

Poland: Warsaw to Krakow

Bike Vacation + Air Package

Follow the lifeblood of Poland, the Vistula River, between its modern and ancient capital cities on easy cycling routes. From royal castles to lush fruit farms, you'll take it all in at a gentle pace. You'll visit charming Old World towns and roll through a pristine forest, ride a horse and buggy, and venture underground to merchants' cellars and a UNESCO-acclaimed salt mine. And savor memorable meals, from a picnic lunch on a castle lawn to a sumptuous palace repast—and toast your discoveries with tastings of local vodka and mead.

Cultural Highlights

Join your Trip Leaders as they shop for a picnic lunch at a farmers' market.

Ferry across the Vistula River to the ruins of the 16th-century Janowiec Castle.

Learn about the history and folklore of the quaint village of Kazimierz Dolny during a guided tour.

Lunch in a late-Baroque palace, one of the most beautiful residences in Poland.

Visit underground merchant cellars beneath the town square on a walking tour of Sandomierz.

Cycle through fertile orchards in a region sometimes called the "Tuscany of Poland."

Learn the delicious secrets of making a traditional fruit dessert during a cooking demonstration.

Sample Sandomierski mead, a unique brew produced only in this region.

Roll along tranquil paved routes through a sylvan landscape in Niepolomice Forest.

Tour the astonishing Wieliczka Salt Mines, and savor a Polish vodka tasting in one of its underground chambers.

Enjoy a guided tour of Krakow's Old Town.

What to Expect

This tour offers easy terrain throughout the trip and is ideal for beginning cyclists. There are longer options with slight hills for the more experienced cyclists.

Tour Duration: 10 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 15 - 35

Average Cycling Time: 01:15 - 04:00

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

Apr 63°/48°, May 65°/47°, Jun 70°/52°, Jul 73°/55°, Aug 73°/54°, Sep 64°/47°, Oct 54°/40°

Average Rainfall (in.)

Apr 2.4, May 2.0, Jun 2.6, Jul 3.0, Aug 2.8, Sep 1.8, Oct 1.6

DAY 1: Depart from home / Fly overnight to Warsaw

Depart from home for Poland. The particulars of your arrival overseas are detailed with your flight itinerary.

DAY 2: Arrive in Warsaw

Upon arrival at the Warsaw Airport, claim your luggage and clear customs. VBT's local representative will meet you outside the customs area in your arrival terminal and will be holding a VBT sign. Your representative will help you transfer by private car or van to your hotel in Warsaw's city center (approximately 30 minutes). The rest of the day is free for you to settle in and explore the city. Choose a restaurant for dinner on your own.

Please note: If you arrive early, your hotel room may not be available until after 2:00 p.m. You may store your luggage with the reception desk. If you are traveling from the west coast, your arrival in Warsaw may not be until late in the evening.

Your hotel is conveniently located in Warsaw's Old Town. Depending on your arrival time, you can stroll along the many cobblestone streets and explore the most beautiful part of the city.

VBT provides you with City Information that includes information and recommendations on what to see and do in Warsaw during your stay.

Hotel: Mamaison Hotel Le Regina Warsaw

DAY 3: VBT Bicycle Vacation begins / Transfer to Pulawy

Meet the VBT representative in the hotel lobby at 8:00 a.m. for the transfer to Pulawy (approximately 2.5 hours, including a stop on the way). Make sure your luggage is tagged with VBT yellow tags. Meet your Trip Leaders upon arrival in Pulawy. Please be dressed in cycling clothes and ready for biking.

Your Trip Leaders will hold a safety and bike-fitting session followed by an easy warm-up ride through

some Polish “allotment gardens.” These allotment gardens are a reflection of Poland’s agrarian past and efforts to move rural labor into urban settings to meet the city residents’ basic needs. Polish allotment gardeners represent the largest land users in Poland. You’ll then join the bike path along the banks of the Vistula River. The Vistula was at one time connected to the Dnieper River, creating an important trade route known as the “Amber Road,” connecting the Black Sea to the Baltic. As you will see throughout your journey this week, the Polish people now use the Vistula River mostly for recreational purposes.

Afterward, you will shuttle to the nearby quaint riverside artist village of Kazimierz Dolny, where you can take time for a late lunch on your own.

Tonight, get to know your fellow travelers over a welcome cocktail, followed by dinner at the hotel.

Hotel: Krol Kazimierz

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Daily Options: 9 miles (14.5 km)

DAY 4: Weekly farmers’ market / Ferry across the Vistula River / Janowiec Castle

After breakfast this morning, walk with your Trip Leaders to the town square, where you’ll shop for today’s picnic at the weekly farmers’ market. You can choose from an array of fresh fruits and vegetables in season and browse numerous stalls of antiques, paintings and souvenirs. From here, you’ll ride along the Vistula River to a small ferry, which will transport you to the opposite bank, where you’ll cycle to the nearby ruins of the 16th-century Janowiec Castle. After a short visit at your leisure, join your Trip Leaders for a picnic lunch on the castle’s lawn.

