuine commitment to laying the foundations of its tourism infrastructure.

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 Szczecin :

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



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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.