The afternoon is yours to experience the beautiful countryside by bike. If you prefer, return to the hotel to enjoy the pool and spa or to explore the charming streets of Kazimierz Dolny. Later, learn more about this quaint village and its history and folklore during a unique tour.

This evening, dinner is on your own. Among your options is a unique, Jewish-themed tavern that serves old-fashioned cooking with a kosher twist.

Hotel: Krol Kazimierz

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Daily Options: 17.3, 23.3 or 39.8 miles (28.2, 37.6 or 64.2 km)

DAY 5: Lunch in a Baroque palace / Sandomierz / Underground merchant cellars

This morning, shuttle south to the starting point of today's ride. After a morning spin, you'll stop for lunch at one of the most beautiful residences in Poland, a richly ornamented, late-Baroque palace built in the mid-18th century. After lunch, ride to your hotel, located just outside the 14th-century gates of Opatowska—entrance to the picturesque town of Sandomierz.

Sandomierz' location on the banks of the Vistula River made it a prominent town on the medieval trade route that ran from the Middle East through southern Russia and Ukraine and on into central Europe. During an included walking tour, you'll visit the underground merchant cellars beneath the town square. As your subterranean stroll comes to a close, your local guide will point out several restaurant options for dinner on your own. Afterward, your hotel is an easy stroll away.

Hotel: Hotel Sarmata

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Daily Options: 16.5 or 32.7 miles (26.6 or 52 km)

DAY 6: The "Tuscany of Poland" / Cooking demonstration and mead tasting

Set out today on a ride through the countryside—and discover why this region is often called the "Tuscany of Poland." As you roll along country roads through fields and past orchards, you'll be astonished by the variety of fruit: cherries, apples, pears, apricots, peaches and more grow in this fertile basin. Return to Sandomierz for lunch on your own and further exploration of this interesting medieval town. This afternoon, you may continue cycling these lovely roads, or relax at your hotel or at a café in town.

This evening, you'll meet the family that owns your hotel for a cooking demonstration. Using fresh fruit from the orchards you passed today, they will demonstrate how to make a traditional dessert from an old family recipe. After dinner, sample a local favorite—Sandomierski mead, traditional mead that has been brewed only in this region of Poland for more than 1,000 years.

Hotel: Hotel Sarmata

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Daily Options: 17.1, 19.5, 28.5 or 30.9 miles (27.7, 31.4, 46 or 49.7 km)

DAY 7: Niepolomice Royal Castle / The Niepolomice Forest / Wieliczka

This morning, you'll shuttle to the beautiful Niepolomice Forest. Its name derives from the Old Polish word *niepolomny*, which meant "impassable," but today you'll ride lovely paved roads through this sylvan landscape. The forest consists of six nature reserves; the largest is home to the European bison.

After your easy ride, you'll arrive in the lovely town of Niepolomice for lunch on your own and the option to visit the Niepolomice Royal Castle. Originally built in 14th-century Gothic style as a hunting lodge, it was later rebuilt in late Renaissance style. This afternoon, you may take a longer riding option from Niepolomice to your hotel, located in the town of Wieliczka.

This evening is yours to explore Wieliczka. Stroll through the beautiful town and its park, and enjoy dinner at one of the local restaurants on your own.

Hotel: Hotel Grand Sal

Meals: Breakfast

Daily Options: 14.5 or 25.2 miles (23.3 or 40.4 km)

DAY 8: Riding along the Vistula River / Wieliczka Salt Mines with Polish vodka tasting / Farewell dinner

After breakfast you will have a short shuttle to the starting point of today's ride outside of Kraków. Your ride will once again follow the banks of the Vistula river, mostly on a lovely bike path. Your ride takes you past historical monuments of Poland such as the Wawel Royal Castle and the famous Monastery at "Skalka." The morning ride will end in the shadows of the Tyniec Monastery situated on a limestone rock with a beautiful view of the river. After the morning ride you may shuttle to the hotel and enjoy an afternoon at leisure or if you prefer a longer riding option you may retrace your route back to the starting point of the morning's ride and shuttle to the hotel.

This evening, you'll descend into the Wieliczka Salt Mines for a private tour of the fascinating chambers and tunnels created over the centuries. The mine continuously produced salt from the 13th century until just recently and is one of the oldest salt mines in the world. It was placed on the original list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. One of the highlights of the tour will be the "Underground Salt Cathedral of Poland" where everything is carved from salt—including the chandeliers. During your tour, enjoy a Polish vodka tasting in one of the underground chambers.

In the evening, your small group gathers for a festive farewell dinner at the Hotel Grand Sal, where you'll dine on the savory creations of the hotel's renowned chef.

Hotel: Hotel Grand Sal

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Daily Options: 12 or 24 miles (18.6 or 37.2 km)

DAY 9: Transfer to Krakow / Krakow walking tour and buggy ride / VBT Bicycle Vacation ends

You'll have a later start to your final morning. Enjoy the extra time to return to the Salt Mines and attend Mass in the underground cathedral, or simply relax before meeting the group to walk to Wieliczka's bus stop and begin the short journey to Krakow. VBT's guide will meet you in Krakow and escort you on a walking tour of the Old Town, followed by a horse-and-buggy ride to the Hotel Amadeus.

VBT provides City Information containing recommendations for cafés, restaurants, museums and transportation in Krakow. The rest of the day is free for you to explore Krakow.

Hotel: Hotel Amadeus

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10: Depart for home

After breakfast* this morning, transfer to the Krakow airport (approximately 30 minutes) for your departing flight**.

*Please note: For guests with early-morning departures, breakfast at the hotel may not be available. Please check with the front desk to verify the times that breakfast is served.

**Please note: VBT recommends that you check your transfer time in your "Transfer Reminder." VBT transfer times and departure points are finalized in advance and cannot be modified for individual guests. If you extend your stay beyond the scheduled program dates, return transportation to the airport will be at your own expense.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

Hotel Amadeus (Day: 9)

Hotel Amadeus is located in a historic 16th-century townhouse in the oldest part of Krakow, on a quiet stretch of Mikolajska Street. Though it is just a few steps from the Market Square, the hotel is tucked away from urban bustle, offering a serene and elegant ambiance. The stylish Baroque interiors are reminiscent of the era in which the hotels namesake, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, took Europe by storm. Popular with celebrities from cultural, artistic, and political circles, the hotel features a sumptuous restaurant, a cozy café, and 22 richly furnished rooms with such modern amenities as satellite TV, free WiFi access, and air conditioning.

Hotel Sarmata (Days: 5,6)

This quaint, family-owned hotel has all the charm of a stylish Polish inn and is surrounded by a large park with an inviting summer garden. It is ideally situated just about 650 feet (200 meters) from the Opatowska Gate, the entrance to the citys Old Town. Hotel Sarmata features a sauna and a Jacuzzi. All of its spacious rooms have free WiFi, LCD TV, and a safe box sized to hold a laptop. Guests can relax at an onsite wine bar with a selection of more than 150 wines. Front desk staff is available 24 hours a day and can arrange laundry and ironing service.

Krol Kazimierz (Days: 3,4)

The charming Hotel Krol Kazimierz was renovated from a 17th-century granary. It offers a prime location in the heart of Kazimierz Dolny, next to the riverside promenade and just a half-mile (0.8 km) from the towns market square. References to local history, such as the replica of the towns famous well, add to its Old World ambiance. While here, enjoy the view from a magnificent patio, play a game of bowling or billiards, and perhaps take advantage of the spa center, with its swimming pool and Turkish and Finnish saunas. Savor Polish and international cuisine in the hotels Ester restaurant, and dance the night away in the hotels nightclub. Each of the 115 rooms is tastefully decorated and offers all the comforts of a modern hotel, including air conditioning, LCD TV, free WiFi, a minibar, in-room safe, and private bath with shower.

Mamaison Hotel Le Regina (Day: 2)

Welcome to one of the finest hotels in Poland! Set within historic Mokrowski Palace and conveniently located in Warsaws restored Old Town, the upscale, deluxe Mamaison Hotel Le Regina Warsaw gives you easy access to all the citys attractions. Enjoy gourmet dining at La Rotisserie Restaurant and relax at the swimming pool, sauna, and massage room. Your cozy room features a unique décor, including hand-painted frescoes, fine Italian furniture, and a view of the nearby gardens, the Old Town, or the hotel courtyard. Amenities include air conditioning, flat-screen TV, direct-dial phone, free WiFi, in-room safe, minibar, and private bath with shower.

Hotel Grand Sal (Days: 7,8)

The Hotel Grand Sal, located in the picturesque St. Kinga Park, occupies an impeccably renovated structure that once housed the Salt Baths of the Wieliczka Salt Mines. At once lavish and cozy, the building dates to the turn of the 20th century and was refurbished to mirror the detail and style reflected in archival materials. Its interiors emphasize the hotels intimate connection with the mines. Its stylized furnishings and high-quality fabric create a warm and refined atmosphere. During your stay, you will have easy access to the adjacent Mikolaj Danilowicz entrance to the mine shaft. Each room features climate control, satellite TV, telephone, safe, free WiFi, hair dryer, cosmetics made from Wieliczka salt, and a private bath with shower.